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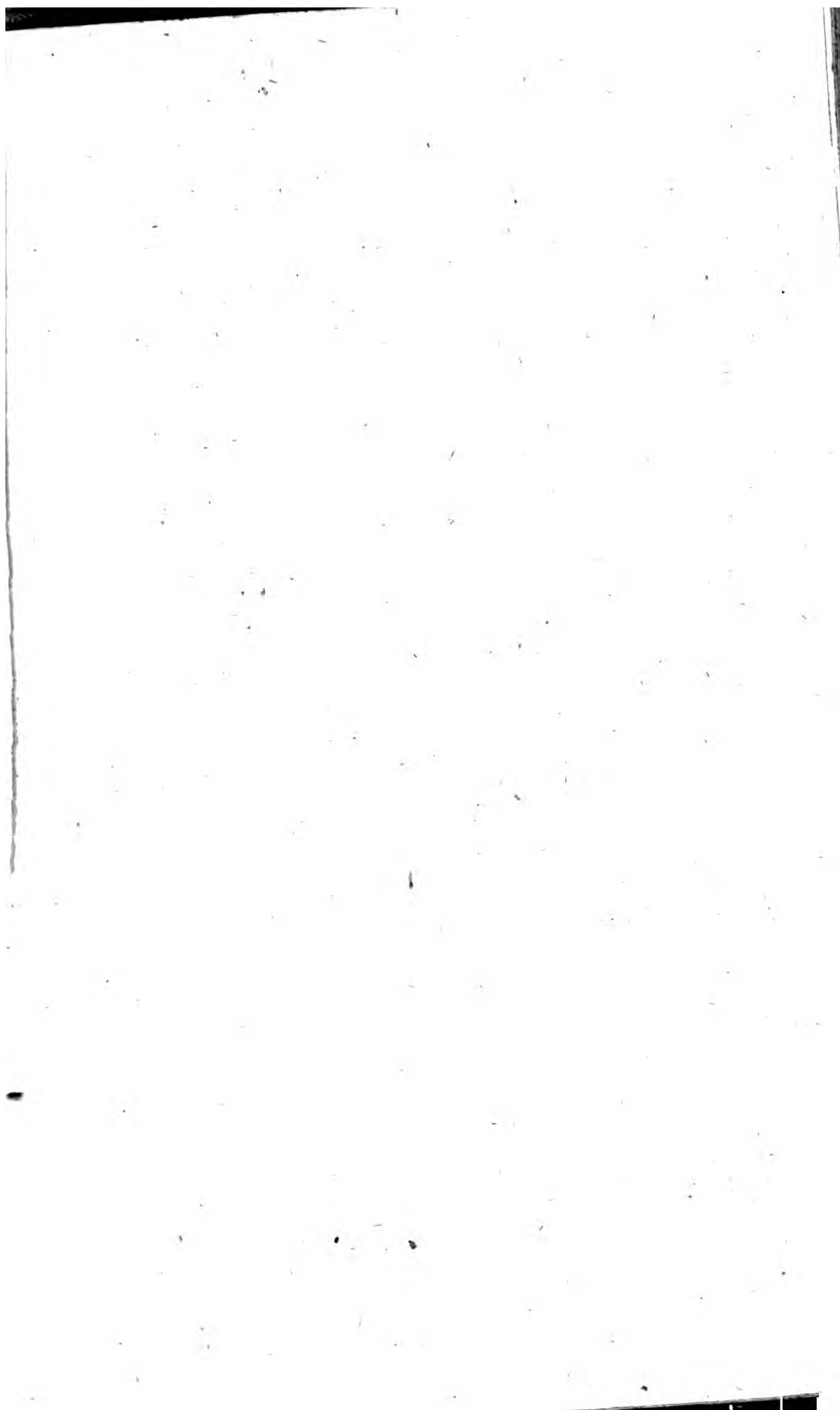
TO THE UNIVERSITY

BY

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THE
MODERN PART
OF AN
Universal History,
FROM THE
Earliest Accounts to the Present Time.

Compiled from
ORIGINAL AUTHORS.

By the AUTHORS of the ANCIENT PART.

V O L. II.



L O N D O N,

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C O N T E N T S

OF THE

S E C O N D V O L U M E,

C H A P. III.

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THE
MODERN PART
OF
Universal History.

CHAPTER III.

The History of the Arabs from the Accession of the Family of Ommiyah to the transferring the Khalifat to the Family of Abbâs.

SECTION III.

From the Accession of Abd'almalec to the Defeat and Death of Merwân Ebn Mohammed, the last Khalif of the Family of Ommiyah.

ABD'ALMALEC, the son of Merwân, who succeeded him, was surnamed Abu'l Walid, or, as others affirm, Abu Merwân, and, according to Abulfeda, was inaugurated on the third day of the month of Ramadân, being the very day on which his father died. His mother was Ayesha, the daughter of Alûm Ebn Arah Ebn Abu'l As, or, according to others, of Moâwiyah Ebn Mogheirah Ebn Abu'l As Ebn Ommeya Ebn Abd Shems. Some authors relate, that, at the time of his inauguration, he had the Moshâf, or the Koran, in his lap; which folding up, he said, probably to the person taking the oath of allegiance to him, "Let this divide, or determine, between me and thee."

Abd'almâlec succeeds his father Merwân in the khalifat.

The Syrians perform their pilgrimage to the temple at Jerusalem.

Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, who had been elected khalif by the Arabs, still residing at Mecca, Abd'almâlec would not permit his subjects to visit the temple of that city; and, for that reason, ordered the temple at Jerusalem to be so enlarged as to take the stone, or rather the steps, on which Omar had formerly prayed, and on which the Moslems had before erected a mosque, into the body of the church. The whole being, therefore, thus in a manner converted into a mosque, the Syrians, performed their pilgrimage thither, as the Arabs under Abd'allah's jurisdiction still visited the Caaba. Abd'almâlec also desired the Christians of Damascus to deliver into his hands one of their churches adjoining to the cathedral in that city. Upon which, they shewed him the instrument drawn up and signed by Khâled Ebn Al Walid, when the city was taken in the khalifat of Omar; by which the possession of that and the other Christian churches was for ever secured to them. Abd'almâlec then offered them a large sum of money, and gave them leave to build another church in lieu of it, in any other part of the town; but as they could not be prevailed upon to part with it willingly, he left it in their possession; not judging it proper or expedient at this juncture, when he had a powerful enemy to contend with, to take it from them by force.

Al Mokhtar puts himself in motion.

In the following year, Al Mokhtar, who had found means, during his imprisonment, to keep up a correspondence with the sectaries, being informed of Soliman's fate, which, from the moment of that general's departure, he had expected, began to put himself in motion. As Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir still supported himself in Arabia against the new Syrian khalif, he thought this a proper time to put his design in execution; and, therefore, having received a commission from Al Mohdi, the son of Mohammed, the son of Ali, the great imâm, or head of the sect in a lineal succession, constituting him general of all his forces, he took upon himself the command of the Shiite army. This step was for some time opposed by Ibrahim Ebn Ashtar, a man of considerable interest among the sectaries; but, upon Al Mokhtar's producing his commission, he acquiesced in the measures that had been taken, and Al Mokhtar was universally acknowledged generalissimo of the forces assembled to demand the blood of Hosein, or, in other words, to take vengeance of the murderers of that imâm. According to Abulfeda, he was formally inaugurated khalif upon the following terms; that he should govern according to the contents of the Book of God,

God, and the traditions of his apostle, and destroy all the murderers of Hosein. In consequence of which agreement he killed Shamer, Kawla, who carried Hosein's head to Obeid'allah, and Amer, who commanded the army that defeated the troops of that imâm. The head of Amer, together with that of his son, he sent to Mohammed Ebn Hanifiyah; and put Adi Ebn Hathem, whom he had taken prisoner, into the hands of the Shiites, who stripped him and shot him with arrows, in the same manner as he had served the son of Ali. We must not forget to observe, that, according to Ebn Jaljal Al Andalusia, an Arab author of Spain, Masarjowyah, a Jewish physician of Basra, flourished in the khalifat of Merwân. He translated the medical pandects of Aaron the presbyter into the Arabic tongue.

Al Mokhtar Ebn Abu Obeidah Al Thakifi having received advice, that Abd'almâlec had sent an army to reduce Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, and that a body of the khalif's troops were posted upon the frontiers of Irâk, which he apprehended might attack him on that side, whilst Mus'ab Ebn Zobeir, Abd'allah's brother, advanced against him with a strong detachment from Basra, he wrote an artful letter to Abd'allah, wherein he offered to march to his assistance, at the head of all his forces. Abd'allah, in answer to that letter, assured him, that as soon as he had satisfied him of the sincerity of his allegiance, by receiving the suffrages of his men for him, he should esteem him as his friend, and not send any forces into his country: he added, that for the present he could not give him a more convincing proof of the sincerity of his intentions, than by sending a body of troops, with all possible expedition, to observe the motions of the khalif Abd'almâlec's army, that was then posted at Dilkora. As soon as this answer arrived, Al Mokhtar dispatched Serjabil Ebn Wars, one of his officers, with a body of three thousand men, consisting chiefly of slaves, to Medina; commanding him, upon his arrival, to write to him from thence for farther orders. His design was to send an emir immediately to Medina to command those troops, whilst Serjabil, at the head of another body of the Shiite forces, should form the siege of Mecca, at that time the residence of Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir: but Abd'allah, not having received from Al Mokhtar the security he required, was resolved to be upon his guard; and, therefore, sent Abbâs Ebn Sahel to Medina, with a detachment of two thousand men; ordering him to treat Al Mokhtar's troops as friends, if he

A pacification concluded between Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir and the followers of Ali.

found them really in his interest; but, if otherwise, to use his utmost endeavours to destroy them. Abbâs, upon his arrival at Medina, not being able to persuade Serjabil to march with him to Dilkora, very justly entertained a suspicion of him. However, he dissembled this, till he found an opportunity of distributing a few sheep amongst Al Mokhtâr's troops, reduced almost to the last extremity for want of provisions; which excited them to disperse themselves over the adjacent territory, in order to supply the camp with what necessaries they could collect. This circumstance being observed by Abbâs, he advanced at the head of his troops, to the enemy's tents, soon made himself master of them, killed Serjabil himself, with seventy of his men, and spared all the rest, who accepted of the quarter offered them, except about three hundred, who were afterwards put to the sword. Al Mokhtar fearing this disaster might intimidate Mohammed Ebn Hanifiyah, at the same time that he acquainted him with it, offered to support him with a powerful army: but Mohammed refused such assistance; telling him, in the answer he wrote, that his intention was to have recourse only to pacific measures; and before the messenger, which he sent to Al Mokhtar, departed, he said, "Desire him to fear God, and abstain from all effusion of blood:" but though Mohammed Ebn Hanifiyah, and all the rest of Ali's family, behaved at Mecca in a very inoffensive manner, and were so far from exciting any commotions, that they did their utmost to preserve the public tranquillity and repose; yet Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir not thinking himself safe as long as they refused a recognition of his authority, imprisoned them, together with seventeen of the principal Cûfans, set a guard over them, and threatened to put them to death, and reduce their bodies afterwards to ashes, if, within a limited time, they did not take the oath of allegiance to him. Al Mokhtar, being informed of their distressed situation, sent a body of seven hundred and fifty horse, under the command of Abu Abd'allah Al Jodali, to Mecca, to release them. Al Jodali not only executed his orders with great bravery, but likewise took Abd'allah himself prisoner, and would have cut him to pieces on the spot, had not Mohammed prevented such an act of violence, and composed all differences, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, by his timely interposition. Abu Abd'allah Al Jodali, or rather Mohammed himself, distributed a sum of money he brought with him amongst four thousand of Ali's friends, in order to make them some amends for
the

the losses they had sustained. When Mohammed Ebn Hanifiyah was delivered from the prison near the well Zemzem, in which he had been confined, the time allowed him to make his submission to Abd'allah was within two days of being expired; and a sufficient quantity of wood, and other combustible materials, was prepared for burning both him and his companions, if they had not been released by the Shiite horse. Notwithstanding the late pacification, Mohammed Ebn Hanifiyah, after a distribution of Al Mokhtar Ebn Abu Obeidah's money amongst those that attended him had been made, for his farther security took post on a mountain near Mecca with a body of four thousand men ^a.

The Cûfans having received advice, that Merwân, before his death, had sent Obeid'allah with a powerful army towards their city, and even given him a permission to plunder it for three days together, appointed Yezid Ebn Ares, a man of undaunted courage, to command the forces they raised to oppose him: but Merwân dying before Obeid'allah could execute his orders, an end was put, at least for the present, to the intended expedition. However, the Cûfans remembering this particular, and Al Mokhtar now being at leisure to chastise that general for suggesting such an enterprize to Merwân, as well as for the murder of Hosein, which still was the pretext for all the hostile proceedings of the sectaries, they assembled a body of troops, in their turn, to act offensively against Obeid'allah, and even the Syrian khalif himself, if he should think proper to support him. There was one thing very remarkable in the preparations made for this expedition. Al Mokhtar caused a portable throne to be made, in which he pretended there was something mysterious; telling the people, that it would be of the same use to them that the ark was to the children of Israel: wherefore he ordered it to be carried on a mule with the forces that were to march against Obeid'allah, and a prayer to be said before it, conceived in the following terms: "O God! grant that we may live long in thy obedience; help us, and do not forget us, but protect us." To which petition the people answered, "Amen, Amen." By this stratagem, than which nothing could have been devised more proper to animate a body of ignorant hot-headed enthusiasts, the Cûfan troops were inspired with such fortitude and reso-

*Obeid'allah
Ebn Ziyâd
defeated
and killed.*

^a MS. Laud. num. 161. ubi sup. Ism. Abulf. et Al Makin, ubi sup. D Herbel. Bibl. Orient. in Art. Mokhtar Ebn Abu Obeidah, p. 619.

lution, that Ibrahim Ebn Ashtar, Al Mokhtar's general, found it no difficult matter to lead them against the enemy. Being determined to act offensively, he attacked Obeidallah's camp; and, after a sharp engagement, forced it, put that general and many of his men to the sword, and drove a great number of them into a neighbouring river, where they perished. Ibrahim cut off Obeidallah's head, which, with some others, he sent to Al Mokhtar, and afterwards reduced his body to ashes. This victory the Cûfans ascribed entirely to the ark, or throne, and consequently almost idolized it for a long time after. We are told by some Arab authors, that the army commanded by Obeidallah Ebn Ziyâd consisted of seventy thousand men, of whom ten thousand three hundred were killed in the action; and that the loss sustained by Ibrahim scarce amounted to three hundred and seventy men. Be that as it may, the victory was complete; inasmuch that Nisibin or Nisibis, Sinjar, and Dara or Daras, without the least opposition, surrendered to the victors. This wonderful success rendered the sectaries so formidable, that they began to entertain thoughts in earnest of fixing either Mohammed Ebn Hanifiyah, or some other of Ali's family, upon the Moslem throne ^b.

Al Mokhtar defeated and killed by Mus'ab.

Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir had sent his brother Mus'ab to govern Basra. Al Mokhtar was then absolute master of Cûfa, where he put all to the sword who would not join him, in order to revenge the murder of Hosein. Upon Mus'ab's arrival at Basra, he went into the mosque, ascended the pulpit, and made a speech to the people. His predecessor Al Hareth sat one step below him. In his speech, amongst other things, he reflected upon Abd'almâlec, and that part of the Moslem empire which submitted to him, and extolled the conduct of the Arabs who obeyed the orders of his brother Abd'allah. Then he told the Basrans, that as they usually gave names, or rather surnames, to their emirs, he would take the liberty to assume that of Hejâz. Soon after which transaction, one Shebet came to Basra, upon a crop-eared bob-tailed mule from Cûfa, with his cloaths rent, crying out, "Ya gautha! Ya gautha! *Help! Help!*" He was attended by many of the principal Cûfans, who complained bitterly of Al Mokhtar's cruel and tyrannical administration; and begged Mus'ab to march with an army against him. This

^b Ism. Abulfed. et MS. Laud. num. 161. in Bibl. Bodl. Oxon. ubi sup. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. & Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 59, 60.

petition Mus'ab very readily complied with, and wrote immediately to Al Mohalleb, his lieutenant in Persia, to come and join him with the Persian forces; an order which he obeyed, though with some reluctance. After this junction, Mus'ab and Al Mohalleb advanced at the head of their troops into the territory of Cûfa, forced Al Mokhtar to a general action, overthrew him with great slaughter, and obliged him to shut himself up in the castle of Cûfa. Thither Mus'ab pursued him, and laid siege to the place. Al Mokhtar for some time made a brave defence; but being at last killed, his men surrendered at discretion. They amounted to about seven thousand, and were, on account of the outrages they had committed, every one of them put to the sword^c.

This blow, which for the present at least put an end to all their towering projects, was given the Motazalites in the month of Ramadân, and the 67th year of the Hejra. The immediate consequence of which was the submission of Cûfa, and its district, to Mus'ab; and Ibrahim Ebn Ashtar took the oath of fidelity to Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir. After this important conquest, Mus'ab appointed Mohalleb Ebn Abu Safra to preside over Mawfel upon the Tigris, together with the provinces of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Aderbijan. As for Al Mokhtar, he was killed in the sixty-seventh year of his age, after he had defeated, in several engagements, the generals of Yezid, Merwân, and Abd'almâlec, and made himself master of the Babylonian Arâk, of which Cûfa was the capital. He never pardoned any one who had declared himself an enemy to the house of Hâshem, or who had been in any manner concerned in the murder of Hosein. He was surnamed Al Thakîfi, as being originally of the tribe of Thakif, and boasted that he had destroyed fifty thousand of the adherents of the house of Ommiyah, exclusive of those that were slain in the battles which he fought. He left several children behind him, some of whom so signalized themselves by their glorious actions, that a book was afterwards written by an Oriental author, intitled, *Anwar alathâr fi faldh banu Al Mokhtar*; which contained an accurate account of all the illustrious achievements of Al Mokhtar and his descendents.

A farther account of the great captain Al Mokhtar.

Next year, the Azarakites, so denominated from Nafê Ebn Al Azarak, the author of their sect, assembled a considerable force in Persia, and made an irruption into

^c MS. Lavé num. 161. ubi sup. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 160. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Mokhtar Ben Abou Obeidah, p. 619.

*The Azar-
akites
over-
thrown by
Omar Ebn
Abd'allah
Al Temimi.*

Irâk. They advanced almost to the gates of Cûfa, and penetrated to Al Madâen. As they acknowledged no established government, either temporal or spiritual, and were sworn enemies to the house of Ommiyah, they committed terrible ravages in the provinces of Ahwâz, and in every other part of the Moslem territories through which they moved. They carried their excesses so far as to murder all the people they met with, and to exercise every species of cruelty upon the Moslems of all denominations, without distinction of sex or age. One of them being desirous of sparing a lady of transcendent piety, as well as beauty, another said to him, "What, thou enemy of God, thou art captivated with her beauty, and hast denied the faith!" and instantly killed her. The governor of Mawfel and Mesopotamia, being informed of these unparalleled outrages, marched against them with a body of select troops, came up with them at a place called Sawlâk, and carried on a brisk war against them, for the space of eight months, without intermission; during which interval many sharp engagements happened. In some part of this term, their leader Nafê Ebn Al Azarak died, and was succeeded by Katri Ebn Al Fojat; under whose conduct they continued their depredations. Mus'ab being displeased with his lieutenant Mahleb, or Al Mohalleb Abufafra, for his management of the war, recalled him, and substituted in his room Omar Ebn Abd'allah Al Temimi, who gave the Azarakites a total overthrow at Naifabûr in Khorasân, put many of them to the sword, and pursued the rest as far as Ispahân and the province of Kermân. Here having received a reinforcement, they returned into the province of Ahwâz, and did incredible damage to the country through which they passed. But Omar advancing a second time against them, they retired at his approach to Al Madâyen, and plundered the district belonging to that city in a dreadful manner. However, Omar pursuing them hither also, they fled first into Kermân, and afterwards into Khorasân, where they gradually dispersed themselves. This year there was a grievous famine in Syria, which suspended all military operations. Abd'al-mâlec, however, encamped at Botnân, near the district of Kinnifrîn, though he was much incommoded by the heavy rains that fell there; and in the spring returned to Damascus, where he soon finished his preparations for the ensuing campaign ^d.

^d MS. Laud. num. 161. et Al Makin, ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Azarecah, p. 154. Golii Not. ad Alfragan, p. 188—190.

In the 69th year of the Hejra, Abd'almâlec left Damascus, in order to march against Mus'ab Ebn Zobeir, who was grown very formidable since the defeat of the Azaraites, and appointed Amru Ebn Sa'id governor of that city: but Amru seizing upon it for himself, the khalif was obliged to return thither, and lay aside for the present the intended expedition. Upon Abd'almâlec's arrival at Damascus, several skirmishes happened between detachments of his troops and some of Amru's men; but, by the intervention of the women, a treaty was at last concluded between the contending parties, and the public tranquillity entirely restored. However, the khalif, not forgetting his competitor's attempt, three or four days after sent for him, ordered him to be disarmed, and fettered, and beat out two of his fore-teeth. Then he went to the evening-prayers, and left the execution of Amru to his brother Abd'alaziz; who being nearly related to him, and commiserating his unhappy situation, threw away his sword, and resolved not to be the instrument of his death. The khalif returning from the performance of his devotions, to his great surprize found Amru alive; whereupon he ordered him to be laid upon his back, and immediately killed him. This action, however, so affected Abd'almâlec, that he was seized with a tremor, which, for some time after, quite disabled him; infomuch that his servants were obliged to take him up, and lay him upon his couch. The people observing, that Amru did not attend the khalif to prayers, acquainted his brother Yahya with the affair; who instantly armed one thousand of Amru's slaves, and attacked Abd'almâlec's palace. After a warm dispute, they forced open the gates, killed several of the guards, and were upon the point of entering the palace, when the people within threw Amru's head amongst them. This so cooled their ardour, that they desisted from the attempt; and some money having been soon after distributed amongst them by Abd'alaziz, they retired to their respective habitations: but so great was Abd'almâlec's avarice, that, as we are told by an Arab author of credit, when the commotion was appeased, he recalled the money bestowed upon them, and ordered it all to be again deposited in the public treasury. As for Yahya, who was the ringleader in the late riot, he was sentenced to die; but Abd'alaziz prevailed upon the khalif to convert that punishment, on account of his being a member of the Ommiyan family, into a month's imprisonment, and then to banish him to Mus'ab Ebn Zobeir. The

quarrel

*Abd'almâ-
lec reduces
Amru.*

quarrel between Amru and Abd'almâlec, which proved so fatal to the former, is said to have been occasioned by an emulation excited between them by an old woman, whom they frequently visited, in their infancy. Merwân being apprized of this emulation, and fearing it might produce fatal effects after his death, obliged the Syrians to take the oath of fidelity to Abd'almâlec as his successor, in his life-time, and to swear likewise to elevate to the Moslem throne, if that khalif died without issue, his younger son Abd'alaziz.

*The khalif
concludes a
treaty
with the
Greek em-
peror.*

In the 70th year of the Hejra the Greeks made an incursion into Syria. Abd'almâlec having then occasion for all his forces, in order to reduce Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir in Arabia, and Mus'ab, his brother, in Irâk, to his obedience, was not able to march against them, and therefore agreed to pay the Greek emperor a thousand dinârs every week for a certain term, to induce that prince to withdraw his troops from the Moslem territories. This year Mus'ab went to Mecca, with all the wealth, cattle, and rich furniture he had amassed, which he distributed amongst the Arabs. Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir himself also performed the pilgrimage to Mecca about the same time. We must not omit to observe, that, according to Theophanes and Cedrenus, Abd'almâlec concluded a treaty with the emperor, in the third or fourth year of his reign, by which he engaged to pay that prince annually three hundred and sixty-five thousand pieces of money, or dinârs, and to send him every year three hundred and sixty-five slaves, as well as the same number of horses, of a generous breed; and the Christian potentate, on his part, promised to repress the course of the Maronites, who committed great disorders in the khalif's dominions. In the aforesaid treaty, it was also stipulated, that the revenues of Cyprus, Armenia, and Iberia, should be equally divided between the contracting powers^c.

*Abd'almâ-
lec invades
Irâk.*

Abd'almâlec being resolved to undertake an expedition into Irâk against Mus'ab Ebn Zobeir, put to death the principal accomplices of Amru Ebn Sa'id, and dispatched Khâled Ebn Afid privately to Basra, to form a party for him in that city. Mus'ab having received intelligence of Ebn Afid's arrival, attempted to surprise him, but without effect; which disappointment he imputed to the care the Basrans had taken to conceal him; and, therefore, re-

^c MS. Laud. num. 161. ubi sup. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 300, 301, 302, 303. Georg. Cedren. Historiar. Compend. p. 440. Ockley, ubi supra, p. 323.

proached

proached the chief of them, in very sharp terms for their conduct on this occasion. Some of them he upbraided with their mean extraction, others with infamous actions committed either by them or their relations; and, in short, all of them with something that incensed them greatly against him. In the mean time Abd'almâlec had sent letters to the leading men full of large promises, and, amongst the rest, one to Ibrahim Ebn Al Ashtar, who delivered it Mus'ab sealed up as it came. The letter contained a promise to Ibrahim of the lieutenancy of Irâk, if he would declare in favour of the khalif. Ibrahim then assured Mus'ab that he should persist in his fidelity to him, and advised him, as Abd'almâlec had undoubtedly written to the other principal persons in Basra, whom he thought he could confide in, to the same effect, to behead all those whom he had reason to suspect were in that prince's interest; but Mus'ab not approving of this expedient, as he imagined it would create in the people of Irâk an aversion to him, Ibrahim pressed him to put them under arrest till his fate was determined; so that if he should be defeated by Abd'almâlec, their heads might be cut off upon the first arrival of the bad news at Basra; but if he obtained the victory, he might make a compliment of them to their tribes. As for Abd'almâlec, his subjects did their utmost to prevail upon him to reduce Irâk by his generals, and not expose his person to the hazards of war, fearing lest their affairs should be embroiled if any disaster should happen to him, as their government was not yet settled upon a solid foundation; but the Syrian khalif believing himself perfectly qualified to command his troops in this expedition, both by his abilities in war and personal courage, and that he was a better match for Mus'ab than any of his generals, would not be persuaded to remain at home whilst his forces were in the field. Having, therefore, finished his military preparations, he began his march for Irâk, and at last arrived at Masken, where Mus'ab had drawn up his army in order of battle. Masken, which we find called Sakan by Abu'l-Faraj, is a small town in the deserts either of Al Sham, or Al Jazira, between Tadmor and the town of Tayba, near the Euphrates, upon the frontiers of Mesopotamia.

After several movements the two armies came in sight of each other, and made the necessary dispositions for an engagement. The troops of Irâk, according to custom, were resolved to desert Mus'ab, and not expose their country on his account to the ravages of a Syrian army.

Ibrahim

*The battle
of Masken.*

Ibrahim Ebn Al Ashtar began the battle, by charging Mohammed Ebn Harûn with such fury, that he forced him to retire; though being sustained by a fresh body of troops, headed by the khalif himself, he soon returned to the charge, repulsed Ibrahim in his turn, and killed him upon the spot. Mus'ab's general of the horse, either intimidated by the death and defeat of Ibrahim, or through treachery, soon after betook himself to flight; and many other of the Irâkian officers, who did not abandon their posts, refused to fight. Neither Omar Ebn Abd'allah, nor Al Mohalleb, nor Ibâd Ebn Hossam, appeared in this engagement; of which circumstance Abd'almâlec being informed, he immediately promised certain victory to his troops. Mus'ab, being pressed on all sides, endeavoured to prevail upon his son Isâ to make his escape to Mecca, and acquaint his uncle Abd'allah with the perfidy of the people of Irâk; but he could not by any means be induced to desert his father at that perilous conjuncture; declaring he would not survive him. On the contrary, he advised him to retreat first to Basra, and afterwards to Mecca; but Mus'ab would not hear of such infamous conduct: he would not even accept of quarter offered him by the khalif, but persisted in his resolution of dying upon the field of battle. His son, therefore, who was determined not to forsake him, and he, rushing into the midst of the enemy, fought like men animated by despair, destroyed several of the Syrians, and were at last both laid dead upon the spot. Mus'ab was first grievously wounded with arrows, then stabbed in several places, and finally had his head cut off by a man who carried it immediately to the khalif. Abd'almâlec offered the bearer a thousand dinârs, which he would not accept; saying, that as he had slain Mus'ab purely to gratify his own private resentment, he had no manner of title to it. We are told by Abulfeda, that Abd'almâlec and Mus'ab, in the khalifat of Merwân, had contracted an intimate friendship; but that the latter afterwards marrying Sekina, the daughter of Husein, and Ayesha, the daughter of Telha, became allied to two families that bore an implacable hatred to the house of Ommyyah. Theophanes relates, that about this time, whilst the Arabs were engaged in a civil war, the imperial forces, under the conduct of Leontius, drove them out of Armenia, Iberia, Media, and Bulcaria, with great slaughter, and re-annexed those provinces to the empire. He also informs us, that Abd'almâlec, whom he calls Abimelec, after Mus'ab had cut off Mokhtar, killed
and

and defeated that conqueror, and reduced Persia, or rather Irāk, under his dominion; particulars which agree tolerably well with what we find advanced in this point by the Arab historians; for, according to them, after the battle of Masken, Cûfa opened its gates to the Syrian khalif, and both the Persian and Babylonian Irāk submitted to him. The people of those provinces came in crouds to swear allegiance, and, amongst the rest, Yahya, the brother of Amru, whom he had killed. After the conclusion of that ceremony, he ordered vast sums of money to be distributed amongst them, and gave a splendid entertainment to his new subjects, to which even the meanest were admitted. Neither the Arab nor Greek writers have preserved many particulars of the battle of Masken, nor given an account of the number of Moslems killed and wounded on either side in that memorable action^f.

During the banquet prepared for the Cûfans, Abd'almâlec took particular notice of Amru Ebn Al Hâreth, an ancient Makhzumite, whom he placed by him on his sofa. Amongst other questions, he asked him what sort of food pleased him best? To which the old Makhzumite answered, "An afs's head, seasoned high, and well roasted." "That is but an ordinary dish," replied the khalif; "what say you to a leg or a shoulder of a sucking lamb, well roasted and covered with butter and milk?" When the supper was over, the Makhzumite diverted the khalif with a particular account of the antiquities of the castle; after which, Mus'ab's head, which had been just brought in, was exhibited to his view. One of the company seeing it, said to Abd'almâlec, "I saw Hosein's head in this same castle presented to Obeid'allah, Obeid'allah's to Al Mokhtar, Al Mokhtar's to Mus'ab, and now at last Mus'ab's to yourself." This observation greatly affected the khalif, who, in order to avert the ill omen, caused the castle to be immediately demolished. Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, having received the melancholy news of his brother's death, assembled the people in the mosque at Mecca, and made a speech from the pulpit suitable to the occasion. He then exerted his utmost endeavours to put his capital in a posture of defence, and render it capable of sustaining a siege, expecting a speedy visit from his formidable competitor, who now gave law to Irāk, Syria, and Egypt without control.

The khalif takes great notice of an old Makhzumite.

^f MS. Laud. num. 161. ubi sup. Ism. Abulfed. in Hist. Univer. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Theophan. ubi supra, p. 303, 304. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 61.

The Mozalites apprise Al Mohalleb of the defeat at Masken.

The Separatists, or Azarakites, in the neighbourhood of Mawfel, received advice of the defeat at Masken, and of Mus'ab's death, before Al Mohalleb, the governor of that city and its dependencies, with whom they were then at war, was apprized of those fatal events. In consequence of this information, some of them asked his men what they thought of Mus'ab? They replied, "He is a lawful imâm." "He is then (said the sectaries) your friend both in this world and that which is to come; and you are his friends both alive and dead." To which the others answered in the affirmative. "And what (demanded the Separatists) is your opinion of Abd'almâlec, the son of Merwân?" "He is (said they) the son of the accursed; we acknowledge him not, but hold it more lawful for us to shed his blood than your's?" "And you are (continued the Separatists) his enemies both alive and dead?" "Yes, (replied the others)." "Very well, (said the Azarakites), Abd'almâlec has killed Mus'ab, your imâm; and you will make him your imâm to-morrow, though you wash your hands of him to-day and curse his father." To which insinuation the others answered, "You lie, you enemies of God." However, being certainly informed next day of what had happened, they took the oath of allegiance to Abd'almâlec without hesitation; for which conduct being reproached by the Azarakites in very severe terms, they defended themselves by saying, "We were pleased with the other as long as he presided over us, and now we approve of this as we did before of him." "You are (replied the Azarakites) brethren of the devils, companions of the wicked, and slaves to the present world." With regard to Mus'ab, he was, according to an Arab author of reputation, an officer of distinguished bravery, great generosity, and of a very comely agreeable person. Though he had a son that fell with him in the battle of Masken, as has been already observed, he was not above thirty-six years of age when he met with his untimely fate^g.

The Azarakites, or Separatists defeat Abd'alaziz.

Soon after Abd'almâlec's arrival at Damascus, he conferred upon his brother, Bashar Ebn Merwân, the government of Cûfa, and upon Khâled Ebn Abd'allah that of Basra. The latter of these had no sooner taken possession of his post than he appointed Al Mohalleb supervisor of the tribute of Basra; which was a very indiscreet and impolitic step, as Al Mohalleb was one of the most consummate generals of his age. To this imprudent measure

^g MS. Laud. num. 161. ubi sup. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 61.

was probably owing the disaster that immediately followed. The Azarakites, being informed of Al Mohalleb's dismissal from the command of the army destined to act against them, and that he was succeeded by Abd'alaziz in that important post, advanced against the latter with great celerity, entirely defeated him, and took his wife prisoner. A debate arising amongst the victors about the value of that lady, which some fixed at a hundred thousand dinârs, one of them, in order to put an end to it, immediately struck off her head. Khâled, after the blow he had received, wrote a letter to the khalif, acquainting him with the loss the army had sustained, and desiring to know what step he was next to take. Abd'almâlec condemned Khâled's conduct, ordered him to remove Abd'alaziz from the command of the forces assigned him, to substitute Al Mohalleb, whom he called the son and grandson of war, in his room, to advance into the province of Ahwâz with all the troops he could assemble, and to do nothing without the privity and advice of Al Mohalleb. This answer by no means pleased Khâled, though the khalif also promised him a speedy reinforcement; and, in consequence of that promise, sent a body of five thousand Cûfans, under the command of his brother Basfar, soon after to join him. Basfar, before his arrival, dispatched a courier to Al Mohalleb to give him notice of his approach; the good of the khalif's service at that time rendering it necessary to treat a person of that general's merit with great marks of distinction^b.

The khalif's generals receiving advice, that the Azarakites, or Separatists, were in motion, advanced at the head of the army as far as Ahwâz, the metropolis of the province of the same name, and pitched their tents in the neighbourhood of that city. Soon after their arrival, Al Mohalleb advised Khâled to seize some ships that then appeared in the river on which Ahwâz was situated; but they were burnt, before that design could be put in execution, by a party of the enemy's horse. Al Mohalleb one day viewing all the posts of the camp, observed that an officer had not taken the precaution to intrench himself; who being asked by that general the reason of this neglect, replied, that he valued the Azarakites no more than a camel's fart: but Al Mohalleb told him, that he ought not to despise them, since they were the lions of the

The Azarakites are overthrown by Khâled and Al Mohalleb.

^b MS. Laud. num. 161. & Al Makin, ubi sup.

Arabs. In consequence of this opinion, that commander ordered a line to be drawn round the camp; and the troops remained in their intrenchments about twenty days. After the expiration of which term, Khâled and Al Mohalleb attacked the enemy with such fury, that, after a most sharp and bloody engagement, they defeated them, and took possession of their camp. Khâled ordered David, one of his officers, to pursue the fugitives with a body of horse, and dispatched an express to the khalif with a particular account of the victory they had gained. Abd'almâlec then sent an order to Bathar to reinforce David's detachment with another body of four thousand horse, that he might be thereby enabled to push the Azarakites to the very centre of Persia. This was accordingly performed, and those detachments of cavalry, after a long and fatiguing pursuit, in which most of their horses perished, returned in a very miserable condition to Ahwâz.

*Abd'almâlec's forces
invest Mecca.*

Abd'almâlec having defeated and dispersed the Azarakites, in the 72d year of the Hejra, had no enemy left to contend with but Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, who still was considered as khalif by the Arabs, and resided at Mecca. He, therefore, made great preparations for an invasion of Hejaz, and appointed Al Hejâj Ebn Yusef Al Thakîfi, one of the most warlike and eloquent captains of the age, to command the troops to be employed in this expedition. Al Hejâj having imagined in a dream that he had vanquished Abd'aliah Ebn Zobeir, taken him prisoner, and slayed him, the Syrian khalif considered this as a fortunate omen; and, therefore, resolved to commit to his care the management of the war to be carried on against the khalif of Mecca. Before he put his army in motion, he offered his protection to all the Arabs of Mecca that would accept of it, and take an oath of fidelity to him. Abd'allah being informed of Al Hejâj's approach, detached several parties of horse to reconnoitre the enemy, and give him intelligence of their motions. Betwixt these and some of Al Hejâj's advanced guards several skirmishes happened, in which Abd'allah's men had generally the worst. This success encouraged Al Hejâj to send to his master for a farther reinforcement, his army, consisting of only two thousand men, not being strong enough to form the siege of Mecca; assuring him, that Abd'allah's arrogance was very much abated, and that his men deserted him daily. Upon this intimation, Abd'almâlec ordered Thârik Ebn Amer to march to his assistance

assistance with a body of five thousand men; after which junction he continued his route to Mecca, and immediately invested that place.

In the 73d year of the Hejra, Abd'almâlec offered the whole public revenues of Khorasân for seven years to Abd'allah Ebn Hâzim, if he would submit to him; a proposal which so incensed that commander, that he forced the khalif's messenger to eat the letter he brought, and would have cut him in pieces upon the spot, had he not foreseen that such an action would have created a quarrel between two of the Arab tribes. Abd'almâlec, in order to chastize him for his insolence, sent one of his generals with a body of troops against him; who first defeated and dispersed his forces, and afterwards put him to death.

Abd'almâlec overcomes Abd'allah Ebn Hâzim.

Notwithstanding the reinforcement Al Hejâj had received, for some time he made very little progress in the siege of Mecca. Whilst he battered the temple with his military engines, it thundered and lightened so dreadfully, that the Syrians were struck with terror, and refused to play them any longer upon that edifice. Upon which, Al Hejâj tucked the corner of his vest into his girdle, and worked the catapult with his own hands. Next morning, the Syrians were annoyed by several successive storms, that killed twelve of their men, and overwhelmed them with terror. Al Hejâj seeing them in such a consternation, said, "O Syrians! let not this terrify you. I am a son of Tehâma. This, therefore, is the storm of Tehâma. Victory is at hand. Rejoice at the news of it, especially since the rebels suffer as much as you." The day following, some of Abd'allah's men were killed by another storm, that was extremely violent, which gave Al Hejâj a farther opportunity of animating his troops. At last, Abd'allah having been deserted by most of his friends, ten thousand of the inhabitants of Mecca, and even his two sons Hamza and Khobeib, desired to know his mother's sentiments with respect to the course he was to take. He represented, that he was almost entirely abandoned by his subjects and relations; that the few who persisted in their fidelity could scarce enable him to defend the city any longer; and that the Syrian khalif would grant him any terms he should think fit to demand. She, being a woman of inflexible resolution, and not able to bear the thoughts of seeing her son reduced to the condition of a private person, having herself been the grand-daughter, or rather the daughter, of Abu Becr, the first khalif, advised him by no means to

Mecca taken by Al Hejâj.

survive the sovereignty of which he was upon the point of being deprived. This advice perfectly agreeing with his own sentiments, he resolved to die in the defence of the place; so that, to the great surprize of the besiegers, he maintained himself there ten days longer, though destitute of arms, troops, and fortifications. At last, having taken a final leave of his mother, and being animated by despair, he made a sally upon the enemy, destroyed a great number with his own hands, and was at length killed, fighting valiantly. We are told, that his mother obliged him to put off a coat of mail he had on when he made her his last visit, and which he wore, that he might be the better able to defend her; pressing him, after the conference was over, to rush into the midst of the enemy, and die a martyr for the cause of truth. It is also said, that when he told her he was not so much afraid of dying, as of being exposed after death, she courageously replied, "When a sheep is once killed, it is not sensible of the pain of excoriation;" and that, in order to inspire him with a greater degree of fortitude, she gave him a draught into which a pound of musk had been infused. The enemy, not daring to approach, pelted him with stones, and wounded him in several places, before they gave him the fatal stroke. When he felt the blood run down his face and beard, he repeated an Arabic verse, importing, that the blood of our wounds does not fall upon our heels, but upon our feet: by which he implied, that he did not turn his back upon his enemies, however formidable they might appear. After his death, All Hejâj ordered his head to be cut off, and his body to be affixed to a cross in the city; which, being perfumed with the musk Abd'allah had drank, emitted a grateful odour for several days, and was afterwards interred in the burying-place of the Jews at Medina. As to the duration of the siege of Mecca, authors are not perfectly agreed; some making it amount to seven months and a few days, and others to eight months and seventeen nights. According to the writers followed by Al Makîn, Abd'allah's mother survived him only five days. The reduction of Mecca put Abd'almâlec in possession of the peninsula of the Arabs, and consequently rendered him sole and absolute master of the Moslem empire¹.

¹ MS. Laud. num. 161. ubi sup. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 61, 62. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 366—369. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 199. D'Herbel, Biblioth. Orient. in art. Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, p. 7.

Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir presided over the Arabs nine years and twenty-two days, having been inaugurated immediately after the death of Yezid. He was a man of extraordinary courage, which was allowed even by Abd'almâlec and Tharik themselves, and is sufficiently apparent from the whole tenor of his conduct; but more particularly from his noble defence of Mecca, though the place was in a manner void both of troops and fortifications. He has been represented likewise by some of the eastern writers as a person of exemplary piety, and so fixed and unmoved when employed in the performance of his devotions, that nothing could divert his attention from the object of them: and yet notwithstanding these amiable qualities, he is said to have been so covetous, that his avarice became a proverb amongst the Arabs. Abulfeda relates, that he wore a suit of cloths forty years, without ever putting them off his back; an assertion which is absolutely incredible. He was about seventy-two years of age at the time of his death, and of a family not much celebrated for wisdom, according to some of the Moslem historians. In the beginning of the siege of Mecca, he resided for the most part in the Caaba; but after Al Hejâj had beat down one part of that place, by means of his battering engines, and set fire to the other by some balls of pitch, he found himself obliged to retire to his own house. The same year, Mohammed Ebn Merwân gained a victory over the Greeks, which was attended with the surrender of Affasiyah; and Othmân Ebn Walid made an irruption into Armenia with a body of four thousand Arabs, and defeated likewise an army of the same nation amounting to sixty thousand men. The Greek writers only in general observe, that all civil wars ceasing at this time amongst the Moslems, they became re-united under one prince; and that Abd'almâlec being now firmly seated upon his throne, discovered an inclination to keep up a good understanding with all the neighbouring powers^k.

*Abd'allah
Ebn Zo-
beir's cha-
racter.*

After the late victory, Mohammed Ebn Merwân, who was then governor of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Aderbijan, sustained a very great loss in the first of those countries, by the defeat and total destruction of an army of one hundred thousand men, sent against the Hararians, Khazarians, or rather Khazarians. Upon which, Mohammed, at the head of another army of forty thousand men, who

*Several
sharp en-
gagements
in Armenia.*

^k Ism. Abulfed. Hist. Univ. vol i. Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 62. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 304. Georg. Cedren. Hist. Compend. p. 441.

were all chosen troops, penetrated into the very heart of Armenia, defeated and dispersed a large body of the Khazarians, drove them into their temples, and reduced them to ashes. Moslem Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân also, with another body of the Moslem forces, attacked an army of eighty thousand Khazarians, at the Iron or Caspian Gates, and destroyed a great number of them. The rest were obliged by the victors to embrace the Mohammedan faith. Several other actions happened about the same time in that country, of which no clear and distinct account has been handed down to us either by the Moslem or Christian historians.

*Hejâj's
cruelty.*

In the 74th year of the Hejra, Al Hejâj demolished the temple of Mecca, after it had been repaired by Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, rebuilt it, and restored it to the form it was in before Mohammed's time, wherein it still remains. Having been appointed governor of Medina, he exercised horrid cruelties upon the inhabitants of that city. He frequently quarrelled with them without any manner of provocation, and punished them without the least appearance of any crime. It has been observed by some Arab writers, that there happened a very remarkable solar eclipse this year, on Monday, towards the close of the Former Jomâda; in one part of the duration of which the stars very distinctly appeared.

Hejâj appointed governor of Irâk, Khorasân, and Sijistân.

In the following year, Abd'almâlec made Al Hejâj his lieutenant of Irâk; of which post that general took possession at Cûfa, escorted by a body of twelve thousand horse. The khalif likewise constituted him governor of Khorasân and Sijistân, after the death of his brother Basfar. Al Hejâj entered Cûfa, muffled up in his turban, and was soon surrounded by crowds of people, who pressed forwards to see him. He told them their curiosity should soon be gratified, as he would immediately discover himself. Then going directly to the mosque, he ascended the *membar* or *pulpit*, where he treated them after a very brutal manner; swearing that he would make the wicked bear his own burden, and fit him with his own shoe. One day, after a short pause, in the pulpit, he said, "O people of Irâk! methinks I see the heads of men ripe and ready to be gathered, and turbans and beards, sprinkled with blood." The day after his arrival at Cûfa, he upbraided, in very severe terms, the inhabitants of that city; swearing from the pulpit, that his punishments, in rigour and severity, should exceed those of the most cruel of his predecessors, and be a pattern for his successors to the remotest period of time.

time. Those who had any hand in the murder of Othmân were the principal objects of his fury and resentment, both at Cûfa and Basra; to the latter of which places he went after a short stay at the other, and harangued the citizens in a speech conceived in much the same terms as those above mentioned. In order to give the Basrans a taste of his discipline, he caused one of them, who had been informed against as a rebel, to be beheaded upon the spot. In short, his conduct so exasperated the people of Irâk, that they formed an insurrection against him; but having defeated them in a pitched battle, and sent eighteen of their heads to Al Mohalleb, he returned to Basra. Soon after, he sent a body of troops, under the command of Al Mohalleb, and Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Mehnef, against the Azarakites, who again began to be in motion. Those generals at first obtained several advantages over the rebels; but Abd'alrahmân refusing to listen to the advice of Al Mohalleb, and neglecting to entrench himself, was at last surprised, and cut to pieces, with all the troops he commanded. The Azarakites, at this time, were probably posted at no great distance from Basra, as the revolt, that happened at this juncture, greatly encouraged those rebels, and animated them to attack the forces sent against them by Al Hejâj. However, they reaped no great advantage from that event; Al Mohalleb soon afterwards putting them to flight, and driving them before him into some of the remoter parts of Persia ¹.

In the 76th year of the Hejra, Saleh Ebn Marj, a hot-headed sectary, and Shebib Ebn Zeid, a Khârejite, took up arms against the khalif. They had both been on pilgrimage at Mecca the preceding year, when Abd'almâlec was there, and formed a conspiracy against him. The khalif, being apprised of this, ordered Al Hejâj to seize them; but they eluded all his vigilance, and found means to make their escape. Saleh remained very secure a month at Cûfa, and concerted the most proper measures with his friends to carry his design into execution. That branch of the Khârejites, that followed him, went under the name of Saffrians, and appeared now for the first time in arms. He was a man much given to devotion, and had many followers in Mawfel and Mesopotamia, to whom he frequently read and expounded the Koran. He once delivered a dis-

*Saleh and
Shebib re-
bel against
the khalif.*

¹ MS. Laud. num. 161. ubi supra. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. Al Mâkin, ubi supra, p. 63. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Hegiage, p. 442, 443. Gölîi Not. ad Alfragan. p. 118.

course, which so pleased all his hearers, that they begged he would favour them with a copy of it. He granted their request, and that discourse has been preserved to the present age; but as it is little better than enthusiastic cant, or rather a collection of crude exhortatory observations, adapted to the taste of those hot-headed illiterate enthusiasts, to whom it was directed, and entirely calculated to excite them to a rebellion; as it throws not the least light upon that part of the Arab history, in which we are now engaged, and consequently contains nothing that can render it in any degree either instructive or entertaining, an omission of it here will not be regretted by the intelligent reader.

*And are
driven to
Mawfel.*

Whilst Saleh was haranguing his followers, in order to inspire them with sentiments of abhorrence both of the khalif and Al Hejâj, he received a letter from Shebib; wherein that incendiary reproved him for being so tardy in his motions. Saleh, in his answer, by way of recrimination, told him, that, had he himself not been so dilatory, hostilities would have commenced before that time against the wicked imâm; that his delay had raised a suspicion of him; and that they waited only for his arrival, in order to enter upon action. This intimation rousing Shebib, he immediately joined Saleh at Dara'ljazira, that is, Dara, or Daras, in Mesopotamia, of which Mohammed Ebn Merwân was at that time governor, with a small body of infantry, and saluted him emperor of the faithful. After this junction, they seized some of Mohammed's horses in a neighbouring village, upon which they mounted their infantry. The governor soon received intelligence of their motions; but despising their number, the whole force commanded by these enthusiasts not exceeding one hundred and twenty men, he only ordered Adi to march against them with a detachment of four times their number: but Adi informing him, that his force was insufficient to reduce them, he reinforced him with as many more; upon which he advanced to Daras, near which place the Safrians, or Khârejites, had posted themselves. Adi, having no inclination to fight, notwithstanding his great superiority in point of numbers, gave Saleh to understand, that, if he would quit Mesopotamia, and invade some other province, he would not oppose him; but this proposal Saleh rejected, except Adi would declare himself to be of the same religious and political sentiments with the Safrians, who acknowledged him for their chief. The condition not being relished by Adi, nothing could then be concluded upon. Adi, soon after this first effort to prevail upon Saleh to de-
part

part from Mesopotamia by amicable means proved ineffectual, not being sufficiently upon his guard, was surprised by the enemy; who attacked him whilst he was saying the noon-prayers, defeated him, and made themselves masters of his camp. Mohammed, receiving advice of this defeat, ordered Khâled Ebn Al Jora and Al Hâreth, each at the head of one thousand five hundred men, to advance against the Separatists; who coming up with them near Amed, or Amida, a fierce conflict ensued. The rebels behaved with great bravery on this occasion, and handled the khalif's horse so roughly, that they were obliged to dismount, and fight on foot: after which, they vigorously attacked the enemy. However, the Saffrians defended themselves with unparalleled intrepidity, till the approach of night put an end to the action; though finding themselves not able to oppose the khalif's forces, they soon after decamped, and retired with great precipitation to Mawfel, from whence they continued their route to Dascara^m.

Al Hejâj having been informed that the Saffrians, under the command of Saleh and Shebib, had taken post at Dascara, sent Al Hâreth Al Hamadâni to drive them from thence with a body of five thousand men. Whilst Al Hâreth was upon his march, he received advice that Saleh had abandoned Dascara, and seemed to be moving towards Jalouta and Katikin; upon which, he pursued him with great expedition. At last the two armies faced each other at Modbaj, a little town or village upon the Tigris, between Mawfel and Jukhi, and, after some previous motions, engaged. Saleh's forces were composed only of three companies, consisting of thirty men each; which, not being able to make head against Al Hâreth's troops, were soon thrown into confusion, and Saleh himself was killed upon the spot. Shebib was also beaten off his horse, obliged for some time to fight on foot, and at last made his retreat in excellent order to a neighbouring castle. From thence, though surrounded by Al Hâreth's numerous forces, he made a sally upon the enemy, penetrated about midnight to the very centre of their camp, cut many of them to pieces, wounded the general himself, who was with great difficulty carried off, and dispersed the most considerable part of the army. By this victory, Shebib animated his friends, and became terrible even to Hejâj himself, whom he afterwards worsted in several actions. Taking advan-

Shebib defeats the khalif's forces, and takes Cûja.

^m Idem ibid. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 232, 235, 241, & alib. pass. Ockley, ubi supra, p. 352—362.

*But over-
thrown
and killed
by Sofân
Ebn Al
Abrad.*

tage of that general's absence, when at Basra, without any considerable opposition, he made himself master of Cûfa^a.

Al Hejâj, determined not to bear any longer the insults of Shebib, wrote to the khalif for a reinforcement; who sent him a strong detachment of Syrian forces, to enable him to extirpate the Safrians under the command of that enthusiast. After he had been joined by these succours, he advanced against Shebib, whose army did not consist of above four thousand horse, or, as others assert, six hundred, gave him battle in the plains of Cûfa, and entirely defeated him. Shebib's wife Gazâla, who had attended him in his first march to Cûfa, his brother, and a considerable number of his men, were killed in the action. This disaster obliged Shebib to abandon Cûfa, in order to provide for his own safety. Having, therefore, passed the Tigris, he advanced to Jukhi; from whence, repassing the same river at the place where Wâset was afterwards built, he retired with great precipitation to Ahwâz, and from thence into Kermân, where he halted. In the mean time Al Hejâj ordered Gazâla's head to be washed, and interred; and detached Sofiân Ebn Al Abrad, whom Abd'almâlec had sent to his assistance out of Syria, with a body of troops to march against Shebib, who had advanced a second time to Abwâz. Sofiân came up with the enemy at a bridge called Dojail Al Ahwâz, where a sharp dispute ensued; in which, notwithstanding the inequality of numbers, Shebib several times repulsed the khalif's forces, but was at last himself put to flight. His horse, leaping upon a mare before him, loosened the stones of the bridge, whilst he was passing it, and forced his foot upon the edge of a boat, by which means he was thrown into the river, or arm of the sea, which discharges itself into the bay of Basra. The first time he emerged, he said, "When God decrees a thing, it is done;" and the second, "This is the decree of the Almighty, the all-wise God:" upon which the Safrians, being struck with terror, immediately cried out, "The emperor of the faithful is drowned." His body being drawn up with a net, the head was cut off, and sent to Al Hejâj, who was greatly delighted at the sight of it. When the body was opened, the heart was taken out, and found to be prodigiously firm and hard, like a stone. His mother is said to have been a Christian, carried off as a prisoner, and consequently a slave, by Ye-

^a MS. Laud. num. 161. & Ism. Abulfed. ubi supra. Ockley, ubi supra, p. 364.

zid Ebn Naim, after a victory obtained by the Moslems over the Greeks, in the khalifat of Othmân, and the 25th year of the Hejra. Proving with-child of Shebib by her master, she grew extremely fond of him, and in order to please him, embraced Mohammedism. Shebib was born on the tenth of Dhu'lhajja, the day on which the victims at Mecca are killed. Before his birth, his mother is reported to have seen in a dream a flame proceeding from her, that diffused itself over the face of the heavens, and extended to every quarter; after which, a coal dropt into a large water, and was quenched. From whence, continues our author, she inferred, that her son was to be a man of blood, elevated to an exalted station, and at last perish in the water. Hence it came to pass, that, being once informed of his having been killed, she gave no credit to the rumour; but that being told he was drowned, she immediately believed it, saying it was impossible for him to come to any other end. After Shebib's death, the Azarakites, or Saffrians, quarrelled amongst themselves, the greatest part of them deserting their leader Katri Ebn Fojât. This dissension gave the khalif's troops an opportunity of attacking them to great advantage, putting four thousand to the sword, and driving the rest, with Katri, into Taberistân. They were kindly received by Ashid, the king of Taberistân, who assigned them a part of his territories for their habitations. They had not long been settled here, before they insisted upon Ashid's either embracing Islamism, or paying them an annual tribute; which alternative he rejecting, they drove him to Ray, or Raya, a populous city of Al Jebâl, in the Persian Irâk, where he implored the khalif's protection. He afterwards conducted a body of the Moslem troops into Taberistân, where they attacked the rebels with such fury, that they killed Katri Ebn Fojât himself upon the spot, cut a great number of his men in pieces, and took all the rest prisoners. We must not forget to observe, that Taberistân, the scene of this expedition, is a mountainous tract, full of woods, bounded by the region called Deylam, and the districts of Ghilân and Cazbîn, said by Golius pretty nearly to answer to the Hyrcania of the ancients?

The same year, being the 76th of the Hejra, in the khalifat of Abd'almâlec, dinârs and dirhems were first

*The Arabs
begin to
coin money.*

* MS. Laud. num. 161, ubi supra. Ebn Al Athir, Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 63, 64. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Schebib Ben Zeid, p. 780. Khondemir & Aut. Nichiaristan. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 193—197.

struck,

struck, with Arabic inscriptions upon them. Before this time, the dinars, or gold coins, had Greek, and the dirhems, or silver money, Persian characters upon them. The first erection of a mint amongst the Arabs was occasioned by the following accident. Abd'almâlec frequently prefixed to the letters he wrote to the Greek emperor, this short passage of the Koran, "Say, God is one, or say, there is one God;" and then inserted the name of the prophet with the date of the letter, according to the Hejra, or the æra then in use amongst the Arabs. This practice giving the emperor great offence, he desired the khalif to alter that manner of writing; threatening otherwise to send some coins that should mention their prophet in terms not very agreeable to him. Abd'almâlec, from that time, proposed erecting a mint in his own dominions. The first Arabic money seems to have been some dirhems stamped by Al Hejaj, with this inscription, "Say, there is one God," or, according to Al Makin, "Allah Samad; God is eternal;" which expression not a little displeased the Moslems, as they imagined that the sacred name of God would be thereby exposed to the touch of unclean persons of both sexes. Somyor, a Jew, regulated their coinage, which was very imperfect at first, but received afterwards several improvements. Abd'almâlec, understanding that Justinian was determined to break the treaty lately concluded with the Arabs, raised a powerful army, and gave the command of it to one of his generals, named Mohammed; who, causing the articles of the late treaty to be carried before his troops on the point of a spear, met the emperor in the neighbourhood of Sebastopolis, and engaged his army with unparalleled bravery. Nevertheless, Mohammed was obliged to give ground, and even retire to his camp; where he must have perished with hunger, or submitted to the emperor, had he not in the mean time gained over twenty thousand Sclavi, with their commander, in the emperor's service; whose unexpected desertion caused such a consternation in the Greek army, that they immediately betook themselves to a precipitate flight, and were pursued with great slaughter by the Arabs. After which retreat, Mohammed ravaged the imperial provinces in a most cruel manner, and made himself absolute master of Armenia; which, however, revolted to the emperor in a very short time^p.

^p Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 64, 65. Ebn Al Athir, MS. Poc. num. 137. in Bibl. Bodl. Oxon.

In the 77th year of the Hejra, answering to the 696th of the Christian æra, one of Abd'almâlec's commanders, called by Theophanes and Cedrenus, Alid, made an incursion into the imperial territories, plundered them in a dreadful manner, and then retired with the Christian prisoners he had taken into the khalif's dominions. About the same time Sergius, a patrician, who commanded the Greek troops in Lazica and Barnucium, rebelled against the new emperor Leontius, and delivered up both those places to the Moslems.

*Lazica
and Bar-
nucium
betrayed to
the Arabs.*

In the following year the Moslems invaded Africa with a very considerable force, made themselves masters of Carthage, and over-ran the whole country which, in the earlier ages, was subject to that city. But they were soon expelled by John the patrician, a man of great valour and experience, whom the emperor had sent against them. The Arabs, to repair the great losses they had sustained, equipped another fleet, and returning to Africa, obliged John to fly to the sea-coast, where he embarked with the troops under his command for Constantinople.

*The Arabs
reduce
Africa
Propria.*

In the 79th year of the Hejra, or of Christ 698, Apfimar, or Tiberius, who had been raised to the empire, sent his brother Heraclius into Cappadocia, to observe the motions of the Arabs. At this period, according to Theophanes and Cedrenus, Abd'alrahmân, an Arab governor, or commander, rebelled against the khalif in Persia, and drove the khâkhân out of that country. Khâkhân was the general title of those princes who reigned in the Trans-oxanian provinces.

*Abd'alrah-
mân rebels
against the
khalif.*

In the course of the succeeding year, being the 80th of the Hejra, and the 699th of the Christian æra, the khalif sent a general, called Mohammed, with a powerful army, into Persia; who, after he had been joined by the khâkhân, overthrew Abd'alrahmân with very great slaughter, killed him upon the spot, and reinstated the khâkhân in the government of Persia. About the same time Heraclius, one of Tiberius's generals, taking advantage of the divisions that now reigned amongst the Arabs, penetrated into Syria, as far as Samosata, desolated all the adjacent territory, and put to the sword about two hundred thousand of the enemy. After which exploit, he returned to Cappadocia, loaded with the immense booty he had acquired in this expedition.

*Heraclius
destroys
two hun-
dred thou-
sand
Arabs.*

In the 81st year of the Hejra, A. C. 700, died Mohammed Ebn Hanifiyah, who, by several of his followers, was considered, after Hosein's death, as lawful khalif and imâm.

*Mohammed
Ebn Hani-
fiyah dies.*

imâm. Some of the Shiites revere him as an illustrious prophet, taken and preserved by God in Mount Redwa, who shall hereafter appear, and fill the earth with piety and justice. His father's name, or rather surname, according to the Arab poet Al Hamiri, one of his admirers, was Seth; after whose death, Kawla, his mother, and Seth's widow, was married to Ali; so that he was not, properly speaking, the son of that imâm, nor descended from Mohammed, as Hasan and Hosein were. He several times refused the khalifat, and was surnamed Ebn Hanifiyah, that, by this appellation, he might be distinguished from the two last mentioned imâms, who were truly and properly Ali's sons, by Fâtema, the daughter of the prophet. We are told by the Greek writers, that the Arabs made an irruption this year into the imperial territories, and besieged Antaradus in Syria; but not being able to master that place, they returned to Mopsuestia in Cilicia, and left a garrison there.

*Abd'alahmân de-
feats Al
Hejâj; but
is at last
over-
thrown by
that gene-
ral.*

The expedition placed by the Greek writers in the 79th year of the Hejra, and said by them to have been undertaken by Abd'alahmân against the khâkhân, really happened in the 82d year of that æra, according to the Arab historians. Which of these may be in the right as to the year, our curious readers will not be displeased to find the following particulars, extracted from the Oriental authors, relating to that expedition. Al Hejâj, hating Abd'alahmân Ebn Mohammed Ebn Aḥḥab Al Kendi, ordered him to advance against Zentil, king of the Turks, or the khâkhân, and, with an inconsiderable force, make an irruption into his dominions. This scheme was laid for his destruction; and being apprized of the design, he did not fail imparting it to the troops under his command. The soldiers finding they were to be sacrificed to Al Hejâj's malice against their general, resolved to be revenged of the governor for his barbarity; and, therefore, unanimously took an oath to support Abd'alahmân Ebn Mohammed. Abd'alahmân hereupon concluded a peace with the Turk, returned into Irâk, and marched directly against Al Hejâj; who, having received advice of what had happened, had sent to the khalif for a reinforcement of the Syrian troops. After the arrival of these succours, Al Hejâj attacked Abd'alahmân Ebn Mohammed Ebn Aḥḥab Al Kendi; but being defeated, Abd'alahmân carried his victorious arms to Basra, and was joined by a great number of the inhabitants of that place, who took the oath of allegiance to him. Then entrenching himself on one side
of

of the city, he found an opportunity of attacking, to great advantage, Al Hejâj, in his turn, and gained a second victory over him. From the scene of action he moved to Cûfa, and was received with open arms by the people of that city. In the mean time, Al Hejâj assembled all his forces, and led them against Abd'alrahmân; whose army, by the accession of the Bafrans, who had conceived an invincible aversion to Al Hejâj, on account of his enormous cruelty, amounted to one hundred thousand men. Al Hejâj encamped at a place called Dairkorrah, and Abd'alrahmân at another, denominated Dairaljamajim, at a small distance from the enemy; and, in the space of a hundred days these two commanders are said to have fought eighty-one battles. At last, Al Hejâj put Abd'alrahmân to flight, and cut off four thousand of his men; after which defeat, the latter retreated to Sahân, where he was seized by Al Hejâj's lieutenant, and rescued by Zentil, the Turk, his friend and ally. Al Hejâj, receiving intelligence of this interposition, sent Yezid Ebn Al Mohalleb against Zentil, in order to force him to deliver up Abd'alrahmân into his hands. Zentil made the proper dispositions for his defence, and engaged Yezid with an army of sixty thousand men; but he was soon overthrown, had many of his men killed, and a great number taken prisoners; amongst whom was Abd'alrahmân himself. With regard to the manner of that general's death, the Arab writers are not perfectly agreed; but, according to some of the greatest authenticity, he threw himself headlong from the top of a high house, in order to avoid falling into the hands of his most implacable enemy. The Greek writers relate, that Baanes, surnamed Heptadæmon, from the seven devils with which he was supposed to have been possessed, betrayed this year likewise Armenia to the Arabs, for which treachery he received a very considerable reward^q.

In the following year, being the 83d of the Hejra, and of Christ 702, Al Hejâj built a city upon the Tigris, which he called Wâset. The name signifies the *Middle* in the Arabic language, because this city stood in the midway between Basra and Cûfa. The Arabs call the circumjacent tract Al Abâr, *the Wells*, as it abounds with wells; and near the city there is a place bearing the name of Al Abâr Al Arab, *the Wells of the Arabs*. About the

*Al Hejâj
builds
Wâset upon
the Tigris.*

^q Al Makin & Iâm. Abulfed. ubi supra. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Hegiaze Ben Josef Al Thakefi, p. 442. Theophanes, ubi supra, p. 311. Cedren. ubi supra.

same time, the nobility of Armenia drove the Arabs out of their country, and sent to Apfimar, or Tiberius, for assistance. Mean while, Mohammed, one of the khalif's general's, entering Armenia with a powerful army, recovered that province; and, having got the authors of the revolt into his hands, burnt them all alive. Encouraged by this success, the Moslems invaded Cilicia once more, under the conduct of Azar; but were, to the number of ten thousand, either cut in pieces by Heraclius, or taken prisoners, and sent in chains to Constantinople.

*The Arabs
defeated by
Heraclius.*

In the 84th year of the Hejra, the khalif sent Azib, or Azid, one of the Moslem commanders, with an army into Cilicia, in order to subdue that country. Meeting with no enemy at first to oppose him, he laid siege to Sisium, took it, and levelled it with the ground: but Heraclius the imperial general soon after appearing at the head of the Christian forces, brought him to a general action; in which he cut off twelve thousand of the Arabs. As we hear no more of Azib after this action, we may naturally suppose, that he soon abandoned Cilicia, and retired with the shattered remains of his army into the khalif's dominions.

*Abd'al-
mâlec's
death.*

In the following year, the khalif Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân departed this life. The Arabs seem to have enjoyed at this period, an uninterrupted repose, as no account of any achievements, or military operations, has been recorded by any of the Greek or Moslem writers.

Next year, Abd'alaziz Ebn Merwân, the khalif's brother, died at Al Fostât in Egypt, and was buried on Monday, the 12th day of the Former Jomâda. He governed Egypt above twenty years, having been constituted lieutenant of that country by his father Merwân. Being infected with the leprosy, the physicians advised him to retire to Holwân, as the most proper place for him to reside in. Here he made a large fish-pond, or reservoir, which he took care to supply constantly with water from the springs, or fountains, on mount Al Mokattam, by means of certain arches, or vaults, that kept open a communication between them; upon which, according to Eutychius, he erected a throne of glass. Upon these and other works at Holwân, where he first planted dates, he is said to have expended one million of dinârs. He rode every Thursday from Holwân to Al Fostât; and the next, after the morning prayer, returned to the for-

mer place. He likewise built a mikeas or measuring pillar, in order to form an estimate of the increase of the Nile. His two chamberlains were Christians of the Melchite sect, whom he permitted to erect the church of St. John at Holwân, for those of their own communion. He likewise obliged the Egyptians to pay part of their tribute every Friday, that he might be the better enabled to supply the exigencies of the state, till the death of Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, and the perfect settlement of his brother upon the Moslem throne. He constructed a bridge upon the Khalij Amir Al Mumenin, or *the River of the Emperor of the Faithful*, the Amnis Trajanus of the ancients, and the Khalis of the moderns; and had an intention to remove the bridge at Al Fostât to Howlân, a pleasant village about two parasangs distant from that city, on the eastern bank of the Nile. He likewise designed to transfer the port, the merchants, and the exchange, from Al Fostât to Holwân; but did not live long enough to put this design in execution. We are told by some of the Christian writers, that he was the first who fixed upon the Egyptian monks a capitation tax, obliging every one of them to pay annually a dinâr. An author cited by Al Makîn relates, that Abd'alaziz, entering into a monastery at Holwân the day before his death, perceived an image of the virgin Mary with Christ in her arms, which he spat upon; and that the night following our Saviour appeared to him in a dream, commanding him to be killed; upon which, he supposed himself to be immediately run through with a lance. This imagination struck him with such terror, that he instantly awaked, and expired the same night. His son, according to the same author, survived him only forty days. After Abd'alaziz's death, the khalif conferred the government of Egypt upon his son Abd'allah, who rendered himself more disagreeable to the Egyptians than any of his predecessors. In this post he continued till his father Abd'almâlec's death, which happened about the middle of the month Shawâl, in the 86th year of the Hejra. The disease he died of seems to have been a dropsy, since the physicians had absolutely prohibited him the use of all kinds of liquors. Notwithstanding which prohibition, being tortured with extreme thirst, he commanded his son Al Walid to give him some water to drink; which he refusing to bring, he applied to his daughter Fâtema. But Al Walid, desirous of keeping his father alive as long as possible, would not suffer her to approach him; a circumstance which so exasperated the

the khalif, that he threatened to disinherit him. Fâtema, therefore, gave him water, which he greedily drank, and soon after expired. He was always apprehensive that the month Ramadân would prove fatal to him; as he was born, weaned, learned the Koran by heart, and was saluted khalif in that month. He sat upon the Moslem throne above twenty-one years; and was sixty, sixty-two, or, as others say, fifty-seven years old, at the time of his death. He was buried at Damascus, without the little gate, and his son Al Walîd performed the funeral service at the time of his interment. With respect to his person, Abd'almâlec was of a middle stature, and swarthy complexion; a large mouth, a long beard, and a prominent belly. His disposition was so extremely covetous, that some of his subjects, by way of derision, called him the Sweat of a Stone. However, according to Abulfeda, as well as the authors followed by Al Makî, he was a man of very great capacity, being exceeded by few of his subjects in judgment and penetration. He was also brave, learned, and wise; but did not make so amiable a figure after his elevation to the khalifat as before. He had such stinking breath, that the flies lighting on his lips were almost instantly struck dead with it; for which reason he received from some the appellation of Father of Flies. He one night dreamed, that he made water in the most sacred part of the temple of Mecca; and this dream was repeated four times successively, which greatly affecting him, he consulted Sa'id Ebn Mosabbib, a person well skilled in the interpretation of dreams, about the signification of so ominous a vision. Sa'id told him, that he had no reason to consider it in so disagreeable a light, as it undoubtedly portended the exaltation of four of his sons, all of whom should be advanced to the khalifat after their father's death. Which nocturnal prediction was verified, Al Walid, Soliman, Yezid, and Heshâm, four of his sons, afterwards actually ascending the Moslem throne. He left sixteen sons behind him, the eldest was Al Walîd, who succeeded him. The inscription of his seal was, "I believe in God our Saviour." He was much more powerful than any of his predecessors; having subdued Abd'allah Ebn Zobeir, and annexed Arabia to his dominions; reduced to his obedience the sectaries of all denominations that appeared in arms against him; conquered India, or at least a considerable part of that vast region, in the East; and, in the West, penetrated with his victorious troops as far as Spain. He was so implacable an enemy to the house
of

of Ali, that he would not suffer the celebrated poet Ferazdak, in his works, to praise any of the descendents of that illustrious imâm^s.

Al Walid, the son of Abd'almâlec, was proclaimed khalif the same day his father died. His mother was Walada, the daughter of Abbâs Ebn Harbi Ebn Hâreth: he was surnamed Abu'l Abbas, and continued all his father's lieutenants of provinces in their respective governments. Korrah Ebn Shebal, or, according to others, Korrah Ebn Sharik, of the house of Abbâs, his governor of Egypt, at the khalif's command, demolished the principal mosque at Meſr, and either built or beautified another, gilding the tops or heads of its pillars; a circumstance which rendered that governor extremely disagreeable to the Egyptians. Al Walid also is said to have adorned the temple at Jerusalem with some additional buildings, soon after his accession; and, after the example of his father Abd'almâlec, to have ordered his subjects to go on a pilgrimage thither. His troops made a very successful irruption into the imperial territories, under the command of his brother Moslem Ebn Abd'almâlec, who carried off a very considerable number of the emperor's subjects prisoners. This Arab general seems to have been called by Theophanes, Masalmas. In the 88th year of the Hejra, or of Christ 707, money was coined in the new mint lately erected at Wâset; as appears from a dirhem explained by the learned Dr. Hunt, and now preserved in the cabinet of medals belonging to the university of Oxford.

*Al Walid
Ebn Ab-
d'almâlec
proclaimed
khalif.*

About the same time, this khalif rebuilt the temple of Medina, where Mohammed and the first khalifs lay interred. This was a much more superb and magnificent structure than the former; and, in order to render it the more grand, Al Walid commanded Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, his governor in Arabia, to demolish the houses destined for the habitations of the prophet's wives. This order gave great offence to the inhabitants of Medina; who reproached the khalif with having deprived the Moslems of the finest monument of Mohammed's modesty, in having assigned his wives, for their habitations, such low and small cottages as those that then remained. Walid also ordered the construction of a most stately and famous

*He extends
the Moslem
conquests.*

^s Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 66—69. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 368—373. Ism. Abulf. in Hist. Univ. & in Descript. Ægypt. Ebn Al Athir, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Abd'almâlec, p. 8.

mosque at Damascus; to which he joined the superb church of St. John the Baptist, that had been enriched with many invaluable ornaments by the Greek emperors, for several ages. He intended to have purchased this church of the Christians for a sum of money, with which they might have built them a church in some other part of the city, amounting to about forty thousand dinârs; but they shewing him the instrument signed by Khâled Ebn Al Walid, confirming to them the possession of that church, and refusing to part with it at any rate, he took it from them by force: he employed twelve thousand workmen in the erection of his mosque, but did not live to see it finished. This year Katiba Ebn Moslem penetrated into the Transoxanian provinces; and having passed the Jihûn, or the Oxus, without any loss, defeated a numerous army which had kept him blocked up for four months, and reduced him to very great distress. That army was composed of Turks and Tartars, of whom Katiba slew a very great number. After this victory he besieged Bokhâra, the metropolis of Bukharia properly so called, and took it. From thence he marched to Samarkand, which in a short time surrendered to him. In short, he reduced Sogd, or Sogdiana, Bagrafa, Shash, Fargâna, and the whole immense tract going under the name of Mawarâ'nahr. After he had concluded a peace with, or rather conquered the khân of Khowarazm, he erected a mosque in his capital, where he officiated every Friday, and destroyed all the idols he found in that city. Those idols were fixed to the places where they stood by golden nails, that weighed fifty thousand methkals, or Arabic drachms; all which Katiba carried off with him. The principal article of the treaty concluded with the khân of Khowarazm was, that he should pay an annual tribute of two millions of dinârs to the khalif. Mohammed Ebn Kasem Al Thakîfi, another of Al Walid's generals, at or near the same time, also invaded India, or Al Hind, and subjugated a considerable part of that country. He likewise conquered the kingdom of Sindia, or Al Sind, bounded by Kermân, or rather the region of Makran, the desert of Sijistân, and India, some parts of which great continent it likewise comprehends, whose king Dahar he defeated, killed him in battle, and cut off his head. The Greek writers mention few particulars relating to the Moslem affairs, during the three first years of Al Walid's reign. However, Theophanes observes, that he mounted the Moslem throne the same year his father Abd'almâlecc died;
and

and that he deprived the Christians of their great church at Damascus, in his second year. We are told by an eastern writer, that a dreadful pestilence raged about two years before this time in Mesopotamia; and made terrible havock in the territory of Sarug; no less than seventy-two persons dying in the monastery of St. Silas.

During the following year, being the 89th of the Hejra, and of Christ 708, no remarkable occurrences happened in the Moslem empire, except the continuation of the building of Al Walid's famous mosque at Damascus; the expence of which is said to have amounted to four hundred chests, or purses, every one of which contained fourteen thousand dinârs. The six hundred golden chains for the lamps were so bright, says an Arab author, that they disturbed the devotions of the Moslems who came thither to pray. They were afterwards blackened by the smoke, and remained in that condition till they were removed into the public treasury by Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, who substituted iron chains in their room. One of the historians followed by Al Mâkin relates, that when the workmen were digging for the foundations of this mosque, they found a stone with an inscription upon it, importing that the temple, or edifice, to which it belonged, was built by Mahab Al Khair, in the fourth year of Al Astawâna. This year Theodorus was constituted patriarch of Jerusalem, and lived, after his promotion to that high dignity, thirty-five years^t.

The building of the mosque at Damascus continued.

We are told by Al Makîn, that Al Walid appointed Korrah Ebn Sharik governor of Egypt in the 90th year of the Hejra; though Euty chius, who, in this point, has probability on his side, places that event three or four years higher, in the beginning of this khalif's reign, as has been already observed. Be that as it may, this Korrah was most certainly a very impious and abandoned person; for he frequently carried with him a company of catamites, players, and buffoons, into the cathedral at Mefr, and placed them upon the seats belonging to the priests, in time of divine service. At this time, Masalmas, Moslema, or Moslem, and Abbâs, two Arab commanders, according to Theophanes, made an irruption into Cappadocia, and formed the siege of Tyana. The emperor sent an army under the conduct of Theodorus Carteruca, and Theophylactus Saliba, two of his generals, to force them to raise the siege: but this army being composed of raw undisci-

His forces make an irruption into Cappadocia.

^t Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 70, 71. Euty ch. ubi sup. p. 374, 377.

plined troops, assembled in haste, was easily routed by the Arabs, who killed a great number of the Christians upon the spot, took the rest prisoners, and made themselves masters of their camp. The besieged, being destitute of all hopes of relief, and reduced to the last extremity, surrendered the place to the Moslems, who had been so distressed in their camp for want of provisions, before the late action, that they had entertained thoughts of abandoning the siege. However, the Arabs are said to have violated their agreement with the Tyaneans, by sending many of them into remote deserts, and making the greatest part of the remainder slaves. A synod was held in the monastery of St. Silas, at Sarug, in Mesopotamia, over which the patriarch Julian, Thomas the bishop of Amida, and James the bishop of Edeffa, presided about the beginning of the second year of Al Walid's reign.

*Abbās
makes an
incurſion
into the
imperial
territories.*

In the 91st year of the Hejra, or of Christ 710, Abbās, one of the khalif's generals, made an incurſion into the imperial territories, and carried off a vast number of that prince's subjects prisoners, who of course were made slaves by the Arabs. The same commander founded a city near Heliopolis this year; but neither its precise situation, nor the time when it was finished, has been ascertained by any good author^u.

*Tarik Ebn
Zarka con-
quers part
of Spain.*

In the 93d year of the Hejra, answering to the year of our Lord 712, Tarik Ebn Zarka, made a descent in Spain with a body of Moslem troops, defeated Roderic, the last king of the Goths, reduced the city of Toledo, and overran a considerable part of that kingdom. Tarik was sent to Spain by Mûsa Ebn Okair, or Okail, who seems to have commanded the khalif's forces in the western parts of Africa, and to have been the person who projected this expedition. Mûsa being informed of Tarik's success, soon followed him with a body of auxiliary troops, composed of Arabs and Africans; and, after the junction of these two Moslem generals, the Arabs made themselves masters of a great number of fortresses in Spain; subduing in a manner the whole country, and obliging it to become tributary to the khalif. The Moslems acquired spoils to an immense value in these expeditions, and, amongst other things, an exceeding rich table, called by the Arab writers the table of Solomon, the son of David. Those writers

^u Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 72. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 315. Dionys. Telmarenf. apud Jos. Sim. Asseman in Biblioth. Orient. Clementino-Vatican. tom. ii. p. 505. ut & ipse Jos. Sim. Asseman. ibid.

pretend,

pretend, that this table consisted entirely of silver and gold, and was adorned with three borders of pearls; but Roderic of Toledo represents it as consisting of one entire stone, of a green colour, and an immense size, having no less than three hundred and sixty-five feet. After Mûsa and Tarik had committed dreadful devastations in Spain, they were recalled by the khalif. However, Mûsa sent his son Abd'alaziz into that country, who fixed his residence at Seville, and afterwards married Egebo, or Egibon, king Roderic's widow; but being persuaded by his wife to wear the diadem after the Gothic manner, he was assassinated by the Arabs, who from thence concluded that he had become a convert to Christianity. Abd'alaziz, after a reign of three years, was succeeded by Ayub Ebn Halib, by whose advice his predecessor had been murdered, and who was esteemed by the Arabs as the most prudent Moslem in Spain. Ayub is said to have built a city called Calatayub, and to have transferred the royal seat from Seville to Corduba. Some authors relate, that the two sons of Vitiza, Roderic's predecessor, and count Julian, whose daughter Roderic had ravished, applied this year to Mûsa for a body of troops, which they offered to conduct into Spain, and put that kingdom into the hands of the khalif; but Al Walid suspecting treachery in this affair, ordered Mûsa to send over first with Julian, and the two princes attending him, only a small detachment of his forces, and to form a notion of that count's sincerity from the reception those Arabs should meet with in Spain. Upon which he assigned Julian only a body of four hundred foot and a hundred horse, under the command of Tarik, or, as he is called by the Spanish historians, Tarif, who passed the Streights of Hercules, now known by the name of the Streights of Gibraltar, was joined by a great number of Julian's friends, and ravaged the maritime coast of Bætica and Lusitania: soon after which depredations the Arabs returned loaded with plunder to Africa. The Moslems also this year extended their conquests in other parts; Masalamas, Moslema, or Moslem, one of their generals, reducing the city of Amasia, and seizing upon a considerable part of Pontus and Armenia ^w.

Next year, being the 94th of the Hejra, and of Christ 713, the city of Antioch was almost totally destroyed by an earthquake, the shocks of which were extremely violent, and continued, though with intermission, forty days

He undertakes a second expedition into that country.

^w Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 72. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. Roderic. Toletan. Hist. Arab. cap. 9. p. 8, 9. Isidor. Pacenf. Theophan. ubi sup. p. 320.

together. This year likewise Tarik, or Tarif, assembled a body of twelve thousand men, which he embarked privately on board some merchant-ships, collected for that purpose by count Julian, and transported them to the rock or mountain Calpe, denominated afterwards from this general Jibel Tarif, that is, the *Rock or Mountain of Tarif*; from whence the word Gibraltar has been formed. Tarif, soon after his arrival in Spain, made himself master of an ancient city situated at no great distance, in a western direction, from the spot on which Gibraltar was afterwards built, and from him received the name of Tarifa, or Tariffa, by which it is also at present known. After the reduction of this place the Moslem general marched to Seville, which he easily reduced, as it was not in a state of defence. Many other considerable towns likewise surrendered to him; and this success enabled him to plunder the whole province of Bætica, with a very considerable part of Lusitania. Roderic, receiving advice of these depredations, sent his cousin-german Eneco, Enecon, or Inach, called by some writers Sanctius, with a raw undisciplined rabble, collected in haste, against the Arabs; but the Goths were soon put to flight, and left a great number of their men dead upon the field of battle. This victory so animated Tarif, that he resolved not to lay down his arms till he had made an absolute conquest of Spain. About the same time that Tarif made such a rapid progress in Spain, Abbâs, another Moslem general, fell into Pisidia with a powerful army, took the city of Antioch, and, after he had ravaged the whole province, retired into the khalif's territories with very inconsiderable loss*.

*Al Hejâj's
death, and
extreme
severity.*

The Arab writers of the greatest authority place the death of Al Hejâj Ebn Yusef Al Thakîfi in the month of Ramadân, and the 95th year of the Hejra, answering to the year of our Lord 714. When he died he was fifty-four years of age, and had presided over Irâk about twenty years. He is said to have killed a hundred and twenty thousand men, and to have suffered fifty thousand men and thirty thousand women, to perish in prison. In order to excuse this extreme severity, or rather cruelty, he used frequently to say, that a severe, or even violent government is better than a weak and indolent administration;

* Al Makin, ubi sup. Lucas Tudens. Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup. Philosoph. Transact. No. 559. p. 903. and Jones's Abridgm. of the Philosoph. Transact. vol. v. part ii. p. 83—95. Lond. 1721. Dionys. Telmarenf. & Jos. Sim. Affeman. ubi sup. p. 105. Theophan. ubi sup.

because

because the former only hurts some particular persons, whereas the latter injures the whole body of the people. He did not scruple to declare, that the obedience due to princes is more absolute than that which men owe even to God himself; since they are enjoined by the Koran only to obey God as far as they are able, whereas that book requires an unconditional and unlimited obedience to all earthly rulers. Some persons hearing him talk after this extravagant manner, told him, that nothing could equal either his envy or ambition, as he assumed to himself such an impious degree of authority. To which remark he replied, "that man is still more envious and ambitious than me, who says to God, Give me, O Lord, such a state of life as no person can enjoy after my death." We are told by Abu'l-Faraj, that Al Hejâj destroyed a hundred and twenty thousand persons of rank and distinction, besides those that fell in war, and others of a lower degree; as also, that he was only fifty-three years old at the time of his death, and had then presided over Hejaz, as well as Irâk, about twenty years^y.

Al Hejâj, being one day in the country, met an Arab of the Desert, who was a perfect stranger to him, and asked what sort of a man this Al Hejâj was, of whom people talked so much? The Arab answered, that he was a very wicked man. "Do not you know me then?" said Al Hejâj. "No," replied the Arab. "I am, (said the other) Al Hejâj, of whom you give so bad a character." The Arab, without the least emotion or concern, demanded of Al Hejâj, in his turn, whether he knew him? "No," answered the other. "I am (said the Arab) a member of the family of Zobeir, whose posterity all become fools three days in the year, and this is one of them." Al Hejâj could not forbear laughing at so ingenious an evasion; so that, notwithstanding his natural ferocity, he pardoned the Arab, whom he esteemed for his wit and courage. As he was a man of quick parts and great eloquence, as well as a military genius, and not much advanced in years at his death, he was both a judge and an admirer of every thing that appeared spirited and brilliant in others even to the very last^z.

It has been already observed, that Al Hejâj at last entirely defeated Abd'alrahmân, and killed four thousand of his troops. He took a great number of officers prisoners

^y Al Makin, & Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi supra. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Hegiage Ebn Yusef Al Thakifi, p. 442.
^z D'Herbel. ubi sup. Mirkhond.

in that decisive action, and resolved to put them all to the sword. One of them, going to the place of execution, said, he had a piece of justice to demand of Al Hejâj; as he had reproved his general Abd'alrahmân for speaking with great acrimony against him: Al Hejâj asked him whether he could produce any witnesses? He replied, that one of his comrades, now condemned to die as well as himself, heard every thing that passed between him and Abd'alrahmân on this occasion. Al Hejâj being satisfied with the truth of the fact, asked the other why he did not behave in the same manner? This undaunted man answered him fiercely, "I did not do it because you are my enemy." Upon which Al Hejâj gave both of them their lives; the one in order to acknowledge the obligation he was under to him, and the other for having confessed the truth with so much frankness and courage. Hence it appears, that Al Hejâj was not quite void of generous sentiments, and that what some of the Arabs termed enormous cruelties were, in reality, to be considered only as wholesome severities, adapted to the nature of the people he governed. This supposition may possibly be farther evinced by an extemporary speech he once made to the Moslems under his government, after he had been taxed with barbarity by them; which was to the following effect: "God (said he) has at present given me the power over you; and, if I exercise it with some severity, do not imagine that you will find yourselves in a better situation after my decease. You will always hereafter meet with at least as ill treatment from my successors, as you have hitherto experienced from me. When I shall be dead, God will send you another of his servants, who may possibly execute his commands against you with greater severity than I have done. Would you have a prince humane and moderate? Follow justice and obey his orders. Your own conduct will be the principle and source of the good or ill treatment you may receive at your governor's hands. The prince, or his lieutenant, may justly be compared to a mirror; all that you see in the glass is only the return of the objects you present to it." Nor can any piece be drawn more to the life than the portrait here given of the people of Irâk.

*Another
story of
him.*

This general, as he was hunting, being one time separated from his retinue, found himself very thirsty in a solitary place where an Arab was feeding his camels. As soon as Al Hejâj appeared, those animals were scared away; a circumstance which made the Arab, then attentive to something else, lift up his head in a great passion, and

and say, "Who is this with his fine cloaths that comes here into the Desert to fright my camels? the curse of God light upon him!" Al Hejāj, without taking notice of what he had said, rode up to him, saluted him very civilly, and, after the Arab manner, wished him peace; but the other, instead of returning his salutation in proper terms, answered rudely, that he neither wished him peace nor any blessing of God. Al Hejāj seemed not to understand him, and begged with great humility a little water to drink. The Arab told him, that he might alight and help himself, for he was neither his companion nor his servant. Al Hejāj took his advice, and after he had drank, asked him whom he took to be the most noble and excellent of all men? "The prophet sent by God, burst you!" answered the Arab. "And what think you of Ali?" added Al Hejāj. "His excellency cannot be sufficiently expressed by words," replied the other. Al Hejāj continuing his discourse, then asked him what opinion he entertained of Abd'almâlec? To which interrogation at first he made no answer; but being pressed, he at last dropped some words which seemed to imply, that he believed him to be a bad prince. "Why so?" answered Al Hejāj. "Because (replied the Arab) he has sent us for a governor the most wicked man under the heavens." The words were scarce out of his mouth when a bird flew over their heads, making at the same time a strange kind of noise, which the Arab had no sooner heard, than he looked steadfastly upon Al Hejāj, and demanded who he was? Al Hejāj not chusing to give him a direct answer, desired to know the reason of that question. "Because (said the Arab) this bird assured me that a company of people draws near, and that you probably are the chief of them." Al Hejāj's attendants then came up, and, by his order, carried the Arab along with him, who, next day, was admitted to Al Hejāj's table, and commanded to eat. The Arab then said his usual grace, "God grant the end of this meal may be as fortunate as the beginning." Whilst they were eating, Al Hejāj asked him if he remembered the discourse that had passed between them the day before. The Arab answered him immediately, "God prosper you in every thing; but as for yesterday's secret, take care you do not divulge it to-day." "That I most certainly shall (replied Al Hejāj); but you must chuse one of these two things, either to acknowledge me your master, and then I will retain you in my service; or else to be sent to the khalif Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân, to whom I shall give an account of all that you

you have said of him." The Arab having heard Al Hejâj's proposal, answered him instantly, "There is a third way you may take, which seems to me to be much better." "What is that?" said Al Hejâj. "Send me home (replied the Arab), and let you and I never see one another more." Al Hejâj, not a little pleased to hear the poor man talk with so much spirit and vivacity, made him a present of ten thousand dirhems, and dismissed him, according to his desire. With regard to the language of birds, the Arabs pretend, that several of their nation have understood this even from Solomon's time. They affirm that Balkis, the queen of Sheba, or Saba, had a bird called hudson, that is, the *hoop* or *lapwing*, which she dispatched to Solomon on several occasions, and which was the messenger of their amours. We are told by Jallâl'oddin, that Solomon, having notice of the embassy designed to be sent him by Balkis, by means of the lapwing, ordered a large square to be inclosed with a wall built of gold and silver bricks, wherein he ranged his forces and attendants to receive them².

*Kumeil
saved by
his wit.*

Kumeil, the son of Ziyâd was a man of fine imagination; he lived in the time of Al Hejâj, and greatly disapproved of his conduct. One day that governor ordered him to be brought before him, and reproached him, because, in a certain garden, before some persons that he named, he had uttered several imprecations against him, some of which were to the following effect: "The Lord blacken his face;" that is, "fill him with shame and confusion; and may his neck be cut off, and his blood shed!" To which charge Kumeil, who had an exceeding ready wit, answered instantly, "It is true, I did speak these words in the garden you mention; but then I was under a vine-arbour, looking upon a bunch of grapes not yet ripe, and I wished that they would turn black soon, that they might be cut off, and made wine of." This ingenious explication so pleased Al Hejâj, that he sent Kumeil home, and re-established him in his favour.

*A religious
Moslem's
prayer for
Al Hejâj.*

Sadi relates, that Al Hejâj once recommended himself to the prayers of a religious Moslem; upon which he instantly prayed that God would please to kill him quickly; for nothing, said he, can be more advantageous either to himself or the people.

² D'Herbelot. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Hagiage Ebn Yusef Al Thakifi, p. 442, 443, & in art. Balkis, p. 182. Jallâl'oddin.

Mirkhond relates, that when he was upon his death-bed, he consulted his astrologer, to know if he had not found in his ephemerides that some great captain was near the end of his days. The astrologer answered him, that a certain great lord, named Kolaib, was threatened with speedy death, according to his observations. Al Hejâj replied, "That is the very name my mother gave me when I was a child." "Then (said the astrologer with great imprudence) you must certainly die; there is no room to doubt it." Al Hejâj, offended at this discourse, said instantly to him, "If that be the case, and you are so dexterous in your predictions, I will send you before me into the other world, that I may make use of you there;" and at the same time gave an order to have him dispatched. The word kolaib, in Arabic, signifies a *little dog*; and we meet with an account of this astrologer's fate, similar to that handed down to us by Mirkhond, in Abu'l-Faraj^b.

Al Hejâj orders his astrologer to be dispatched.

The former of those writers also relates, that this general was born without an anus; so that his parents found it necessary to have him opened with surgeon's instruments, lest a stop should be put by this natural impediment to the exercise of the animal functions. We are told by a writer of reputation, that Al Hejâj was extremely magnificent in his entertainments; insomuch that he furnished, on some occasions, no less than a thousand tables. He also made very valuable presents to his friends, amounting sometimes to a million of dirhems at once. He left behind him a son, who erected a little principality, consisting of only seven small towns, in Al Jebal, or the Persian Irâk. Abd'alrahmân, the son of Al Hejâj, having been defeated by his enemies, and his country ruined, the inhabitants of the seven original towns gradually deserted them, and their descendents built the city of Kom; which was divided into seven parts, that retained the names of those towns. The city of Kom is at this day justly celebrated for its manufactures of silk, called in the Persian and Turkish languages Komash. Abd'almogni Ali, a famous astrologer, who left behind him an astrological treatise, intitled Ekthiarat, was a native of Kom, and from thence surnamed Al Komi, or Al Kommi.

Some farther particulars relating to him.

In the course of this year, being the 95th of the Hejra, Al Walid Ebn Abd'almâlec banished Ali Ebn Abd'allah

^b Mirkhond. Greg. Abul'-Faraj, ubi sup. p. 200, 201. Moham-med. Al Firauzabad. in Kam.

*The Mos-
lems still
victorious
in Spain,
and other
parts.*

Ebn Al Abbâs from Damascus to Honein, a valley which lies about three miles from Mecca, towards Al Tâyesf, where he begot twenty sons. The khalif also ordered this Ali to receive seventy stripes, for meditating the murder of Salit. The Arabs gained this year a complete victory over the Goths in Spain, which paved the way to the absolute conquest of most of the provinces of that kingdom. Roderic, being informed, that the Moslems had landed a powerful army in Spain, and made terrible havock in several parts of his dominions, assembled his whole force, and resolved to bring the enemy to a general action, in order to determine his fate as well as that of his subjects. Coming up with them, at Affidona, he attacked them with such bravery, that, notwithstanding the Goths had been enervated by a long peace, the victory hung in suspense for eight whole days. The king himself, dressed in his royal robes, with a golden crown upon his head, in an ivory chariot, after the manner of the Gothic princes, appeared at the head of his army, and so animated his troops by his presence and valiant behaviour, that they really performed wonders; though at last the Arabs being continually reinforced with fresh troops, forced them to give way, and even betake themselves to a precipitate flight. To this disaster the sons of Vitiza, according to some writers, greatly contributed; for, Roderic committing to their conduct the wings of the army, though they had already manifested their sinister intentions towards him, they deserted to the enemy in the heat of the action; upon which a total rout immediately ensued. The Arabs pursued the flying Goths with so much ardour, that the greatest part of them were killed either in the battle or the pursuit. In this fatal engagement, which terminated on Sunday the fifth day of July, according to some of the best Spanish historians, all the Gothic nobility were slain; so that the Spaniards, except the Asturians and Cantabrians, who were the last that submitted to the Romans, were obliged, within a short time, to receive the Moslem yoke. It is not certainly known whether Roderic was killed in the action, or survived the destruction of his army. Some affirm, that he fell in the battle; but others deny this circumstance. However, we are told as a certain fact, that his horse Orelia, and the ensigns of royalty, were found in a miry place, frequented by swine and other filthy animals, though the enemy sought for his body in vain. Count Julian is said to have soon met with the proper reward of his

his villainy; the Arabs, according to a proverb received amongst us, loving the treason, but hating the traitor. They stoned his wife to death, threw his son headlong from the top of the castle of Ceuta, and stript him of all his possessions. After which disgraces, according to some, he miserably expired in irons in a fort or citadel belonging to the territory of Osca, though others, it must be owned, are of a different opinion. Be this, however, as it may, the Arabs, who lost sixteen thousand men in the battle of Assidona, reduced the whole kingdom of Spain, except the provinces occupied by the Asturians and Cantabrians, within the space of eight months: though there are not wanting those who assert, that the Arabs spent five years in the conquest and entire reduction of the most considerable part of this region. Tarif, who now commanded in Spain, acquired immense treasure, during this successful campaign; which not only enriched him, but likewise enabled him to reward liberally all his officers and soldiers for their bravery. Nor did the Moslem commanders fail afterwards of amassing prodigious riches, with which they were supplied by this most opulent country; though these soon occasioned such dissensions amongst them, that many came to violent deaths, inasmuch that, within the space of twenty years, there were no less than fifteen Moslem princes or governors, in Spain. The Arabs were this year likewise formidable in the eastern parts of the world. Masalmas, Moslema, or Moslem, an Arab general, made several incursions into the imperial territories, and ravaged the whole province of Galatia, carrying off many rich spoils, and a great number of prisoners. The Greek emperor, being informed, that Al Walid was making vast preparations to attack him both by sea and land, sent some of his nobles, and, amongst the rest, Daniel Sinopenfis, to treat of a peace with that prince. Amongst other instructions with which Daniel was charged, the emperor ordered him to procure as exact an account as possible of the force with which Al Walid proposed to invade the Greek empire. Upon his return from the Moslem court, that nobleman represented both the naval and military preparations of the Arabs against the Christians, and particularly the capital city of the empire, as so stupendous, that it would be next to impossible to oppose them. The emperor, therefore, finding that the khalif intended to lay siege to Constantinople, caused a large number of light ships to be built, the walls to be repaired, and, having filled
the

the public granaries, ordered such of the citizens as had not laid up provisions for three years, to depart the city. He likewise added some new works towards the sea-side, and disposed his military engines on the towers in such a manner as might enable him to give the enemy a proper reception, whenever they should think proper to appear. In the mean time, Al Walid continued his warlike preparations with the utmost vigour, being determined to make himself master of Constantinople, if possible, in one campaign.

*The death
and cha-
racter of
Al Walid.*

In the 96th year of the Hejra, or of Christ 715, Korrah Ebn Sharik, Al Walid's governor of Egypt, died at Mefr, where he had erected a large and stately mosque. He was succeeded by Abd'almâlec Ebn Refa'a, who presided over the Egyptians till the accession of Solimân Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân to the Moslem throne. The khalif Walid also died this year, about the middle of the Latter Jomâda, and was buried at Damascus. He reigned about nine years and eight months; being, at the time of his death, according to some, forty-eight, or, as others say, forty-three years of age. He was very tall, swarthy, flat-nosed, and pitted with the small-pox. He had a large beard, with some grey hairs in it, was of a strong robust constitution, and a very choleric temper, subject to intemperate sallies of passion. According to Al Makîn, he married sixty-three wives, the greatest part of whom he divorced. He expended large sums of money upon public buildings, such as the magnificent mosques at Damascus, Jerusalem, and Medina; all which were either erected or enlarged and beautified in his reign. This khalif appointed Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz his commandant of Medina, and was the first of the successors of Mohammed who founded an hospital for sick people, and a caravanfera, or public house of entertainment, for poor travellers or strangers. The inscription of his seal was, "O Al Walid! you are to die, and to give an account of your actions." He is said to have had some skill in architecture, but to have been a very indifferent linguist. The accounts of the public treasury he ordered the clerks, or secretaries, to write in Arabic, and not in Greek, as was the custom before his elevation to the khalifat. He was more powerful than any of his predecessors; having conquered, according to the eastern writers, Spain, Sardinia, Majorca, Minorca, part of Gallia Narbonensis, the vast province of Mawarâ'nahr, Little Bukhâria, or the kingdom of Kashgar, and Turkestân. He likewise, rendered that part of India on
this

this side the Ganges tributary to him. The greatest part of the Moslem historians differ widely from those of Syria in their accounts of this prince. The latter represent him as the greatest khalif of the house of Ommiyah; whereas the former have transmitted him to posterity as naturally cruel and violent, of much the same disposition with Pharaoh king of Egypt, called also Al Walid by some of the eastern writers. Khondemir, one of the principal of the Persian historians, tells us, that Katiba Ebn Moslem, Al Walid's governor of Khorasan, after he had passed the Jihun, advanced to Samarkand, where Magourek, the king, or khan of Mawara'nahr, was shut up, and laid siege to that place; that, after having sustained several very vigorous attacks, it surrendered by capitulation; the principal article of which was, that Magourek should pay the khalif annually, by way of tribute, two millions of dinars, and at the same time make him a present of three thousand slaves; and that, after he had possessed himself of the place, he ordered all the idols therein to be destroyed, and erected one of the most superb mosques to be found in all the Moslem empire^c.

Soliman Ebn Abd'almalec, surnamed Abu Ayub, succeeded his brother Al Walid, and was inaugurated the very day on which that khalif died. His mother was Waladah, the daughter of Al Abbâs Ebn Harbi Al Abbâsi. He was a prince of quick parts and surprising eloquence, having been educated amongst his mother's relations in the Desert. He redressed all grievances that had happened before his accession, put an end to all disorders, encouraged trade, and released all the prisoners in his extensive dominions, except such as had been confined for capital crimes. In the 96th year of the Hejra, or the first of his reign, Katiba Ebn Moslem, the governor of Khorasan, rebelled against him; but the people of that country were so far from joining with him in his defection, that they immediately rushed upon him, cut him to pieces, and elected for their leader Waki Ebn Abu Sawid, who presided over them till Soliman appointed Yezid Ebn Mohalleb Ebn Abu Safra his lieutenant of Khorasan. Yezid

He is succeeded by his brother Soliman.

^c Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 73. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 201, 202. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 376, 377. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Valid, p. 907. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 314. Khondemir. Vide etiam Ism. Abulfed. in Hist. Univers. Aut. Leb. Tarikh, Mirat Cainat, Ebn Shohnah, aliosque scriptor. Orient. plur.

greatly

greatly extended the Moslem conquests on that side, reducing Taberistân and Jurjân, Georgiana or Giurgiana, under the dominion of the khalif. In this war he gained many glorious victories, ravaged the enemies territories, killed a vast number of the infidels, and imposed an annual tribute upon the rest. Soon after these exploits, Solimân began to make the necessary dispositions for putting his troops in march against Constantinople, and appointed his brother Moslema to command in that expedition. Asamah Ebn Zeid Al Tannukhi collected the tribute at this time for Solimân in Egypt. Musa, the prefect of Africa, hearing of the great success of Tarif, and of the immense riches he had acquired, landed again with a large body of the Moslem troops in Spain, seized for his own use the spoils taken by that general from the Goths, and then in conjunction with him, notwithstanding the mutual hatred and animosities that subsisted between them, reduced Cæsaraugusta, known at this time by the name of Saragosa or Saragossa, and several other towns. The inhabitants of those places the Arabs treated with extreme cruelty, plundering and pillaging them all without distinction, and even putting many of them to the sword^d.

*A mikeas
built by So-
limân.*

In the following year, Solimân ordered a mikeas, Nile-scope, or pillar to measure the increase of the Nile, to be erected on an island between Geeza or Al Jiza, the ancient Memphis, according to Dr. Shaw, and Al Fostât; he having been before informed by Asamah Ebn Zeid Al Tannukhi, his collector of the tribute and customs in Egypt, that the mikeas built at Holwân by Abd'alaziz Ebn Merwân was become entirely useless. This Nilescope may possibly be still remaining, as that seen and described by the learned Dr. Shaw stands upon the point of an island lying between Cairo and Geeza; which situation exactly corresponds with that assigned Solimân's Nilometer by Eutychius and Al Makîn.

*Moslema
begins his
march for
Constantinople;*

The Arabs rather lost than gained ground in Spain. Pelagius, or, as the Spaniards call him, Pelayo, the son of Fasila or Favila, duke of Cantabria, was proclaimed king of the Asturians; and Garfias Ximenius, known amongst the Spaniards by the name of Garcia Ximenes, of Gothic extraction, founded a kingdom in the Pyrenean mountains, whither many of the Christians had fled from Sara-

^d Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 73, 74. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 202. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 376, 377. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 190—197. Fortalit. Fid. Joan. Val. Hispan. Chronic. p. 697.

gosa and other towns of Arragon and Navarre, when they were taken by the Arabs. Nor could the khalif's forces in Spain reduce these two new princes. The army sent against Pelayo returned, without having effected any thing, to Corduba; and that destined to act against Ximenes was not able to seize upon any part of his territories. On the contrary, the latter of these Christian monarchs advanced his frontiers into the enemy's country, and died after a reign of forty-two years. About this time, Moslema, who is called by Theophanes and Cedrenus Masalmas, began his march for Constantinople, with an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men, advanced first to Amorium in Phrygia, and afterwards to Pergamus in Mysia, which he surprised; and then took up his winter-quarters in the Lesser Asia.

The Christians of Spain, who submitted to pay an annual tribute to the khalif, and chose to reside in the Moslem territories, were not disturbed either in the possession of their properties, or the free exercise of their religion. As they were intermixed, and in a manner incorporated, with the Arabs, they obtained on that account the name of Mozarabes; and the Misal then in use amongst them, drawn up by St. Leander and St. Isidore, and which was followed by all the Christians of Spain till the time of Alphonsus VI. was called the Mozarabic Misal. This year, Mûsa and Tarif were recalled by Solimân. Mûsa left his son Abd'alaziz behind him, to govern Spain in his absence, who married Egibon, Egilon, or Egilona, Roderic's wife, and fixed his residence at Seville. Tarif, before his departure, appointed Al Khamân, an excellent officer, to command the Moslem forces destined to act against Pelagius, whom he thought it a disgrace not to have reduced. Al Khamân, before he proceeded directly to hostilities, sent Oppa or Oppas, the archbishop of Seville, to prevail upon him, if possible, to take the oath of allegiance to the khalif. This task Oppa undertook, and had a conference with Pelagius, who had taken post with a thousand chosen men in a cave on mount Aufena, having disposed his other troops, on which he could not so much depend, to the best advantage, upon the summit of that mountain; but without effect, that prince being still determined to assert his independency against the Arabs. Al Khamân, therefore, finding pacific measures ineffectual, marched against him with a powerful army, but could not find an opportunity of attacking him before the following year. In the mean time, Moslema, having in vain waited for

Leo's performance of certain engagements he had last year entered into, when he persuaded him to assume the purple, and promised to support him, left his winter-quarters in the Lesser Asia, and resumed his march for Constantinople. Upon his arrival at Abydus, he made the necessary dispositions for passing the Hellespont, and transporting his forces into Thrace. This service being performed, he sent orders to Solimân, the khalif's admiral, to appear with the fleet, defeated the imperial army that covered Constantinople, made himself master of the enemy's camp, and invested the city on the 15th day of August. Moslema having soon after opened the trenches in form before the city, and drawn a line of circumvallation round his camp, pushed on the siege with great vigour. On the 1st of September, Solimân, according to Theophanes, in pursuance of the orders he had received, appeared, with the Arab fleet, consisting of ships of war of a prodigious size, besides merchant-men and light vessels, amounting in all to about 1800, before the town, in order to block it up by sea, and forward the operations of the land-forces. Twenty of the merchant-men, or transports, which, on account of their heavy lading, sailed slower than the rest, arriving a few days after the grand fleet, were set on fire by some ships sent against them from the citadel, and reduced to ashes; an event which proved a very considerable loss to the Arabs, as every vessel had a hundred soldiers on board, armed with coats of mail; all which were either consumed by the flames, or swallowed up by the waves. This success greatly animated the garrison, and struck the enemy with terror and consternation. It likewise prevented an attack on the sea-side of the city, which the enemy proposed to have made with a great part of their forces the very day on which this action happened. The following winter was so severe in Thrace, that the ground was covered with snow a hundred days; insomuch that almost all the enemy's horses, camels, and other beasts of burden, perished with cold. They lost likewise a vast number of men by the inclemency of the season, and were reduced to great distress for want of provisions. They found themselves, therefore, incapable of making any considerable progress in the siege before the return of spring; when two fleets, one of eight hundred ships, with a vast quantity of corn on board from Egypt, under the command of Sofiân, and another of three hundred and sixty merchant-men, or transports, laden with arms, baggage, and provisions, from Africa, under

under the conduct of Yezid, approached to their relief: but both these admirals having received intelligence of the fatal effects of the liquid or sea-fire, so called because it burnt under water, they were obliged for some time to stand off to sea. However, at last they ventured to approach the city; but were, for the most part, consumed by the artificial fire discharged upon them from certain swift vessels and biremes, on board of which a proper quantity of it had been lodged for that purpose. All the land as well as the naval forces brought by those fleets, to reinforce the Moslem army encamped before Constantinople, were either drowned or reduced to ashes in this action; and the Greeks carried off with them all the enemy's baggage, money, and provisions, that had escaped the flames. About the same time, a detachment of the imperial forces cut to pieces a body of the Arab troops, commanded by Merdasan, that had ravaged the coast as far as Nicæa and Nicomedia; which action cleared the opposite shore of the enemy's parties, and enabled the emperor's subjects to supply the besieged with necessaries; the communication between Thrace and the neighbouring parts of Asia being now as open as before the commencement of the siege. The fishing vessels likewise followed their occupation in the Bosporus and the Propontis, without any disturbance from the Moslems; so that the city, at this juncture, enjoyed plenty of every thing necessary for the support of human life. The Arabs, on the other hand, were so severely distressed for want of provisions, that a famine ensued; which obliged them to feed upon horses, asses, and other unclean animals; and even at last upon one another. This famine introduced the plague, which swept away an infinite number of men; and, to crown all their misfortunes, the Bulgarians attacked their camp, and put twenty-two thousand to the sword. Nevertheless, Moslema expecting a reinforcement from Solimân, then at Marj Dabek, near Kinnifrîn and Aleppo, obstinately persisted in his resolution to continue the siege^c.

In the 99th year of the Hejra, Al Khamân ascended Mount Aufena at the head of a powerful army, and attacked the cave on the top of that mountain, where Pelagius had posted himself with one thousand men, being the

*The Arabs
meet with
bad success
in Spain.*

^c Joan. Vassæus, ubi sup. p. 698, 699, 700. Theophan. ubi sup. p. 329—333. Cedren. ubi sup. p. 451. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 74. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 202, 203. D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 821.

flower of his troops; but was repulsed with the loss of twenty thousand men, according to some of the Spanish historians. This victory so animated the Christians under Pelagius, that they sallied out of the cave, attacked the Arabs in their turn, and defeated them with very great slaughter. Al Khamân himself was killed in the action, and Oppa taken prisoner; though it is not certainly known what afterwards became of him. The Arabs, who escaped the carnage on this occasion, were either obliged to throw themselves down headlong from the precipices of the mountains, or fell into the hands of the Christians, who put them immediately to the sword. In the mean time Tarif, arriving first at the khalif's court, accused Mûsa of such enormous crimes, and supported with such convincing proofs his accusation, that the latter was not only ill received by Solimân, but likewise fined in a very large sum of money; a circumstance which so affected him, that he soon after pined away with grief. One of the crimes laid to Mûsa's charge was, that he had secreted most of the riches acquired in Spain for his own use, and reserved but a small part for the khalif; upon which he was not only deprived of the honourable post to which he had been advanced, but likewise obliged to pay down two millions of dirhems. And because Ayub, of whom we have spoken already, was related to Mûsa, the khalif recalled him from Spain, and substituted Alahor, or Alabor, Ebn Abd'alrahmân in his room. Alahor, upon his arrival in Spain, being informed of the terrible havock made amongst the Arab troops by Pelagius, imputed the disaster to the treachery of Julian and the sons of Vitiza; whose effects he therefore confiscated, and afterwards put them all three to death. Others, however, affirm, that those traitors met with this fate before Mûsa's departure out of Spain. Be that as it may, the Moslem throne was occupied by Solimân, the brother of Al Walid, the 97th, 98th, and part of the 99th years of the Hejra, as we certainly learn from the most authentic Arab historians.

*Moslema
raises the
siege of
Constanti-
nople, and
returns
home.*

The khalif's forces before Constantinople having been so weakened by sickness, desertion, the attack of the Bulgarians, the various assaults they had made, and the sallies of the garrison, that they despaired of taking the city either by storm or capitulation. Moslema, the Arab general, found himself at last obliged to raise the siege. The army, therefore, by his order, decamped, and returned into the Lesser Asia, in the 99th year of the Hejra, after having sustained an incredible loss. The soldiers,

for

for a considerable time, were forced to subsist upon hides, the roots and leaves of trees, the most noisome animals, and even some of their own dead bodies, before they abandoned the enterprize in which they had been so long embarked. Theophanes and Cedrenus relate, that the Arab fleet, with the shattered remains of the land-forces on board, sailed for the coast of Asia, on the fifteenth of August, in the present year; and that, on this very day, that fleet was almost totally destroyed by a dreadful storm of thunder, lightning, and hail, and the artificial fire of the Greeks, ten ships only escaping the common destruction: in which, however, those writers are not supported by the concurrent testimony of any Moslem historian. The calamities suffered by the inhabitants during the siege, which continued, according to some, thirteen months, or, as others maintain, two years, or, lastly, if we believe Abu'l-Faraj, two years and a half, are not to be described; thirty thousand having perished with hunger, and the like number swept away by the plague. As for the Arab troops, very few of them returned home, though the general himself seems to have arrived safe at the Moslem court; so that the khalif must have lost near one hundred and twenty thousand men in this fatal expedition^f.

The same year Solimân Ebn Abd'almâlec, emperor of the faithful, on the twenty-first day of the month Safar, departed this life at Marj Dabek, in the district of Kinnifrîn, to the inexpressible regret of his subjects. He had so endeared himself to them, by releasing from their confinement all the prisoners in his dominions, and other acts of clemency, that they gave him the surname of Meftah Al Khair, or *the Key of Goodness*. When he was on his death-bed, he sent for Raja, his wazîr, or visir, and ordered him to write down on a piece of paper, that he had nominated Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, his cousin-german, to succeed him, on condition, nevertheless, that Yezid Ebn Abd'almâlec, his brother, should, after that prince's decease, be called to the succession. This writing having been signed and sealed in form, Raja, by his command, assembled all the nobles and grandees of his court, and made them take an oath to recognize the authority of the person named khalif therein after his death. The Moslem lords then, in pursuance of another order, came all to Solimân's bed, and con-

*Solimân's
death and
character.*

^f Theophan. ubi supra, p. 334. Georg. Cedren. ubi supra, p. 451, 452. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 204. Ebn Amid, Khondemir. Vide etiam D'Herbel. ubi supra.

firmed in his presence what they had before obliged themselves by their own hand-writing, as well as by oath, to perform. Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, one of them, soon after meeting Raja, desired him to inform him who the khalif designed for his successor; declaring he knew himself to be excluded from the succession, was perfectly easy in that matter, and should sincerely congratulate the new khalif upon his nomination. But Raja, being a man of prudence and discretion, desired to be excused from revealing that secret, reassembled the nobility, as soon as the breath was out of Solimân's body, and made them all, without exception, repeat the oath they had formerly taken; after the conclusion of which ceremony, he opened the paper wherein the successor's name was written, by Solimân's order, and immediately proclaimed Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz emperor of the faithful. Solimân was forty-five, or, as others say, thirty-nine years old at the time of his death, and reigned two years and eight months, wanting only five days. In his person he was tall, of a fair complexion, had a black beard, and seemed to tread upon his heels. With regard to his disposition, he was mild and merciful, and a great lover of women. He died, according to some, of a pain in his side, or, as others assert, of an indigestion. Nor is this circumstance to be wondered at, if what some of the Arab writers relate be true, that he could eat three lambs roasted for breakfast, and afterwards dine very heartily in public; or if, according to others, he used to devour no less than a hundred pounds weight of meat every day. An historian, followed by Al Mâkin, seems to intimate, that he lost his life by drinking a draught of milk, into which some poison had been infused by an Arab, sent by his brother Yezid out of Palestine for that purpose. We are told by some of the eastern historians, that Jaafar Al Barmeki, one of Solimân's principal counsellors, advised him to coin money of less alloy, and a higher standard, than that struck in the reign of his father Abd'almâlec; so that the finer gold and silver money, current amongst the Moslems after this event, from this Jaafar received the name of Jaafarian.

*He is succeeded by
Omar Ebn
Abd'alaziz.*

In obedience to Soliman's will, Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz was proclaimed khalif the day on which his predecessor died, that is, the twentieth or twenty-first of the month Safar, in the 99th year of the Hejra, answering to the month of February, in the year of Christ 718. His mother Omm Afem was the daughter of As, the son of the khalif Omar; he suppressed the solemn malediction pronounced

by

by the khalifs of the house of Ommiyah, after the conclusion of divine service, from the accession of Moâwiyah I. to the death of Solimân, against the name of Ali, and all his family; every member of which was cursed and excommunicated, during that interval, in all the mosques throughout the empire. Omar, according to Abu'l-Faraj, harangued the people from the pulpit, which he ascended immediately after his inauguration, on this occasion; wherein he endeavoured to inspire them with sentiments of piety and moderation; telling them, that he bore not the least ill-will to any Moslem; and that the wicked only had reason to be apprehensive of meeting with any severity from him. After which declaration he gave the robe he had on to the poor, and came down from the pulpit: but the abolition of this custom, however right in itself, by no means pleased many of his subjects; who, after the dismissal of the assembly, cried out, "The law is neglected! the law is neglected!" We are told by Khondemir, that as soon as Omar was saluted khalif, the finest horses were brought him out of his predecessor's stables; all which he refused; and that, mounting the horse he usually rode when a private person, he went directly to his own house, being unwilling to incommode the last khalif's family, which then resided in the palace: nor could he, according to that author, be prevailed upon to take possession of any of the apartments assigned him as khalif, till Solimân's domestics and relations, abashed by his superior modesty, had withdrawn themselves. However, notwithstanding his virtuous disposition, if we credit the Greek historians, he persecuted the Christians this and the following year; putting to death those who persisted in the profession of their religion, and remitting the tribute of those who became converts to Mohammedism: he is also said to have written, about the same time, a letter to the emperor Leo, containing an exposition of his faith, in order to make a proselyte of that prince. About this time, that is, the 100th year of the Hejra, Alahor, or, as Roderic of Toledo calls him, Alabor, sent a body of troops to ravage Gallia Narbonensis, and the hither part of Spain, where they committed dreadful devastations; and imposed an annual tribute upon those provinces, as well as some other parts of Spain, which had not yet been plundered by the Arabs. Alahor also treated with extreme severity the Christians settled at Corduba, and even the Moslems themselves that first came into Spain; whom he oppressed with famine, imprisoned, and put to various kinds of tor-

tures, to compel them to discover the treasures they were supposed to have concealed. Abd'alaziz, the son of Mûsa, who married Roderic's widow, and fixed his residence at Seville, is also said to have been assassinated this year. It is likewise intimated by some of the Spanish historians, that before the conclusion of it, there happened a very remarkable solar eclipse, which continued three hours, and was visible all over Spain; during a considerable part of which, the stars appeared ^g.

Omar discovered on several occasions a great affection for the family of Ali.

Omar did not distinguish himself in a military capacity; but he discovered a most humane and benevolent disposition, and a remarkable affection for the house of Ali, on several occasions. The suppression of the solemn malediction already mentioned was the first incontestible proof of this regard. The principal circumstances preparatory to, and attending that unexpected event, have been related in the following manner by Khondemir, the Persian historian. Omar, having some conversation with a Jew, said, amongst other things, "Ask of me one day or other in public my daughter in marriage." This the Jew did, and was answered by the khalif, "How can such a thing be, since you and I are of different religions?" To this the Jew replied, "Did not Mohammed give his daughter in marriage to Ali?" "The case there (said Omar), was quite different; for Ali was a Moslem, and has been the commander of the faithful." "Why then (returned the Jew), do you curse him publicly in your mosques?" Upon which the khalif, turning his face towards his principal courtiers then present, ordered them to answer this Jew: but finding them greatly embarrassed, and that they had no reply to make, he declared, that for the future that malediction should be suppressed; and that, instead of it, there should be pronounced the following verse of the Koran: "Forgive us, Lord, our sins; pardon likewise all our brethren, who make profession of the same faith that we profess." This khalif also, about the same time, as a mark of his regard for the race of Ali, ordered restitution to be made to his descendants of the territory of Fidak, given Ali by Mohammed, when he bestowed his daughter upon him in marriage; and appointed a particular receiver to collect the revenues of that district, and distribute them amongst those that deduced their origin from

^g Theoph. ubi sup. p. 334. Cedren. ubi sup. p. 452. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 75, 76. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 204. Ism. Abulfed. in Hist. Univ.

the children Ali had by Fâtema, from time to time, by equal portions.

In the following year, Shûzib having revolted against Omar, under divers religious pretexts, the khalif wrote to him, that, if his intention was only to reform religion and the state, whose interests he took to be inseparable, he might come to court, where they would concert together the most proper measures for settling all points according to his desire. Soon after Shûzib received the khalif's letter, he sent two deputies to represent, that he had no subject of complaint against his person, as he could not but acknowledge him to be a very just and equitable prince; but that since, by his own conduct, he had visibly condemned that of the khalifs of his house and family, he ought to cause them to be cursed publicly in the mosques, as they had cursed Ali and his posterity, during their respective reigns. The deputies having executed their master's orders, Omar replied, "As what you require of me relates to another world, and not to this, I should think myself guilty of a very great sin if I granted your request: for we do not find, that God has commanded his prophet to curse any one; nor are we authorized by his word to treat a person in that manner, on account of his wicked life; since Pharaoh, who with so much impudence arrogated to himself divine honours, was never formally cursed for his enormous crimes. Much less can I order a solemn malediction to be publicly pronounced against the house of Ommyyah, my relations, who pray constantly at the usual times, observe the stated fasts, and perform all the other religious duties of the Moslems." The deputies, not being able to make any answer to so obvious a truth, imparted another of their grievances, and said, "But, Sir, ought so just and equitable a prince, as your majesty is, to leave his crown to an impious and abandoned successor?" The khalif told them, that such a case as this might possibly happen, and perhaps not; and that, therefore, they ought to leave to Providence the disposal of future events. To which observation they instantly replied, that they knew Yezid Ebn Abd'almâlec, who had been declared his successor, to be possessed of all the bad qualities that could be inherent in the most wicked prince. At these words, Omar could not forbear shedding tears, and desired three days to think of a proper answer to what they had suggested on this occasion. The members of the house of Ommyyah, having been apprized of the particulars of this conference between Omar and Shûzib's deputies,

*Omar Ebn
Abd'ala-
ziz's death.*

ties, were afraid lest the khalif should change the order of succession, and transfer the khalifat to another family : for this reason, they resolved to dispatch him, and therefore bribed a slave to poison him ; which villainous design was carried into execution this present year. He died the twenty-fifth of Rajeb, after a short reign of two years five months and fourteen days, being then either thirty-three, thirty-seven, thirty-nine, or forty years of age, and was interred in the monastery of St. Simeon, situated near the little town of Maharat, one of the dependencies of Hems ; though his sepulchre was in the monastery of The Cow at Maarra Noomani, according to the common opinion.

*A dispute
between
the Chris-
tians and
Moslems at
Damascus.*

The Christians of Damascus being perfectly well acquainted with the mild and equitable disposition of this khalif, complained of the violence offered by his predecessor Al Walid, when he took from them by force the church of St. John in that city ; and at the same time shewed him the instrument signed by Khâled Ebn Al Walid, when Damascus was taken, by which the free exercise of their religion, and the possession of all their churches, was to be effectually secured to them and their posterity. They, therefore, humbly petitioned Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, that the said church of St. John might, in consequence of that writing, be restored to them : but the khalif, apprehending that such a restitution might excite commotions amongst the Moslems, begged, that, in lieu of their church, they would accept of the sum of money that had been offered by Al Walid on the same occasion, namely, forty thousand dinârs, and with it build a new church in some other quarter of the town. The Christians absolutely refusing this offer, they were told by Abu Edris Al Holwani, that, by virtue of the above instrument, they were, indeed, entitled to the possession of all their churches in that part of the city, which was taken by capitulation ; but that all those in the other part, which was carried by storm, by right of conquest, belonged to the Moslems. In order, therefore, to settle this affair to the satisfaction of both parties, he proposed, that the church of St. John, which the khalif had ordered to be restored, upon their refusal of the money offered, should be ceded by the Christians to the Moslems ; and that, upon this condition, the former should remain in possession of all the churches in that part of the town, and the territory belonging to it claimed by the latter. This condition after much dispute and altercation, was agreed to on both sides, and confirmed by Omar,

Omar, who wrote out an instrument, or schedule, with his own hand, to prevent any future encroachments.

We are told by Mohammed Ebn Emir Khoandshah, that when the poison taken by Omar began to operate, and he was very ill in bed, his friends represented, that he ought to make use of some remedy for the recovery of his health. But he told them, that he was so perfectly resigned to the will of God, and so firmly persuaded of the fatal and inevitable term of human life, that he would not even rub the tip of his ear with a little oil, in order to be cured of his present indisposition. The same author adds, that he was so extremely frugal, that he took no more than two dinârs a day from the royal treasury, for the subsistence of himself and his domestics; that he never wore any rich or sumptuous apparel; and that his divan was generally held in a place but little illuminated, where he sat always upon the ground.

His behaviour in his last sickness.

As a farther instance of this khalif's great humility, it has been observed by Abu'l-Faraj, that when he was visited by Moslema Ebn Abd'almâlec, in his last sickness, he reposed upon a bed made of palm-leaves, supported by a pillow formed of the skins of beasts, and covered with a common ordinary garment. His lips appeared flaccid and of a livid colour, and he had on a dirty shirt. Moslema could not forbear blaming his sister Fâtema, who was Omar's wife, for suffering the emperor of the faithful to be exhibited to any person's view in so mean and fordid a condition: but, in order to justify her own conduct on this occasion, she assured Moslema, that the khalif had not another shirt to put on; a declaration which, after thanks had been returned to God, for enduing so great a prince with such a meek and humble disposition, drew tears from that general. This writer has farther remarked, that the daily expence of Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz did not amount to above two dirhems.

A farther instance of his great humility and frugality.

With regard to his person, Omar was swarthy, as most of the Arabs are, lean, had a handsome face, and in it the scar of a wound he had received from a wild beast in his childhood. Notwithstanding his youth, he had a considerable number of grey hairs, which probably made him appear something older than he really was. In his disposition he was extremely just, religious, and devout; and had fixed his mind, from his infancy, entirely upon the other world. He seems to have been the brightest ornament of the Moslems in that wicked and degenerate age. After his death, the house to which he used frequently to retire, being

Omar's character.

being then shut up, was opened ; the Arabs hoping to discover a considerable treasure in it : but, upon examination, they found only a close thick riding vest, that he sometimes wore, and a sort of rope or cord hung up, with which he now-and-then amused himself, after his spirits had been exhausted by long and fervent prayer ^h.

*Yezid Ebn
Abd'almâ-
lec succeeds
Omar.*

As Yezid Ebn Abd'almâlec, by his brother Solimân's late settlement of the succession, was to ascend the Moslem throne after the death of Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, he was saluted khalif the same day that his predecessor died. His mother Atecah was the daughter of Yezid Ebn Moâwiyah Ebn Abu Sofîân, and the surname usually applied to him Abu Khâled.

*Moslema
reduces the
rebel Ye-
zid, and
drives the
Turks out
of Aderbi-
jan,*

As soon as Yezid Ebn Abd'almâlec came to the crown, he removed all the governors of provinces, who had been promoted to their respective posts by his predecessor Omar ; which removals undoubtedly excited several commotions in the empire. These, however, were probably soon extinguished, as we scarce find any mention made of them in history : but the rebellion of Yezid Ebn Al Mohalleb Ebn Abu Safra, which happened in the year of the Hejra 101, created a great deal of trouble for the khalif. Yezid, knowing that this prince, by his ill qualities, had rendered himself extremely odious to the Moslems, renounced his allegiance to him ; and, having assembled a strong body of troops at Basra, advanced to Cûfa, the capital of the Arabian Irâk, where he found a considerable reinforcement. Yezid Ebn Abd'almâlec, being informed of Ebn Al Mohalleb's defection, sent his brother Moslema and Al Abbâs Ebn Al Walîd against him, at the head of a powerful army ; who, coming up with the rebels, attacked them with such fury, that they slew a great number upon the spot, and put the rest to flight. Yezid Ebn Al Mohalleb himself having been killed in the action, Moslema ordered his head to be cut off, and sent it immediately to the khalif. However, Ebn Al Mohalleb's son Moâwiyah, with some of his father's troops, made his escape to Hormûz, where the rebel Yezid had before built a fortress, which was deemed impregnable, in order to serve for a retreat, in case any misfortunes should happen to him : but his governor refusing to open the gates to Moâwiyah, he was pursued by the khalif's generals, after several other successive defeats, as far as the Indus. The writers followed by

^h Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, Eutyck. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. Khondemir, & D'Herbel. ubi supra.

Al Makîn, however, give a different account of Moâwiyah's motions. After his father had been overthrown, according to them, he fled with great precipitation to Wâset, where he found Adi Ebn Artah, the khalif's governor of Basra, whom he ordered, with thirty-two of his men, to be put to the sword. From Wâset Moâwiyah and his troops made the best of their way to Basra, and afterwards endeavoured to reach Sindia; but, being overtaken by a body of the khalif's forces, under the command of Halal Ebn Akhûr Al Mazâni, sent in pursuit of them by Moslema, they were all either cut to pieces or taken prisoners; and the latter being conducted to Damascus by the general's order, Yezid caused them all to be massacred. Moslema, for his eminent services, was appointed by the khalif governor of Irâk, and had the lieutenancy of Khorasân also conferred upon him: but, upon some disgust, he was soon deprived of both those posts, and succeeded in them by Omar Ebn Habira Al Fozari; though, according to Abu'l-Faraj, Omar presided over Khorasân, as well as both the Persian and Arabian Irâk, before the extinction of the late rebellion. Nor does it appear from that author, that Moslema had ever the direction or management of affairs in any of those provinces. Omar, being settled in his government, sent a body of the Moslem troops, under the conduct of Al Jarah Ebn Abd'allah, either to make an irruption into the Turkish territories, or to force the Turks to abandon the Moslem provinces. Al Jarah executed his orders with great bravery, made himself master of a fortress called Meltahar, or Meltahara, placed in Al Turk, or Turkeistân, by Al Makîn, and drove Ebn Hâf, the Turkish khan, or khakan, before him from place to place: but notwithstanding this success, the khan, having received a reinforcement, waited for Al Jarah at Ardebil, in the province of Aderbijân, engaged him there, and, after a vigorous action, entirely defeated him, putting him and the greatest part of the troops he commanded to the sword. However, Moslema, in a short time, advancing against Ebn Hâf with another Arab army, vanquished him in a pitched battle, and forced the enemy to abandon not only the province of Aderbijân, but every other part of the khalif's dominions.

We find little said of this khalif by the Greek writers. Theophanes only observes, that Izid, the name he gives Yezid, succeeded Umar or Omar, who reigned only two years and four months; that this Izid, at the instigation of a Jew of Laodicea, who promised him a reign of forty years,

*Little said
of this khalif
by the
Greek writers.*

years, as a reward for his impiety, published an edict against images, enjoining his subjects to destroy all those erected by the Christians in their churches throughout the Moslem empire; that he slew Izid, the son of Mualab, that is, Yezid Ebn Al Mohalleb, who had rebelled against him, and reduced the provinces he had seized upon to his obedience; and, lastly, that he died, after he had wielded the Moslem sceptre about four years, before his rigid edict, relating to the destruction of images, could either be sufficiently promulged, or put in execution. Cedrenus speaks of him in much the same terms. Dionysius Telmarenensis relates, that this khalif commanded his subjects to exterminate white dogs, white pigeons, white cocks, and in short, all other animals of the same colour; and that he issued the decree relating to this extermination in the year of our Lord 725. He also raised a persecution against the Christians, forbade a Christian to be admitted an evidence against a Moslem, and fixed the value or price of the latter at double that of the former.

*Account of
the Moslem
affairs in
Spain dur-
ing this
khalif's
reign.*

About the time of Yezid Ebn Mohalleb's defection in Irák, Zama had the command of the Moslem forces in Spain. He introduced some innovations relating to the disposition of the tribute exacted from the Christians in that country, which probably rendered him more unacceptable to many of the Arabs than even the worst of his predecessors. Zama having received orders to extend the Moslem conquests in those western parts of the world, passed the Pyrenees with a powerful army, took the city of Narbonne the capital of Gallia Narbonensis, and besieged Tolosa, at present known by the name of Toulouse; but here he was deserted by the good fortune that had hitherto attended him. Eudo, called by some of the French writers count Eudes, general of the Franks or the French, came to the relief of the besieged, attacked Zama in his camp, killed him and a great number of his men upon the spot, and forced the rest to abandon the siege. Flushed with this victory he marched afterwards to Narbonne, retook that place, and obliged the enemy to retire out of the province to which it belonged. Yezid, having received advice of what had happened, sent Azam or Adham Ebn Malec, with a body of troops, into Spain, to protect the Arab conquests in that country from the insults of the French, and enable the Moslems to repair the loss they had sustained. He reduced several fortified places in Spain that had not before submitted to the Arabs, extended the tribute to be paid into the khalif's coffers,
built

built the famous bridge at Corduba, in the 102d year of the Hejra, and was at last assassinated by his own people at Tortosa. Some of the Spanish writers make Zama and Azam to have been the same person; nor does such a notion appear to us at all improbable. Be that as it may, after the defeat and death of Zama, the Arabs chose Abd'alrahmân for their leader, who presided over them in Spain till the arrival of a new governor from the Moslem court. The khalif being informed of the murder of Azam, constituted Ambiza his lieutenant in Spain, about the year of the Hejra 103, who made several incursions into the territories of the French; though he rather meditated than was directly engaged in a war against that people. Towards the conclusion of his government, he proposed to invade that part of the enemy's country bordering upon the frontiers of Spain; but soon after he had begun his march, in what manner we have not been informed by any of the Spanish writers, a period was put to his days. Before his death he resigned to Odra the command of the Moslem army destined to act against the French, which, after that unexpected event, immediately returned home. We must not forget to observe, that during this interval Pelagius wrested the city of Leon out of the hands of the Arabs, and gained several other very important advantages over them. Some of the Spanish writers inform us, that at this time there were several Arab princes or emirs in Spain, and that the chief of these, who was properly the khalif's governor or viceroy, had the title of king of Corduba: but those writers have by no means given us, in their relations of what happened during the period immediately following the first settlement of the Arabs in Spain, a clear and distinct account either of their own or the Moslem affairs¹.

As Yezid Ebn Abd'almâlec was much addicted to pleasure, even in the khalifat of his brother Solimân, he bought a singing girl, named Hababah, of whom he was passionately fond, for four thousand dinârs; but Solimân thinking this attachment a disgrace to him, obliged him to part with her, and she was afterwards purchased by an Egyptian. Saada, Yezid's wife, being desirous of ingratiating herself in a more particular manner with her husband, once asked him, when he was khalif, whether there was

*Yezid's
death and
character.*

¹ Roderic Toletan. Hist. Arab. cap. 11. Rases Chronic. Reg. Alfonsi. Joannes Vascus, in Hispan. Chronic. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Jezid Ben Abd'almâlek, p. 485, 487.

any thing in the world that he yet desired after his elevation to the Moslem throne? He answered, "Yes, Hababah." Upon which Saada procured her for him; a circumstance which wonderfully conciliated his affections to her. He had likewise another concubine, called Selamah, whom he tenderly loved. Being in that part of Palestine called Belad al Arden, or Belad al Ordonna, that is, *the Country or Plain of Jordan*, and diverting himself in a garden with Hababah, whom he loved to distraction, he was served at his collation with some of the most excellent fruits of that charming country. During this little repast, he threw a grape at her, which she immediately took up and put to her mouth in order to eat it; but being too large, it stuck in the passage without a possibility of being removed; so that she was suffocated in an instant. This melancholy accident so affected Yezid, that he fell into an excess of grief, and was inconsolable for the loss of so amiable an object. Indeed, the transport of his love and of his sorrow carried him so far on this occasion, that he would not suffer the body of his deceased mistress to be interred for a week. Nor would he have permitted it then to be buried, had it not been for the repeated instances of his domestics, who could no longer bear the intolerable stench of the corpse. However, the sepulchre itself was not able to cure his frenzy. He ordered that to be opened, and the body to be exposed once more to his view. In short, being incapable of moderating his grief, he survived his dear Hababah only fifteen days; and, before he expired, ordered his remains to be deposited in a grave near her tomb. This sorrowful event happened in the 105th year of the Hejra, after he had reigned a little above four years. With regard to his person, he was a man of a fair complexion, had good features, and a round face. As for his character, he was extremely indolent, squandered away vast sums of money upon his wives, concubines, and diversions of various kinds, and was a slave to his passions^k.

*Heshâm
succeeds
Yezid.*

Heshâm Ebn Abd'almâlec, upon his brother Yezid's decease, was elevated to the khalifat towards the close of the month Shaabân, in the year of the Hejra 105. He was surnamed Abu'l Walid, and his mother was Fâtema, surnamed Omm Hâshem, the daughter of Hâshem Ebn Ismael Ebn Hâshem Ebn Al Walid Al Makhzumî. His

^k Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 77, 78, 79. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 205, 206. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 382—385.

uncle Yezid nominated Heshâm his successor just before his death, on condition that his own son, Al Walid, after the demise of that prince, should be called to the succession. When Yezid died, Heshâm was at Rûfâfa, a city in the neighbourhood of Rakka upon the Euphrates; but as soon as he received advice of his advancement to the khalifat, he mounted his horse, and came directly to Damascus. Soon after his promotion he appointed Khâled Ebn Abd'allah Al Karli, his lieutenant of Irâk, and removed his brother, Mohammed Ebn Abd'almâlec, from his government of Egypt, substituting in his room his cousin Hafan Ebn Yusef Ebn Yahya, of the house of Ommiyah, who continued in that post till the year of the Hejra 108. Nothing very material happened in the Moslem empire during the first year of Heshâm's reign.

In the 107th year of the Hejra, answering to 725 of our æra, Moslema, or Masalmas, as he is called by the Greek writers, took Cæsarea in Cappadocia; and Moâwiyah Ebn Heshâm, another of the Arab generals, made an irruption into the Christian territories, doing irreparable damage in the provinces through which he marched. This year likewise Amer, one of the Moslem commanders, invested Nicæa in Bithynia with a body of fifteen thousand men; after which, Moâwiyah advancing with an army of eighty-five thousand men, formed the siege of that city. The Arabs battered the walls with such fury, that they levelled a great part of them with the ground, and made several general assaults; but were every time repulsed with incredible loss, and at last forced to abandon the siege. Dionysius Telmarenfis relates, that Moslema, or Masalmas, reduced Neocæsarea this year, and carried away all the inhabitants with him prisoners, except the Jews, who betrayed the place into his hands. The Spanish writers make no mention of any military operations this year in Spain; but only inform us, that Heshâm permitted both the Arabs and Christians in that country to enjoy the sweets of peace, and sent Ishahe, or Yahya, an Arab of distinction, to govern his subjects in that country.

In the following year the Arabs, under the conduct of Moâwiyah, invaded the imperial territories, carried a fortress by assault, and then returned home. About the time Hafas Ebn Al Walid, upon the abdication of Hafan Ebn Yusef, was appointed governor of Egypt. Nothing material passed this year in Spain; the Moslem commanders being wholly employed in amassing treasures for Heshâm, who was richer, as well as more covetous,

The Arabs make several irruptions into the imperial territories.

Heshâm amasses immense treasures.

than any of his predecessors. According to Eutychius, Constantine was constituted patriarch of Constantinople either this or the preceding year.

*Moslema
drives the
Turks out
of Arme-
nia.*

Next year Moslema Ebn Abd'almâlec attacked the Turks, or, as they are called by some of the eastern writers, the Huns, that is, the subjects of the khakan, who had made an irruption into Armenia, and forced them to conclude a treaty of peace with him. He also penetrated the same year to the defile called the Portæ Caspiæ by the ancients, not far from the Caspian Sea; which had served as a sort of barrier to the Moslem empire on that side before the late irruption; the Turks, or Huns, having been long confined by it in the country that properly appertained to them. This affair is however differently related by Theophanes, who says, that the son of the khakan invaded Armenia and Aderbijan with a powerful army, overthrew Garach, or Al Jarah, the Arab general, who attempted to oppose him, committed dreadful devastations in that province, and then retreated: but Dionysius Telmarenfis, to whom we are indebted for the former relation, living at no great distance from the scene of action, not much above forty years after this campaign, and agreeing better with what we find recorded of the reign of Heshâm by the Arab historians than the Greek writers, we shall not scruple to prefer his authority to that of Theophanes.

*The Arabs
invade
France;*

Some of the French and Spanish authors maintain, that Eudo, duke of Aquitain, being about this time defeated and put to flight by Charles Martel, demanded assistance of the Arabs, who had possessed themselves of Spain. The Moslems, accepting of this invitation, passed the Pyrenees, and advanced into Gascoign, to the number of four hundred thousand souls, women, children, and slaves included, under the command of Abd'alrahmân, imagining they should conquer that province without striking a blow. They committed dreadful ravages in their march; pillaging every place, both sacred and profane, without distinction. This expedition is, however, placed some years later by Roderic of Toledo, who appears to be right in his chronology. He also gives us to understand, that about the year we are now treating of, this prince's avarice occasioned commotions in several parts of the empire, which were not appeased without great difficulty, and a very copious effusion of human blood.

In the 110th year of the Hejra, Moslema Ebn Abd'almâlec advanced with a body of Arab troops to the coast of the Caspian sea, restored the fortifications of the defile that

that had been destroyed by the Turks in their late irruption into Armenia, seized upon Derbent at the foot of Mount Caucasus, together with the district belonging to it, and obliged the Turks to swear never to pass their own frontiers in order to disturb the repose of the Moslem territories: but they soon violating that oath, and invading Armenia, he attacked them with such success, that he forced them to retire into their own dominions. After which he appointed Merwân Ebn Mohammed governor of Armenia, and then returned into Syria. Some of the French and Spanish writers relate, that Eudo, being terrified at the approach of such a multitude of Arabs, who desolated the country through which they marched, joined Charles Martel with all his forces, and, in conjunction with him, attacked the infidels this year near Tours with so much vigour, that they were overthrown with incredible slaughter, no less than three hundred and seventy-five thousand of them, amongst whom were Abd'alrahmân, the Arab general himself, and almost all the officers and persons of distinction that served under him, having been killed in the action. No more than fifteen hundred of the Christians are said to have been missing after the engagement. This blow, however, was not given the Moslems, according to Roderic of Toledo, so early as the 110th year of the Hejra. That author scruples not to affirm, that not only Gallia Narbonensis and Gascoign, but likewise Calabria and part of Apulia, if not Sicily itself, about this time, though before the victory at Tours, acknowledged the sovereignty of the khalif.

*and are
defeated by
Charles
Martel.*

In the following year Cosmas, of the Melchite persuasion, was constituted patriarch of Alexandria; who, if we believe Eutychius, could neither write nor read. Be that as it may, upon his arrival at Damascus, he experienced a gracious reception from Heshâm, who, after he had had a conference with him, wrote to Abd'allah Ebn Al Jihân Al Sakwi, his lieutenant of Egypt, to put the Melchites, under Cosmas's government and direction, in possession of all the churches that had been occupied by the Jacobites in Alexandria for the space of ninety-seven years, that is, from the third year of Omar Ebn Al Khattâb to the seventh of the khalif Heshâm; during which interval the Jacobites had remained masters of all the Christian churches in Egypt, except that of St. Saba at Alexandria, and that of St. Michael, in Kasr Al Shama', to which the Melchites had been confined. Nor did the Jacobite patriarch of Alexandria only supply Egypt with bishops for so long a term, but he

*The Jacobites dis-
possessed of
their
churches in
Egypt.*

*The Mos-
lem affairs
in Spain,
during the
year of the
Hejra 112.*

likewise sent many others into Nubia ; the people of which kingdom, till the seventh year of Heshâm, were almost entirely of the Jacobite persuasion.

In the 112th year of the Hejra, Moslema, according to Theophanes, undertook an expedition against the Turks, and penetrated to the coast of the Caspian sea ; but being intimidated by the forces of the khakan, returned, without effecting any thing. That this was really the case, we are more inclined to believe, from the silence of the Moslem writers in relation to any advantage gained by the khalif's army this year in those parts, than from the authority of Theophanes, which is frequently not to be depended upon. Autuman, or Othmân, Heshâm's lieutenant in Spain, was displaced, after he had remained at Corduba about four months, and succeeded by Al Haytam Ebn Obeid. Against this new governor a conspiracy was soon formed ; several of the principal Arabs holding private cabals, in order to concert an effectual method of deposing him. But they being seized, before they could carry their design into execution, he ordered some of them to be publicly scourged, and others to be beheaded. Amongst the former was Zath, or Zeid, an Arab of great eloquence and noble extraction, who, after he had been treated in a very ignominious manner, escaped out of Spain, and took a journey to Damascus, where he and Mahimen, another Moslem of distinction, gave the khalif a full account of every thing that had happened. They also desired that Al Haytam might be recalled, and Abd'alrahmân appointed king of Corduba, or governor of Spain, in his room ; requests which Heshâm immediately granted. Upon their arrival in Spain, Mahimen, who had been invested with full power and authority by the khalif for that purpose, ordered Al Haytam to be publicly scourged, to be carried with his hands bound behind his back, and loaded with irons, upon an ass, through the streets of Corduba, and then to be imprisoned for life. Abd'alrahmân not being to be found, Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah was constituted governor of Spain, and acted in that capacity about two months ; at the end of which term Abd'alrahmân himself appeared. The French annals, according to Joannes Vassæus, pretend, that, about this time, the Arabs, at the instigation of Hunold and Waifar, Eudo's sons, made another irruption into France, and penetrated as far as Burgundy with a numerous army, ravaging the country through which he marched ; but were driven again by Charles Martel into their own dominions,

dominions, after they had lost a very considerable part of their troops. In the mean time, Pelagius still maintained himself in possession of all the posts he had so long occupied upon the Moslem frontiers; nor could he be dislodged from thence by all the efforts of the enemy¹.

In the 113th year of the Hejra, Moslema marched at the head of a powerful army against the khakan, took several of that prince's towns, and carried off a great number of his subjects into slavery, together with an immense quantity of plunder. Moâwiyah, the khalif's son, also penetrated into Paphlagonia, took many of the Christians in that province prisoners, and returned loaded with the spoils he acquired in this expedition. Solimân, another of Heshâm's sons, advanced with a body of troops into another of the imperial provinces, reduced the castle of Pelozonium, pillaging the neighbouring tract, defeated a Greek army sent to oppose him, and then retired with inconsiderable loss. Some of the Arab writers affirm, that the Greek emperor himself, whom they call Constantine, was present in the action, and fell into the hands of Solimân; but, as Leo Isaurus, or Isauricus, sat then upon the imperial throne, and was probably at Constantinople when that engagement happened, this assertion merits not the least attention^m.

Heshâm's troops gain some advantages over the Christians.

Abd'alrahmân, if we believe Roderic of Toledo, was this year constituted the khalif's lieutenant in Spain; but was scarce settled in his government, when Muniz assembled a body of troops, in order to depose him. Muniz, however, not being able to take the field against Abd'alrahmân, was obliged to shut himself up in the principal city of the Cerretani, where he was closely besieged by the governor's forces. At last, finding himself incapable of defending the place any longer, he endeavoured to make his escape; but being closely pursued by one of Abd'alrahmân's detachments, he was forced to throw himself headlong from a precipice, and miserably perished. His wife, who was count Eudo's daughter, and one of the most celebrated beauties of the age, fell into the hands of the victors, and was sent by Abd'alrahmân to Damascus, as a present to the khalif. The death of Muniz, whose head was cut off, and brought to the governor, proved the total extinction of this rebellion; which, had Muniz been reinforced by a body of French troops, might have been attended with

Abd'alrahmân constituted governor of Spain.

¹ Theophan. ubi supra. Roderic. Toletan. Hist. Arab. cap. xii. xiii.

^m Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 80. Theophan. ubi supra, p. 343. Dionys. Telmarenf. ubi supra, p. 106.

fatal consequences, both to Abd'alrahmân and all the khalif's other subjects in Spain. It seems to be hinted by some of the Spanish writers, that the famous Pelagius, who had so remarkably signalized himself in his wars against the Arabs, died about this period ⁿ.

*The Arabs
over-
thrown by
the Greeks.*

Next year Solimân Ebn Heshâm penetrated, with an army of ninety thousand men, into the imperial territories. He advanced as far Tyana in Cappadocia, and had four generals to serve under him in this expedition. Mâlec Ebn Shabib and Abd'allah Ebn Batal, two of those generals, being arrived at Synnada in Phrygia, with fifty thousand men, were engaged by an imperial army, under the conduct of the emperor Leo himself, and his son Constantine Copronymus, according to Theophanes, who obtained such a complete victory over them, that they lost forty-five thousand men killed on the spot, and the rest with great difficulty made their escape. The author affirms, that this glorious event happened in the twenty-third year of Leo's reign, about the 122d of the Hejra; but Dionysius Talmarenfis places it in or near the present year.

*An impostor
appears in
Syria.*

About the same time, an impostor appeared in Syria, who pretended that he was Moses, risen from the dead, and seduced great numbers of the Jews, whom he defrauded of considerable sums of money, and then fled into another province. But being pursued and taken, he was brought before the khalif, who delivered him up to the Jews, that they might inflict upon him what punishment they should think proper.

*The Arabs
defeated by
the French.*

Abd'alrahmân, suspecting that count Eudo had favoured his son-in-law Muniz's rebellion, which he had so happily extinguished, resolved to follow his blow, and carry the war into the heart of France. Having, therefore, assembled a powerful army, he entered that kingdom, and advanced to Arles upon the Rhône, where he attacked and defeated a large body of the Franks, or the French, who attempted to obstruct his march, killed many upon the spot, and pushed a great number of them into the Rhône, where they perished. He afterwards passed the Garonne and the Dordonne, vanquished count Eudo, who endeavoured to stop the progress of his arms, and penetrated into the interior part of France. In short, he pursued that count through several provinces, ravaged the country in a dreadful manner, and at last arrived with his numerous forces at Tours. That city likewise he made a scene of blood, rapine, and confusion, reducing the

ⁿ Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, cap. xiii. Joannes Vaszus, ubi supra, p. 702.

church and all the palaces to ashes, and destroying the whole district belonging to it with fire and sword. Charles Martel, being informed of these devastations, and reinforced by a body of Germans and Gepidæ, came up with those plunderers near Tours, engaged them for seven days together, and at last entirely defeated them. The shattered remains of Abd'alrahmân's army, after this memorable defeat, with great difficulty, reached the frontiers of Spain, and left the French in peaceable possession of the whole tract that had been delivered by their victorious general. This is the account of Abd'alrahmân's fatal French expedition, as preserved by Roderic of Toledo; which, as our curious readers will at first sight perceive, differs not only in point of time, but likewise in several other particulars, from that already given. Some authors tell us, that the Moslem general took Avignon by surprize this campaign; and that it was afterwards retaken by the French. They also relate, that, the following year, Charles Martel overthrew the Arabs, marching, under the command of one of their generals, to the relief of Narbonne, then besieged by a body of the French forces, at Illiberis, with incredible slaughter; scarce any of them escaping into Spain. Which of these relations approaches the nearest to truth, we shall not take upon us to determine.

About the 115th year of the Hejra, Heshâm sent an army under the command of Kaliu and Zobair to reduce Atikh, who had rebelled against him, and collected a considerable force to support his defection. Atikh, receiving advice of their approach, advanced to Sigara, fell upon them by night, entirely defeated them, and put many of their men to the sword. However, as we find nothing afterwards said of him by any good author, it is probable that, in a short time, he submitted to the khalif. About the same year, according to Theophanes, Moâwiyah Ebn Heshâm, with a body of the Moslem troops, ravaged several of the imperial provinces in Asia, without any considerable loss. A very large and resplendent comet, if we credit that writer, likewise appeared at this period.

In the 116th year of the Hejra, Solimân Ebn Heshâm advanced into the imperial Armenia, committed some ravages in that province, and then returned into the Moslem territories. Affad Ebn Abd'allah, another of the kha-

The khalif's forces routed by Atikh.

His arms successful against the khakan's.

o Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, cap. xiii. xiv. Annal. Francor. Jacobus Meyerus, Joannes Vassæus, ubi supra. p Dionys. Telmarenf. ubi supra, p. 107. Theophan. ubi supra, p. 344. Georg. Cedren. ubi supra, p. 457.

lif's generals, gained several victories over the troops of the khakan, and killed that prince himself in single combat. Heshâm sent Abd'almâlec, an Arab of noble extraction, in the 116th year of the Hejra, to preside over the Moslems in Spain; who, by his tyranny, rendered himself extremely odious to them. He found himself incapable of protecting the country under his government from the insults of the French; and having attempted to pass the Pyrenees, in order to take vengeance of that nation, he was driven back into the plains of Celtiberia with very great slaughter.

Moâwiyah makes an inroad into the imperial territories.

In the following year, Moâwiyah Ebn Heshâm made an irruption into the imperial territories; but the Greeks soon assembling a considerable force, he could not long maintain the footing he had gained: he, therefore, returned into Syria, without having effected any thing considerable; and, according to Theophanes, in his march was killed by a fall from his horse. Nothing material happened this year in Spain, under Abd'almâlec's oppressive administration.

Solimân Ebn Heshâm ravages some of the imperial provinces.

About the 120th year of the Hejra, Solimân Ebn Heshâm ravaged some of the imperial provinces contiguous to the khalif's dominions, and carried off a great number of prisoners. Amongst these there was a Pergamenian, who pretended to be Tiberius, the son of the emperor Justinian. This pretended prince, Heshâm, in order to do his son Solimân, who had taken him prisoner, the greater honour, as well as to strike a terror into the imperial court, treated with the highest marks of distinction, as though he had been really a member of the imperial family; sending him to Jerusalem, and all the other principal cities of Syria, escorted by a numerous body of troops, and attended by a very splendid retinue: but however his subjects might be pleased with such ostentation and parade, it does not appear that the khalif himself reaped any remarkable advantage from this ridiculous conduct. In the following year, the khalif removed from the government of Spain the tyrant Abd'almâlec, to the unspeakable joy of the Moslems settled in that country, and appointed Ocha, or rather Okba, to preside over the Arabs of that province in his room. Okba, upon his arrival at Corduba, imprisoned his predecessor, loaded him with irons, and deprived of their offices all the judges and governors of cities, that owed their elevation to him: he likewise obliged the Arabs under his government to observe strictly the ceremonies, as well as the moral duties, enjoined by their religion, collected

Account of the Arab affairs in Spain.

collected the tribute exacted of the Christians with the utmost rigour, took all opportunities that offered of filling the khalif's coffers, and brought the most enormous offenders to condign punishment. However, as he governed strictly according to law, the Moslems could not with any colour of reason complain of the iniquity of his administration. He meditated an expedition against the French, but was not able to carry his design into execution. Arriving at Saragosa with his fleet, he received advice from the coast of Africa, that the Moslems of Spain had an intention to depose him; upon which he retreated with all possible celerity first to Corduba, and afterwards to the continent of Africa, where he assembled a body of troops, with which he returned to Spain, put the ringleaders of the projected revolt to death, and settled himself once more in his former post. Afterwards growing very infirm, he resigned the government to his predecessor Abda'mâlec, with the unanimous approbation of all the khalif's subjects in Spain, a little before he died.

In the 121st year of the Hejra, Zeid Ebn Ali Ebn Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb assembled an army of a hundred and fourteen thousand men at Cûfa, and forced the inhabitants of that city to take an oath of fidelity to him: but, upon the approach of Yusef Ebn Omar, the governor of Basra, with a body of troops to extinguish this rebellion, they asked him what were his sentiments of Abu Becr and Omar; he replied, he had always entertained a great opinion of them. Upon which they renounced their allegiance, rescinded their former oath, and immediately deserted him; so that he found himself obliged to risk an engagement with only fourteen men: he could not, therefore, forbear observing, that the Cûfans, by their infamous conduct on this occasion, had acted entirely in character, and played over again the game of Hosein. Yusef easily defeated him, pierced his brain with an arrow, and consequently killed him upon the spot. Of the few Cûfans that attended him, not one escaped. After the action, Yusef ordered his head to be cut off, and sent to the khalif; by whose command it was fixed upon one of the gates of Damascus. His body was deposited in a sepulchre the same night he died, out of which it was taken next morning, and affixed to a cross or gibbet erected for that purpose; but soon after reduced to ashes, by an express order of the khalif: his son, in order to avoid meeting with the same fate, fled to Balkh, the metropolis of Khorâsân. Soon after the extinction of this rebellion, Moslema Ebn Abd'al-

*Zeid rebels
against the
khalif, and
is defeated
by Yusef
Ebn Omar.*

Abd'almâlec, the khalif's brother, penetrated into the imperial territories, and made himself master of Catamana, a city of considerable strength. Merwân Ebn Mohammed Ebn Merwân, surnamed Himar, subdued also this year Serir Al Dheheb, or rather Serir Al Theheb, that is, *the Throne of Gold*, a province situated between the Euxine and Caspian seas, in which the city of Derbent stands, called by the Turks Demir Capi, *the Iron Gate*; and imposed upon the khan, or prince of that country, an annual tribute.

*Moslem
dies.*

Next year Moslem Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân, Heshâm's brother, departed this life: he was the greatest general of the age, and had distinguished himself on many occasions above the other Arab commanders, both by his courage and conduct. This year the khalif ordered a bridge to be built over the Euphrates, the construction of which was begun on the Syrian bank of that river, opposite to the city of Callinicum in Mesopotamia⁹.

*A rebellion
in Africa.*

In the 124th year of the Hejra, Heshâm sent Handala Ebn Safwân, the governor of Egypt, into Africa, and appointed Hafas Ebn Al Walid to rule over the people of Egypt. In this post Hafas continued till the death of Heshâm; but was removed from it by Al Walid Ebn Yezid Ebn Abd'almâlec, the khalif's successor, who substituted Isha Ebn Abi Atâ in his room. This year the bridge over the Tigris at Amida having received great damage from a flood, Heshâm ordered it to be repaired, or rather rebuilt, and procured a considerable number of architects, who assembled at Amida for that purpose. The construction of this bridge was, however, a work of so much difficulty, that it was not finished before the khalif's death. About the same time, according to Dionysius Telmarenfis, most of the inhabitants of Edeffa were destroyed by an inundation of the Defanes, which laid almost all the houses under water; though, if we believe Theophanes, that disaster happened on the 28th day of the month Peritius, or February, in the preceding year. About this period, there was a rebellion in the western part of Africa, which probably extended itself into Nigritia, or at least to the frontiers of that country, as the rebel army, according to Roderic of Toledo, consisted of Moors, some of whom, in their complexions and frizled hair, resembled the Negroes, or Blacks;

⁹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. Dionys. Telmarenfis. et Jos. Sim. Asseman. ubi sup. p. 107.

and

and were men of such determined courage and resolution, that they defeated an army of one hundred thousand men sent against them by the khalif. Nay, their general, flushed with this success, if that author may be credited, meditated the conquest of Spain; a design which excited even many of the khalif's subjects to revolt. However, Abd'almâlec, Heshâm's governor of that province, proved superior to the rebels, drove a large body of them from Toledo, after they had besieged that city twenty-six days, cut many of them to pieces, dispersed the rest, and obliged two other bodies of the insurgents to return to their duty. Nevertheless, the rebel general, who had set up for himself in Africa, still continued to assert his independency. He not only baffled all the khalif's efforts to reduce him, but likewise found himself in a condition to extend his frontiers. For he sent an army, under the command of Abd'alrahmân, one of his generals, to invade Spain; which advanced to Corduba, reduced that place, took Abd'almâlec prisoner, and put him to a cruel death. Could this relation of Roderic be entirely depended upon, it would seem to imply, that, before the commencement of this rebellion, the khalif's arms had penetrated into the interior part of Africa, and reduced at least a considerable part of the country of Gætulia, if not Nigritia, to the obedience of that powerful prince; though the time when that conquest was made has not been clearly ascertained by any of the Arab historians^r.

On the first day of the 125th year of the Hejra, commencing November 4, 742, on the sixth day of the Latter Rabî, Heshâm Ebn Abd'almâlec died at Rufâfa, after he had sat nineteen years seven months and eleven days upon the Moslem throne. He was fifty-three, or, according to Abu'l-Faraj, fifty-five, or, as others maintain, fifty-six years of age, at the time of his death. With regard to his person, he was of a fair complexion, his hair being of a reddish or sandy colour. Some of the Arab historians relate, that he was squint-eyed, and had a very ugly face; though, according to others, that blemish or defect in him was not at all unbecoming. He tinged his beard with al henna and al catam, in the same manner as did the prophet himself, and his immediate successors. It has been observed by some of the eastern writers, that he governed without

*Heshâm's
death and
character.*

^r Abu Jaafar Al Tabarî. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 81, 84. Roderic, Toletan Hist. Arab. ad calc. Al Mak. Hist. Saracen. ab Erpenio edit. Lugd. Batavor. 1625, cap. xvi.

any prime minister; though being of a covetous and rapacious disposition, he greatly harassed his subjects. He had many wardrobes, and an infinity of garments; though, having sealed them all up, his successor Al Walid could not find a winding-sheet to wrap his body in after his decease, till a servant brought him one for that purpose. One of his sons assigning as a reason for not attending divine service in the mosque, that he had no beast to carry him thither, the khalif forbid him the use of either horse or camel for a whole year. One of his subjects having been accused of drinking wine, as well as keeping singing girls, and playing on a lute, and brought before him with the instrument he was so much delighted with, the khalif, said, "Beat that drum about the rascal's ears." Upon which, some of his domestics beat the fellow with the lute, and he shed tears plentifully. Being then advised to take his punishment patiently, and not disgrace himself by weeping, he said, "I weep not because I am treated in this manner, but because he so contemptuously calls my lute a drum." We are told by Theophanes, that Heshâm permitted the Christians of Antioch to chuse for their patriarch, after they had been deprived of one forty years by the Arabs, Stephen, a monk of uncommon sanctity and austerity of life, with whom he had contracted a particular intimacy; a circumstance which they considered as a blessing derived to them immediately from heaven. This article, though passed over in silence by other Christian writers, has likewise been transmitted to us by Cedrenus in almost the same terms. Heshâm has been represented by Kondemir, who tells us, that he would not trust any person with the keys of his coffers in which his treasures were deposited, as one of the most avaricious princes that ever lived. Nevertheless, he loved horses extremely, of which he kept at least four thousand in his stables. After his death, seven hundred coffers full of moveables, linen, and garments, or habits of various kinds, were found locked and sealed up with his own signet. The distemper of which he died was the quinsy, according to 'Abu'l-Faraj. His body was interred at Rusâfa, a city supposed to have been rebuilt by him; and, for that reason, in order to distinguish it from other places of the same name, some of the eastern writers style it the Rusâfa of Heshâm. Abu Abd'allah Mohammed Ebn Sirin, who composed a treatise concerning the interpretation of dreams, upon the principles of the book com-
posed

posed by Abu Ishâk Al Kermâni, flourished in the reign of this prince*.

Upon the death of Heshâm, Al Walid, in pursuance of his father Yezid's last will and testament, mounted the Moslem throne. He was surnamed Abu'l Abbâs, and proclaimed khalif the very day that his uncle Heshâm died; being then about forty years of age. His mother Omm Al Hejâj was the daughter of Mohammed Ebn Yusef Ebn Al Hakem Ebn Abu Okail Al Thakîfi. He had been treated with great kindness, and even marks of distinction, by Heshâm, till he had totally abandoned himself to a most dissolute course of life. But at last, by spending his time in drunkenness, and discovering an absolute disregard for all the religious observances and institutions of the Moslems, he incurred the displeasure of that prince; who, finding his nephew's life to be little better than one continual scene of debauchery, first re-proved him for the enormities he was guilty of, and then, upon his remaining still incorrigible, altered the whole course of his conduct towards him. Al Walid, not being able to bear the rigorous treatment he received from Heshâm, retired, with his friends and domestics, to Azrak, where he remained till his uncle's death; of which being apprized by two couriers, he posted with the utmost celerity to Damascus, in order to take possession of the khalifat. During his residence at Azrak, according to some of the eastern writers, Al Walid behaved not only in an irreproachable, but even an exemplary manner; though, after his elevation to the Moslem throne, he soon relapsed into his former excesses, and abandoned himself to all sorts of debaucheries. Upon the arrival of the couriers, he immediately issued an order to those who presided over Heshâm's treasures, which were immense, to secure every thing for his use: upon which, Ayyad, Al Walid's secretary, being released from the prison where he had been confined by Heshâm, affixed the new khalif's seal to all the doors of the treasuries, and would not suffer any person to approach them before his master had taken upon himself the government. Hence, according to Abu'l-Faraj, it happened, that Galeb, Heshâm's freedman, was obliged to wrap up that prince's corpse in a winding-sheet, nothing better being at that time to be

He is succeeded by Al Walid.

* Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 81, 82. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 388, 399. Iim. Abulfed. de Vit. Mohammed. cap. lxxv. p. 143. Joan Gagn. Not. in Abulfed. ibid. Theophan, ubi sup. p. 349. Georg. Cedren. ubi sup. p. 460.

found.

found. Al Walid is said to have treated his predecessor's friends and domestics with extreme severity; telling them, that this was the very same treatment he and his adherents had received from their master. The lame and the blind of Damascus he clothed and supplied with plenty of provisions, and distributed a vast quantity of perfumes and costly apparel amongst the women of that city, soon after his accession. In short, he was prodigal to a surprising degree; never refusing a favour to any person who presented a petition to him. Having augmented the pay of all his troops within his vast dominions, he conciliated the affections of the soldiery in such a manner, that he easily prevailed upon them, and of course the whole body of his subjects, to agree to the settlement of the succession upon his two sons Al Hakem and Othmân, by which the survivor was destined, after the death of the other, to ascend the Moslem throne. It appears from the eastern writers, that Yahya Ebn Zeid Ebn Ali Ebn Hosein, who, after his father's death, had escaped to Balkh, the metropolis of Khorasân was defeated, and put to the sword by a body of Al Walid's troops at Jurjân, Jurjana, or Georgiana, in the 125th year of the Hejra, not long after Heshâm's death. The body of this imâm (for so he is called by the followers of Ali) was first affixed to a gibbet, or cross, and afterwards reduced to ashes, which were thrown into the Euphrates, according to Abu'l-Faraj. But this last particular seems to be a mistake, as the city of Georgiana, the metropolis of a province of the same name, is said by some to belong to Khorasân, by others to Taberistân, and by others to Khovarazm, not far from the coast of the Caspian sea, and consequently at a very considerable distance from the Euphrates. This year, the repose of the Arab dominions in Spain, according to Roderic of Toledo, was disturbed by civil dissensions. Al Walid sent Abu'l Kater to take upon himself the government of that province; but he was opposed by the Arabs, under the conduct of Ismael and Toban, two of their countrymen, who at last found an opportunity of cutting him off: after which event, Toban was unanimously declared commander in chief of the Moslems in Spain. At this period, the khalif's forces made an irruption into the imperial territories, where they committed dreadful depredations, and carried off with them an incredible number of Christians prisoners. About the same time, the emperor Constantine, surnamed Copronymus, sent Andreas Spatharius his ambassador to Damascus,

Damascus, to solicit succours of Al Walid; and Artabasdus, his competitor, dispatched Gregorius Logotheta, as his minister, on the same occasion, to the khalif's court. It has been remarked by Theophanes, that Peter, the metropolitan of Damascus, had his tongue cut out, for reflecting upon the Mohammedan tenets, by Al Walid's order, and was afterwards banished to Yaman; as also, that both he and another Christian of the same name, at Maiuma in Palestine, suffered martyrdom in the course of the same year.

In the succeeding, which was the 743d of the Christian era, Al Walid openly professed Zendeism, a species of infidelity nearly resembling Sadducism amongst the Jews, and perhaps not very remote from the Deism of some of our modern infidels, if we believe the Persian historians; which profession, together with his flagitious and abandoned course of life, the genuine consequence of the impious principles he maintained, gave such offence to the people of Syria, that they unanimously resolved to depose him. They accordingly chose Yezid, the son of Al Walid I. his cousin-german, for their leader, and inaugurated him khalif. Yezid was no sooner placed on the throne, than he assembled a body of troops, and marched against Al Walid, who then resided in the territory of Boheira, at a small distance from Damascus. The mutineers easily dispersed the khalif's forces, and besieged him in his palace. At their first appearance before the gates, he reproached them with ingratitude; telling them, that he had eased them of their taxes, relieved their needy, and been more generous to them than any of his predecessors. To which expostulation they replied, that though they were by no means strangers to his good qualities, yet they at the same time knew, that his vices greatly preponderated; that he had frequently inebriated himself with wine, kept up an illicit commerce with his father's concubines, and been guilty of almost every kind of criminal excesses. After this conference, ten of the most resolute leaders forcing their way into the palace, Waja Al Fanin dispatched him, the khalif not attempting to make the least resistance. One of his hands and his head were cut off, carried in triumph through the streets of Damascus, and at last affixed to one of the gates of that city. The funeral prayers were said over him by Ibrahim Ebn Al Walid, at the time of his interment, in the usual manner. His two sons, Al Hakem and Othman, surnamed the Rams, were immediately imprisoned, as soon as Yezid had

*Al Walid's
death and
character.*

had communicated to the Moslems the news of his assassination. With regard to his person, Al Walîd was of a middle stature, had a handsome face, and a fair complexion. He was extremely addicted to gaming, drunkenness, and every species of sensuality. He kept company only with the younger and more abandoned part of his subjects. He ravished a girl in one of his drunken fits, and afterwards obliged her to repeat some prayers to the multitude, with a veil over her face. He is likewise said to have carried wine and dogs with him to Mecca, being very fond of hunting, and to have ordered an iron tomb to be made for him, which he proposed to have placed in a certain part of the Caaba. Notwithstanding his life was one continued scene of debauchery, he had quick parts, and was a tolerable good poet; though he exercised his genius chiefly on the most obscene and lascivious subjects. A specimen of his poetical performances has been preserved by Al Makîn. Eutychius represents him as a person of considerable eloquence, though this was not of the least advantage either to himself or his subjects. To his other enormous crimes he added that of gluttony, according to Al Makîn. He was assassinated towards the close of the Latter Jomâda, after he had reigned a year and three months, being then about forty-two years of age. He had thirteen children, of both sexes. He is said, by the Persian historians, to have been so impious a prince, that he tore to pieces, and trode under foot, several copies of the Koran. After all, his greatest crime seems to have been the contempt he shewed for the ceremonies of a religion founded upon imposture, and supported by fanaticism^t.

*He is succeeded by
Yezid, the
son of Al
Walîd I.*

Yezid, the son of Al Walîd I. who succeeded Al Walîd II. in the khalifat, was, according to Abul-Faraj, a just and virtuous prince. He was generally surnamed Abu Khâled, and sometimes, by way of derision, Al Nakes, *the Diminisher*, and Ebn Al Nakes, *the Son of the Diminisher*, or *the Son of the Diminished*, because he found himself obliged, by the emptiness of his coffers, to diminish the pay that had been allowed the soldiery by the khalifs. His mother was Mah Afrid, or Shahferend, according to the Arab historians, the daughter of Firûz, the son of Yazde-

* Aut. Leb. Tarikh, Khondemir, Ebn Shohnan, Al Mostatrafi, apud Pocock, in Not. ad Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 136. ut & ipse Poc. ibid. Reland de Relig. Moham. p. 270. Millius de Mohammedism. ante Mohammed. p. 311. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 210, 211. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 85, 86. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 388-391. Theophan. ubi sup. p. 351. Cedren. ubi sup. p. 461.

jerd. He became, therefore, sovereign of Persia by hereditary right; and was so far from thinking himself above claiming the title derived to him from his mother, even after he was khalif, that he constantly styled himself the son of Khosrû, king of Persia, the descendent of the khalif Merwân, and a prince amongst whose ancestors, of the mother's side, were the Roman emperor and the khakan. Soon after his inauguration, he caused the Moslems to acknowledge his brother Ibrahim heir apparent of the crown, the succession to devolve after him upon Abd'alaziz Ebn Al Hejâj Ebn Abd'almâlec; and then forced them to take the oath of allegiance, or fidelity, to those princes. Upon the news of Al Walîd's violent death, great commotions happened in the provinces. The people of Hems demanded the blood of the khalif, or, in other words, insisted that vengeance should be taken of his murderers for the effusion of that blood. To extinguish this rebellion, Yezid sent an army against them; which they soon defeated, and put three hundred of his men to the sword. Solimân Ebn Heshâm, who had been loaded with irons, made an irruption into the district of Al Maarra Al Nooman, or Maarra Nomani, ravaged it, and then advanced to Damascus. The people of Palestine rose against their governor, and killed him. During these troubles, Yezid removed Yusef Ebn Omar from the lieutenancy of Irâk, and substituted Mansûr Ebn Jamhûr in his room. About the same time, Merwân Ebn Mohammed, surnamed Himar, rebelled against Yezid in Armenia; proclaiming, that his design was to revenge the death of Al Walîd. He assembled a very considerable force, but was pacified by Yezid, who conferred upon him the government of Mesopotamia, Mawfel, Armenia, and Aderbijân, on condition that he should take the oath of allegiance to him. The Greek writers seem to intimate, that he was a friend to the family of Al Walîd II. and desirous of taking the sons of that khalif under his protection; an assertion which is confirmed by some of the Arab historians. We are told by Theophanes and Cedrenus, that a comet appeared in the northern part of the hemisphere, towards the close of the khalifat of Al Walîd; and that the people seated on the coast of the Caspian sea were greatly alarmed by several violent shocks of an earthquake about the same time. It cannot be inferred from Roderic of Toledo, that any thing remarkable happened, during the reign of Yezid Ebn Al Walîd Ebn Abd'almâlec, in Spain.

*Yezid dies
of the
plague,
after he
had reign-
ed six
months.*

Soon after the conclusion of the pacification between the khalif and Merwân Ebn Mohammed, surnamed Himar, at Harrân in Mesopotamia, the former died of the plague at Damascus, on Wednesday the 18th of the month Dhu'l-hajja, in the 126th year of the Hejra, after he had reigned five or six months, and was, at the time of his death, forty, or, as others say, forty-six years of age. His funeral service was performed by Ibrahim Ebn Al Walid, his brother, who succeeded him. As to his person, he was of a thin habit of body, middling stature, and a swarthy complexion: his mustaches, or whiskers, were not so thick and large as those of the Arabs generally are. With regard to his disposition, he is said to have been ostentatious, eloquent, and proud. He was, however, after his elevation to the Moslem throne, esteemed as an honest, just, and good-natured prince. He hath been represented as a favourer of the Kadarians, a sect denying absolute predestination; saying, that evil and injustice ought not to be attributed to God, but to man, who is a free agent, and may therefore be rewarded or punished for his actions, which God has granted him power either to commit or avoid.

Some farther particulars relating to him.

We are told by Al Makîn, that the body of Yezid, which, as well as that of his predecessor Al Walid, seems to have been buried at Damascus, was dug up, and affixed to a cross, or gibbet, by order of Merwân Ebn Mohammed, surnamed Himar, the last khalif of the house of Ommiyah, after he had ascended the Moslem throne.

Ibrahim Ebn Al Walid ascends the throne;

Ibrahim Ebn Al Walid Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân Ebn Al Hakem, in consequence of the settlement of the succession in the preceding reign, was declared khalif the same day that his brother Yezid died. His mother's name was Naama, or, as others say, Hathefa. His subjects sometimes dignified him with the title of khalif, sometimes with that of emperor of the faithful, and sometimes they considered him only as a private person. His reign was so short, that it has scarce been mentioned by Eutychius; nor have Dionysius Telmarenfis and Theophanes taken any farther notice of him than barely to observe that he succeeded his brother Yezid. According to the former of those writers, about the time that this prince first assumed the government, a dreadful famine and pestilence raged all over the East.

and is deposed.

In the beginning of the year of the Hejra 127, commencing October 13, 744, Merwân Ebn Mohammed Ebn Merwân Ebn Al Hakem, surnamed Himar, the governor of Mesopotamia, Mawfel, Armenia, and Aderbijân, who

who had rebelled against Yezid, under the pretext of revenging the murder of Al Walid II. marched first to Edeffa, and afterwards to Kinnisrîn, with a powerful army, in order to besiege Damascus and depose Ibrahim. Basfar and Mafrûr Ebn Al Walid, who then commanded the khalif's forces at Kinnisrîn, being apprized of Merwân's approach, advanced at the head of their troops to give him battle; but they were deserted by their men, who went over in a body to the enemy, and delivered up their generals into Merwân's hands. Basfar and Mafrûr were, therefore, thrown into prison, and for some time closely confined; then Merwân advanced to Hems, the inhabitants of which city immediately took the oath of allegiance to him. Here he reinforced his army with such an additional number of troops, that it amounted to eighty thousand effective men. With this force he marched against Solimân Ebn Heshâm, Ibrahim's general, who was in motion with an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men. As soon as the two armies came in sight, Merwân invited the khalif's forces to join him, in order to take vengeance of the murderers of Al Walid II. but they declining this invitation, a fierce and bloody conflict ensued, in which Solimân was defeated with incredible slaughter, and forced to fly with the remains of his army to Damascus. Merwân took many prisoners in this decisive action; but released them upon their taking the oath of fidelity to Al Hakem and Othmân, Al Walid's sons, who had remained in a state of confinement ever since their father's tragical fate, at Damascus; but this step in reality proved not of the least service to those unfortunate princes: for Solimân being well assured of Merwân's intention to fix one of them upon the Moslem throne, he no sooner arrived at Damascus than he and Ibrahim ordered both of them to be assassinated: he then plundered the imperial treasury, and, notwithstanding the measures concerted to intercept him, made his escape. However, Al Hakem and Othmân, foreseeing what would happen before their deaths, took care to transfer their right to Merwân, and declared to their fellow-prisoner, Abu Mohammed Al Sheibâni, that in case they should be destroyed, Merwân ought to be considered by all the Moslems as lawful khalif and imâm. Soon after Solimân's depasture, the citizens of Damascus opened their gates to Merwân, who caused the bodies of the two young princes to be solemnly interred, and was saluted khalif by Abu Mohammed Al Sheibâni, now released from his confinement, in consequence of the

G 2

declaration

declaration that had been formerly made to him. Ibrahim Ebn Al Walîd, the deposed khalif, and all the people of Syria, at the same time recognized his authority; so that there was no person in the empire capable of disputing his title, or in any respect of standing in competition with him.

*Ibrahim
lives to the
year of the
Hejra 132.*

As Ibrahim so readily acknowledged Merwân emperor of the Moslems, he survived this revolution, and lived to the year of the Hejra 132; when, as some say, he was assassinated by Nû'ûn, or, according to others, was drowned; or lastly, as others maintain, was murdered by Merwân's son, who is said afterwards to have affixed his body to a gibbet or cross; so that we have no certain account of the circumstances attending the death of this prince. With regard to his person, he had small whiskers or mustaches, not unlike those of his predecessor Yezid, and two remarkable locks of curled hair. He was, according to the authors followed by Al Makîn, of a stupid and imprudent disposition. He reigned, as Al Makîn and Abu'l-Faraj assert, only sixty-nine or seventy days; so that, by some writers, he is not ranked amongst the khalifs or Moslem emperors. We are told by Ebn Shohnah, that this Ibrahim was surnamed Al Makhlû, or *the Deposed*. He has likewise been mentioned by Khondemir, as a person entirely reduced to a private station. Another of the Persian historians relates, that he was cut off about three months after he was driven from the throne; though, in our opinion, a greater degree of credit is due to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, who extends his life, as has been already observed, to the 132d year of the Hejra^u.

*He is suc-
ceeded by
Merwân
Ebn Mo-
hammed.*

Soon after the accession of Merwân Ebn Mohammed Ebn Merwân Al Hakem, he took his predecessor Ibrahim Ebn Al Walîd Ebn Abd'almâlec, and Solimân Ebn Heshâm, at their request, under his protection; though the latter, with several others of the house of Ommiyah, not only refused to assist at his inauguration, but even at first opposed, to the utmost of their power, every step taken by the people of Damascus in favour of the new khalif. His mother's name, according to Abu Jaafar and Al Makîn, who mention her as the daughter of Ibrahim Ebn Afir Al Nakha'i, was Liana. She was, as Eutychius informs us, Mosab Ebn Zobeir's widow, when Mohammed, Merwân's father, wedded her. This khalif was surnamed Abu Abd'-

^u Al Makîn ubi supra, p. 88. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 212. Ebn Shohnah, Khondemir, Aut. Leb Tarikh, Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, D'Herbel. Bibl. Orient. art. Ibrahim Ben Valid, p. 480.

almâlec, and styled, from his undaunted courage, by some of his subjects, Himar Al Jezirah, i. e. *the Ass of Mesopotamia, or the warlike Ass*; the asses of that country being, in his days, remarkable for their unparalleled fortitude and intrepidity. He had likewise the appellation of Al Jaadi, which is said to have been derived from his uncle Al Jaad Ebn Darham. He was scarce settled on his throne, when he conferred the government of Egypt upon Hafs Ebn Abahia, whom he removed from that honourable post in about sixteen days time, and substituted Hafs Ebn Al Walid in his room.

The same year, that is the 127th of the Hejra, the people of Hems revolted against Merwân, who opposed them at the head of a powerful army. Upon his arrival before the town, he desired to know what could excite them to such a defection, and summoned them to surrender: they assured him, that they were disposed to obey his orders, and opening one of their gates, immediately admitted him, with three hundred of his men, into the town. The troops that entered with him they instantly put to the sword, and the khalif himself with much difficulty escaped through the gate of Tadmor. However, he afterwards defeated them in a pitched battle, put a great number to the sword, dismantled their city, and affixed to crosses, erected for that purpose, the bodies of about six hundred of those who had been the most active in this rebellion.

The people of Hems rebel against Merwân.

The people of Damascus, following the example of the citizens of Hems, soon after threw off their allegiance to the khalif, and deposed the governor he had appointed to preside over them; but after the extinction of the former rebellion, Merwân moved with great celerity towards Damascus, entered the city by force, and brought to condign punishment the ring-leaders who had excited the Damascenes to revolt. This success effectually appeased all commotions, and restored the capital of the Moslem empire to its former tranquility.

The Damascenes likewise declare against him.

In the 127th year of the Hejra, Solimân Ebn Heshâm set up for himself at Basra, where he was proclaimed khalif by the people of that city. In order to support his pretensions to the imperial dignity, he raised an army at Basra, consisting of ten thousand effective men, with which he advanced to Kinnisrîn, where he was joined by a great number of Syrians, who repaired to his standard from all parts. Merwân, receiving advice of the rapid progress made by Solimân, marched against him with all the forces he could assemble at Damascus and in the neighbourhood

The Basrans also revolt.

of that city, and at length coming up with him, gave him battle, and entirely defeated him, with the loss of thirty thousand men. Solimân's affairs being in a manner ruined by so terrible an overthrow, he fled to Hems, and was joined by a body of nine hundred men, who engaged themselves by oath to support him to the last drop of blood. With these troops he posted himself in ambush at Telmair, on Mount Al Zaitûn, in the district of Al Maara Al Nooman, in order to surprise Merwân; whom he knew must pass over that mountain in his way to Hems, to which place he took it for granted the khalif would pursue him without delay. As soon as Merwân's forces appeared, the rebels sallied from their ambuscade, and fell upon them with incredible fury: but Solimân, after a very vigorous action, was again defeated, saw the greatest part of his men slain upon the spot, and found himself obliged to retire with precipitation to Hems; but being closely pursued by the victors, he constituted his brother Sa'id Ebn Heshâm commandant of the place, leaving with him the shattered remains of his troops that survived the late carnage, and fled to Tadmor. Soon after his departure Merwân appeared before the town, invested it, and besieged it seven months; during which period he battered it incessantly with eighty catapults. The inhabitants, as well as the garrison, being reduced to the last extremity, surrendered to the khalif, and delivered up Sa'id Ebn Heshâm into his hands. In consideration of which submission, Merwân pardoned the rebellious inhabitants of this city, and took them all under his protection ^v.

*A revolt
likewise
intended at
Cûfa.*

About the same time Abd'allah Ebn Moâwiyah Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Jaafar Ebn Abu Tâleb asserted his right to the khalifat at Cûfa: but Abd'allah Ebn Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, Merwân's governor of that city, having been apprized of the intended revolt, took his measures so well, that he dispersed Abd'allah Ebn Moâwiyah's adherents without any great effusion of blood, drove him into the mountains, and found means to extinguish this rebellion before it could gain any considerable height ^x.

*The parti-
sans of the
house of Al
Abbâs be-
gin to be in
motion.*

Notwithstanding the success Merwân hitherto had met with, in rendering abortive all his enemies designs and machinations, the partisans of the house of Al Abbâs began now to grow powerful in some of the interior provinces of the empire. The first of that family, who made any con-

^v Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra.
Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 90.

^x Abu Jaafar Al Tabar.

siderable figure, was Mohammed Ebn Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Abbâs, who flourished in the time of Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz, and was nominated chief of that house in the hundredth year of the Hejra. When this honourable post was offered him, he resided at Al Homajima, and his father Ali was still living. Amongst the persons who formed the deputation sent him on this occasion, by those who were inviolably attached to the interests of the house of Al Abbâs in Khorasân, the principal were Solimân Ebn Kothair, Malec Ebn Al Hatim, and Mahtaba; who brought many valuable presents with them, and a sum of money amounting to four hundred thousand dirhems. In the first conference between them and Mohammed Ebn Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Abbâs Ebn Abd'almotaleb, the latter is reported to have said, "I shall soon die, and my son Ibrahim will be your leader, till he shall be slain. After his death, my other son Abd'allah, surnamed Abu'l Abbâs Al Saffâh, shall preside over you, and settle the government of the Moslems upon a solid and lasting basis. He shall likewise cut off all the members of the house of Ommiyah; a family that have maintained themselves so long on the throne by repeated act of violence, and an incredible effusion of Moslem blood." They were then introduced to Abd'allah, as their future sovereign, and had the honour to kiss his hands and his feet. As for Mohammed, he departed this life in the 125th year of the Hejra, and was succeeded in the honourable post assigned him by his son Ibrahim; who, immediately after his father's death, dispatched Abu Hâshem, a person he could entirely confide in, to Merû in Khorasân, then the residence of the principal friends of the house of Al Abbâs, to notify to his adherents that tragical event, and to animate them to a perseverance in their attachment to his person and family. Abu Hâshem succeeded in the execution of his commission, according to his desire, and received from the Moslems at Merû, a considerable sum of money, collected for his master's service. It appears, however, from Abu'l-Faraj, that Abu Hâshem was not the first ambassador sent to the people of Khorasân in the interest of the house of Al Abbâs; since, if any credit may be given to that author, Ziyâd was dispatched in that capacity to Khorasân by Mohammed Ebn Ali himself, in the 109th year of the Hejra. That this Ziyâd, upon his arrival at Merû, a city of Khorasân, made great complaints of the dissolute lives and iniquity of the members of the house of Ommiyah; and that he was put to death by Afâd, Heshâm's governor of Khorasân, who had received a full and ample

account of the whole affair. The same author likewise relates, that, in the 118th year of the Hejra, Ammân Ebn Yezid, a person of very loose and impious principles, came into Khorasân, and engaged great numbers of the people to declare for Mohammed Ebn Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Abbâs. It must here be observed, that this Mohammed Ebn Ali was sixty-three, or, as others assert it, sixty-seven years of age at the time of his death; and that he left eleven sons, besides his successor Ibrahim, behind him.

*And defeat
the khalif's
forces.*

In the 127th year of the Hejra, Ibrahim Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ali appointed Abu Moslem, a youth about nineteen years of age, of the family of Isfandiyâr, whose real name was Abd'alrahmân, to go as his representative into Khorasân: but Soliman Ebn Kothair, the chief of the friends of the house of Al Abbâs believing that Abu Moslem, on account of his youth, was not qualified for so arduous a post, and fearing lest his ignorance and inexperience should prove the total ruin of their affairs, refused at first to receive him with such marks of distinction as were required by Ibrahim, and even to obey any of his orders. However, to give Ibrahim proper notions, Solimân Ebn Kothair, Laher Ebn Korait, and Kahtaba, took a journey to Mecca, then the residence of Ibrahim; and, having deposited in one of his servant's hands a present, for his master's use, consisting of many valuable effects, besides twenty thousand dinârs, and two hundred thousand dirhems in ready money, they had a conference with him; the result of which was, that they should acknowledge Abu Moslem, Ibrahim's governor of Khorasân. In the mean time, Nafr Ebn Saâr, Merwân's lieutenant of Khorasân, having received advice of these commotions, assembled a body of horse, and sent them to disperse the rebels before they were joined by the reinforcements they expected from Syria and the peninsula of the Arabs. On the other hand, Abu Moslem having erected his standard, and raised a considerable army, advanced at the head of his forces to attack Nafr Ebn Sayâr; upon which a fierce conflict ensued, in which Nafr was entirely defeated, lost the greatest part of his men, and was obliged to make a precipitate flight. This victory proved extremely prejudicial to the interests of the house of Ommiyah, and not a little contributed to the elevation of that of Al Abbâs to the Moslem throne.

*Merwân
makes pre-
parations
to oppose
them.*

In the following year, being the 128th of the Hejra, Merwân removed Hafas Ebn Al Walîd from the government of Egypt, and substituted Joweirah Ebn Sahl Al Aj-

y Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 92. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi supra,

lâni

lâni in his room. He also made great military preparations to oppose the rebels of Khorasân, who now began to alarm several of the provinces of the Moslem empire, and even to threaten the house of Ommiyah with utter extirpation. After the late victory, they declared Merwân an usurper, and took the oath of allegiance to Ibrahim Ebn Mohammed, whom they asserted, by right of succession, to be lawful khalif and imâm. Many of the Syrians likewise secretly favoured the pretensions of the house of Al Abbâs; having been disobliged by Merwân, who, after the defeat of his predecessor Ibrahim Ebn Al Walid, had transferred the imperial treasury from Damascus to Harrân in Mesopotamia. Some of the Christian writers relate, that Merwân gained two victories over Ibrahim's forces the preceding year; having first defeated in battle Nekaim Ebn Tebith, in the plains of Gara, and afterwards Solimân Ebn Heshâm, upon a spot of ground at a small distance from the river Lita. After this last defeat, Merwân, according to one of these writers, made himself master of Hems, affixed Yezid's body, which he ordered to be taken out of the tomb where it had been interred, to a gibbet or cross, and extorted from a wealthy Jew an immense sum of money, amounting to four hundred thousand dinârs. Merwân also, if we may credit Roderic of Toledo, sent Thoaba, an Arab of distinction, this year to preside over the Moslems in Spain^z.

In the 129th year of the Hejra, Ibrahim Ebn Mohammed sent Abu Moslem a banner, which he called *al thell*, or *the shadow*, and a royal and imperial standard, styled by him *al sahab*, or *the cloud*. These Abu Moslem fixed upon two lances, which he ordered to be carried before him, whilst he proclaimed his master legal emperor of the faithful, and imâm, and published in the principal places of Khorasân the title and pretensions of the house of Al Abbâs to the khalifat. The names *shadow* and *cloud* he assigned to the people of Khorasân, which he interpreted in the following manner, viz. that as the earth would never be uncovered by the clouds, nor quite void of shade; so the world would never henceforth be without a khalif of the house of Al Abbâs. In fine, Abu Moslem brought this year such a formidable force into the field, that the khalif's troops could not make head against him; so that all Merwân's commandants of fortresses in Khorasân were obliged either

Abu Moslem makes himself master of Khorasân.

^z Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi supra. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Marvan II. p. 558. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 351.

*Merwân
extin-
guishes a
rebellion in
Mesopota-
mia.*

to take an oath of fidelity to Ibrahim, or within a limited time to quit that extensive province.

Next year Dakhâk, together with Yacûp, or Jacob, Kaibari, and Sakasbi, according to Dionysius Telmarenfis, rebelled against Merwân in Mesopotamia. These rebels assembled such a powerful army in the neighbourhood of Mount Izla, that they engaged the khalif's forces sent against them at Telmasrita; but were overthrown with prodigious slaughter, leaving the greatest part of their men behind them dead upon the spot. Theophanes relates, that this Dakhâk was prince of the Aruritæ, an Arab nation settled in Mesopotamia, who, in their wars, left their wives and children, and all their effects, behind them, that they might march with the greater expedition, and be more at liberty to engage the enemy, thus freed from all impediments. One Thebit, or Ebn Tebith, had a great hand in exciting the Arabs of Mesopotamia to this revolt; and both he and Dakhâk, together with twelve thousand of their men, were cut to pieces by the khalif's troops in the territory of Hems. Merwân permitted the Christians of Antioch, upon their application to him for this favour, to elect for their patriarch Theophylact, a presbyter of Edeffa, in the room of their former patriarch Stephen, who died this year. The khalif also commanded his subjects to treat with all possible marks of respect the new patriarch, if we may credit Cedrenus and this author. It likewise appears from Theophanes, that Merwân ordered one of his executioners, an Ethiopian, to suffocate in a sack of unslacked lime, Aba, or Abas, a magician, who had destroyed many of the Christians, been accessory to the murder of the khalif Al Walid II. and committed dreadful depredations in several of the provinces.

*The friends
of Al Abbâs
make a
farther
progress.*

In the course of the same year, Abu Moslem entered Merû with his army, and seized upon the imperial palace. He also obliged all the troops posted in and about that city, as well as in other parts of Khorasân, to take an oath to support the interests of the house of Hâshem, without naming any particular person. As Abu Moslem had found means to cut off almost all the officers who served under Nafr Ebn Sayâr, and entirely ruined the troops he commanded in the general action, which proved so fatal to the partisans of the house of Ommyyah, Merwân's governor of Khorasân found it impossible to bring another army into the field against the rebels before the present year: but Nafr having now assembled his forces, advanced to Naifabour, in order to attack Khataba, who had taken upon him-

himself the command of Ibrahim's troops. The vicinity of the two armies, as neither of them was disposed to continue long in a state of inaction, brought on several very fierce engagements, wherein Nafr was generally worsted, and lost thirty thousand men, killed and taken prisoners. From Naifabour Khataba marched to Jurjân, Jurjâna, or Georgiana, the capital of a province of the same name, attacked Banâna Ebn Hanthala, who had posted himself with a body of troops near that city, defeated him with great slaughter, made himself master of his camp, and took a very considerable quantity of plunder. As for Banâna himself, he was killed in the action; a circumstance which still farther embarrassed the khalif's affairs.

In the year of the Hejra 131, Nafr Ebn Sayâr, in order to avoid being made prisoner by Abu Mollem, fled to Raya, a town, according to some of the eastern geographers, belonging to Deylam, but, as others assert, to Khorasân. Soon after his arrival, he fell sick, and was carried to Sâwa, near Hamedan, or Hamadan, where he expired. About this time, Ibrahim Ebn Mohammed, attended by his brothers, Abu'l Abbâs and Abu Jaafar, his son, his uncle, and a considerable number of servants, went as pilgrims to Mecca. As he and his retinue rode on thirty camels richly caparisoned, appeared in splendid attire, attended by a more than ordinary quantity of baggage, and made a very considerable figure, this journey could not long be concealed from Merwân, then in the territory of Damascus. The inhabitants of the deserts of Sham, as well as those of Mecca and Medina, gave him immediate intelligence of this expedition. Besides, Ibrahim's intentions being already sufficiently made manifest by what had lately happened in Khorasân, it was impossible that his pilgrimage to Mecca, which was performed with so much pomp and parade, could long remain a secret either to Merwân himself, or his governors in Syria and Irâk. This journey, therefore, being soon discovered, the commandant of Damascus, by the khalif's order, sent a detachment of horse to pursue him; which came up with him near Harrân, seized him, carried him to that city, and confined him in prison loaded with irons, where he soon after died. Authors, however, are not perfectly agreed with regard to the circumstances attending his death; some of them asserting, that he was destroyed by drinking a poisonous draught, others by the fall of an old ruinous building, and, lastly, others by placing his head upon a poisoned pillow: but, not to determine upon the veracity

*Ibrahim
seized, and
put to death
by Mer-
wân.*

veracity of either of these accounts, he had, some time before he was taken, ordered his brother Abu'l Abbâs to retire to Cûfa, and commanded all those who attended him to acknowledge him khalif after his decease. Abu'l Abbâs, therefore, in consequence of this order, had made the best of his way, with his brother Abu Jaafar, his uncle, and several of his friends, to that place. There he, with his family, lay concealed till the troops, who had declared in favour of the house of Al Abbâs, to whom Ibrahim had written, and recommended him in the strongest terms, advanced to his support. According to Dionysius Telmarenfis, several violent shocks of an earthquake were felt this year in Syria; one of which overthrew St. Mary's church in the city of Mabug, or Manbij, and destroyed the bishop, and a great number of Christians, who were buried under the ruins of that building, whither they had retired for shelter. According to Theophanes, Merwân, either towards the beginning of this or the close of the preceding year, dismantled the city of Heliopolis in Syria, and put all the principal inhabitants to the sword. The same author likewise, as well as Cedrenus, informs us, that there happened about this time a dreadful earthquake in Palestine, and particularly that part of it bordering upon the Jordan, which overturned many churches, monasteries, and towns, and destroyed great numbers of people: and it appears from those writers, that the shocks of this earthquake, which was probably the same with that mentioned by Dionysius Telmarenfis, were felt in almost every district of Syria. The Greek writers insinuate, that the imperial fleet surprised that of the Arabs, consisting of a thousand ships, in one of the ports of Cyprus, about the same year, and so entirely defeated it, that only three of them escaped. After the extinction of the late rebellion in Spain, Yusef, though of a libidinous and petulant disposition, governed to the satisfaction of the Moslems of that country.

Abu'l Abbâs proclaimed khalif, and defeats Merwân's forces.

In the following year Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Mohammed, surnamed Al Saffâh, on Friday, the 12th of the Former Rabi, went from Abu Moslema's house at Cûfa, after evening prayer had been performed in the mosque of the Banu Ayûb, to his own palace. The day following, all the officers of the troops cantoned in and about that city, each of them cloathed in black, and mounted on a good horse, with a sword by his side, formed a sort of military cavalcade, at the head of which he repaired to the citadel, or imperial palace, where he first harangued them, and then

then received their oath of allegiance. After this ceremony, he sent his uncle Abd'allah, with a powerful army, to attack Merwân's forces that were encamped near Tubar, at a small distance from Mawfel, or Mosul, where that khalif was then waiting for an account of the success of the body of troops he had ordered to march against Kahtaba, one of the greatest generals of the age, consisting of twenty thousand men, under the command of Yezid, his governor of Irâk. Kahtaba receiving advice of Yezid's approach, immediately advanced against him with his troops, in order to give him battle, soon brought him to a general action, entirely defeated him, and obliged him to fly to Wâfet. Early next morning, Kahtaba's forces passed the Euphrates, in pursuit of the vanquished enemy; but the waters of that river being then swelled to an uncommon height, both he and his horse were carried away by the rapidity of the current, and perished. This tragical event by no means cooled the ardor of his troops, who, under the conduct of his son Hamid, continued to pursue the fugitives with so much vigour, that they were soon routed and dispersed. After the action, Hamid returned with his victorious army to Cûfa, and Abu Mosleme Ebn Al Halal was declared privy-counsellor to Abu'l Abbâs: a body of troops was afterwards sent to block up Yezid Ebn Omar Ebn Hobeira, in Wâfet; which formed a camp at Najila, before they entered upon any farther military operations. The new khalif, Abu'l Abbâs, whose mother Rabta, or Radiah, was the daughter of Abd'allah Ebn Abid, was clothed in black at the time of his inauguration, and retired, a month after the conclusion of that ceremony, to Anbâr, a city of Irâk, upon the Euphrates, which he made the seat of the khalifat, and consequently the capital of the Moslem empire, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari ^a.

Soon after Abd'allah, with his army, had taken post near Tubar, Merwân received advice of the defeat of his forces under Yezid, in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates. These disagreeable tidings greatly afflicted him; though he in a short time recovered himself, and resolved to give the enemy battle. A general action accordingly ensued; in the beginning of which the khalif found himself obliged to dismount, in order to make water: but a

*Abd'allah
likewise o-
verthrows
Merwân.*

^a Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 213, 214. Abu Jaafar Al Tabari. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 93, 94. D'Herbel. Bibl. Orient. art. Marwan II. p. 559. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 124.

second misfortune happened, of much greater consequence to his affairs than the former; for he had no sooner set his foot on the ground, than his horse took fright, and ran with great swiftness into the midst of his men; who, seeing the beast without his rider, imagined that the khalif was slain at the first onset; and, therefore, without informing themselves farther, quitted their ranks, and fled with great precipitation: nor could the khalif, though he made all possible efforts to rally them, bring them again to the charge; so that the only expedient he could pursue at this melancholy juncture, was to fly to Damascus, then the capital of his empire: but the inhabitants of that city, finding his condition desperate, treated him with contempt, and abandoned him; which unexpected desertion obliged him to leave that place, and retire into Egypt; over which country he had appointed Abd'allah Ebn Al Magbarah, one of his favourites, governor. Here he maintained himself for some time; but was at last attacked, and put to death, by Abd'allah Ebn Ali's brother Saleh, who was sent against him at the head of a strong detachment. At the battle of Tubar, an incredible number of Merwân's soldiers were killed upon the spot, and many more drowned in the Euphrates; amongst the latter of which the khalif Ibrahim Ebn Al Walîd Ebn Abd'almâlec, who had formerly been deposed, is said to have been one. After that decisive action, Abd'allah, Abu'l Abbâs's general, made himself master of the enemy's camp, where he found an incredible quantity of plunder, and pursued Merwân first to Kinnifrîn, and afterwards to Hems: from the latter of those places that khalif fled to Damascus, where he met with the reception already recited. As Abu'l Abbas's troops continued the pursuit, without the least interruption, a great multitude of the partisans of the house of Ommiyah perished on this occasion; which, as Abd'allah Ebn Ali himself was pleased to observe, completely revenged the death of Hosein. As for the citizens of Damascus, though they had so shamefully deserted Merwân, they refused to open their gates to the victors; upon which Saleh Ebn Ali, who was sent against them by Abu'l Abbâs with a body of troops, entered their city by force, and gave it up to the soldiery to be plundered for three successive days: he also put to the sword Al Walîd Ebn Moâwiyah Ebn Merwân Ebn Al Hakem, Merwân's governor of the place, and then pursued his route into Egypt. However, before his departure, if we credit Abu Jaafar Al Tabari and Abu'l-Faraj, he entirely dis-

mantled

mantled that city, and caused the bones of the princes of the house of Ommiyah, there interred, to be dug out of their graves, and burnt.

With regard to Merwân's character, he is said by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari to have been a valiant and magnanimous prince, endued with great prudence, and thoroughly versed in all the departments of government. He filled the throne a little more than five years, and was sixty-nine, or, as others say, fifty-nine, or, lastly, as others assert, fifty-six years of age, at the time of his death. He left behind him two sons, Abd'allah and Abd'alaziz; the former of whom was afterwards taken, and imprisoned, in which situation he remained till the khalifat of Harûn Al Rashîd. He was then released from his confinement, though loaded with irons after that event, died childless, and was buried at Baghdâd. The Arabs express the date of the catastrophe that befel the house of Ommiyah, in the person of Merwân, who was the last khalif of that house, by the word *kalb*, which consists of three letters, kâf, lâam, and ba, denoting *one hundred and thirty-two*, the number of the year of the Hejra in which Merwân was killed, and the khalifat of the princes of the house of Ommiyah entirely abolished^b.

Some of the Christian Arabs have pretended that this khalif, when in Egypt, attempted to violate the chastity of a nun. That saint, continue they, in order to defend herself from the violence with which she was threatened, and preserve her virtue inviolate, offered to give Merwân an unguent, which would render the part rubbed with it invulnerable; and begged that he would first try the experiment upon her. To this proposal the khalif readily agreed, anointed her neck with it, and then with one blow of his scymitar cut off her head; making in this manner undesignedly a martyr of her. Merwân is said by some of the eastern writers to have been a greater eater than most of his contemporaries. Though the khalifs of the house of Al Abbâs endeavoured to destroy all the descendants of this prince, yet we are told, that one of them escaped first into Egypt, afterwards into Africa, and at length into Spain, where he founded the second dynasty of the Ommiyan princes, who assumed the title of khalif. We learn from Theophanes, Dionysius Telmarenfis, Cedrenus, and Abu'l-Faraj, that the last battle, the loss of which proved the total ruin of Merwân's affairs, was fought upon

Merwân's character.

Some farther particulars relating to him.

^b Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 94. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. ubi supra, p. 559. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 392—395. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra.

the banks of the Zab, a river that has its source between the cities of Irbil, or Arbela, and Mawfel, or Mosul, and answers to the Lycus of Strabo. As Abu'l Abbâs Al Saffâh's troops had not only swarthy complexions, but were likewise dressed in black, they were termed by the Arabs Mefuadi, by the Syrians Uchama, which words denote *black* in the Arabic and Syriac languages, and Maurophori by Theophanes and Cedrenus. As the greater part of Abu'l Abbâs's army was formed of the natives of Khorasân, whose country bordered upon Persia, they were likewise called Persians by several authors.



C H A P. IV.

The History of the Arabs from the Elevation of the Family of Abbâs to the Throne of the Moslems, to the taking of Baghdâd by the Tartars.

S E C T. I.

From the Accession of Abul Abbâs Al Saffâh, to the Death of Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr.

The governors of provinces appointed by Al Saffâh soon after his accession.

THE new khalif, Abu'l Abbâs Al Saffâh, ordered Abu Moslema Ebn Al Halâl to be executed, for forming a design to transfer the khalifat to the house of Ali, or Abu Tâleb, from that of Al Abbâs. He also cut off Yezid Ebn Omar Ebn Hobeira, though he had before promised to take him under his protection, because he had entered into some machinations to fix Abd'allah, the son of Hasân Ebn Husein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, upon the Moslem throne. After these executions, he conferred upon his brother Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr the government of Aderbijan, as well as that of Armenia and Mesopotamia; upon his brother Yahya that of Mosul; upon his uncle David that of Hejâz and Yaman; upon his uncle Isâ that of Cûfa; upon Sofiân Ebn Moâwiyah Al Mohallebi that of Basra; upon Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Asna'b that of Persia; upon Mansûr Ebn Jamhûr that of India and Sindia; upon Abu Moslem, who had effected the revolution in favour of the race of Al Abbâs, that of Khorasân;

Khorasân; upon his uncle Abd'allah Ebn Ali that of Syria; and, lastly, upon his uncle Saleh Ebn Ali that of Egypt. The last of which governors chose for his deputy Abu Awn Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Yezid. Abd'allah Ebn Ali Ebn Al Abbâs, after his return from Ramla, made a public entry into Damascus, in order to take possession of his new government, and exercised shocking cruelties upon the members of the house of Ommiyah. Some of them he tortured in a most barbarous and inhuman manner, and others he burnt to death. At Rufâfa, he ordered Heshâm Ebn Abd'almâlec to receive one hundred and twenty stripes upon his bare back; which separated the flesh from the bones in such a manner, that it fell to the ground, and was reduced to ashes by this cruel governor's command; who, at the same time, said, "This is done by way of retaliation for the barbarous treatment experienced by my father from him, who told me that he received formerly sixty stripes for no crime at all." By the preceding list of governors and provinces, it clearly appears that the Moslem empire was of a great extent, when Al Saffâh, the first of the khalifs of the family of Al Abbâs, ascended the throne^c.

In the following year, being the 133d of the Hejra, commencing August 9, 750, the people of Chalcidene, a district of Syria separated by the province of Chalybonitis from the Euphrates, took up arms in favour of the house of Ommiyah, and advanced into the neighbourhood of Hems; but were overthrown by the khalif's troops, who put four thousand men to the sword. About the same time, a body of Arabs of the faction of Kais, under the command of Burikha, formed a conspiracy against the khalif, and cut off a considerable number of the partisans of the house of Al Abbâs; but they were at last dispersed, with very great loss, by Al Saffâh's forces. As the Arabs on this occasion appeared in white cloaths, and the khalif's men in black, hence arose the two different factions of the Whites and Blacks in Syria, which have been remarked by several of the eastern writers. However, Merwân's head having been cut off, after the last defeat of that prince's forces, in Egypt, it was embalmed, and exposed to public view in the principal cities of the empire, which effectually appeased these commotions. Theophanes relates, that the Arabs were divided at this time into two factions, which he calls the Kaisians and the Imanites; the

The khalif's troops gain several advantages over the partisans of the house of Ommiyah.

^c Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 97.

latter of which were either the people inhabiting the province of Omân, or that branch of the Shiites denominated Imâmians by some of the Moslem writers. These Imânites, according to the same author, were superior in fortitude to the Kaifians, had destroyed great numbers of them before, and then joined the forces assembled by Kahataba to act in favour of the house of Al Abbâs. Yusef, Merwân's lieutenant, notwithstanding the late revolution in Syria, continued this year to preside over the Moslems in Spain.

The principal events in the Moslem empire during the year of the Hejra 134.

In the 134th year of the Hejra, and part of the preceding year, the emperor Constantine Copronymus made an irruption into Armenia and the neighbouring provinces, reduced the cities of Melitene, Theodosiopolis, and Jezira, carried part of the inhabitants off with him into Thrace, and seized upon the greatest part of Armenia. It appears from Theophanes, that the khalif's officers, about this time, butchered great numbers of the Christians in Palestine. Dionysius Telmarenus relates, that considerable commotions happened this year at Maiphercat, Maipherchin, Maipheracta, or Mayafarkîn, a city of Mesopotamia. Cyrus Ebn Tebith advanced from thence at the head a body of troops into a district called Culab, and put seven of the principal men of that district to the sword. The inhabitants of a neighbouring territory, named Phis, receiving advice of this outrage, fortified their capital, raised forces, and made the proper dispositions, under the command and direction of John, a Syrian, to give the enemy a warm reception, if they should appear. But, notwithstanding these dispositions, Severus, a native of Phis, endeavoured to bring his countrymen under a foreign yoke, and joined the Arabs. However, John routed the troops sent against them under the conduct of Severus, and killed the greatest part of them upon the spot. He also defeated Cyrus's governor of Culab, who had rebelled against his master, and possessed himself of Elul and Phasphasat; driving him from thence with considerable loss. He afterwards advanced to Hadar, escaped an ambuscade formed by Stephen, who had been reinforced with a body of Arab troops commanded by Awf, a Moslem general, and entirely dispersed that corps. Gregory, an Iberian, likewise, at this juncture, moved at the head of a detachment against the people inhabiting the banks of the river Hara, and put many of them to the sword; a circumstance which induced the members of the canton, seated on Mount Say, to flock in great numbers to John, who commanded the forces of Phis,

Phis, in order to enable him to expel the Barbarians from their country. The eastern part of Mesopotamia, at the same time, renounced all allegiance to the khalif, and set up, in opposition to him, Burikha, who had been defeated the preceding year by Al Saffâh's troops. At Edeffa, Abd'allah Ebn Boktr assumed the supreme command, after he had destroyed the monasteries of Cuba, Resmat in Taifapha, Catara, Hefma, St. Lazarus, Beth Maada, St. Abel, St. Milles, and Senin, in the neighbourhood of Edeffa, Harrân, and Tela. The winter this year in Mesopotamia, and the neighbouring provinces, was extremely severe; the ground being covered a long time with snow, and the waters with ice. This frost, in conjunction with several large swarms of locusts, which entirely consumed all the corn, produced a dreadful famine in Iberia, Armenia, and Mesopotamia, especially the last of these provinces, into which a prodigious multitude had retired from out of the others, for the sake of subsistence^d.

Next year, being the 135th of the Hejra, the rebel Burikha, having raised a powerful army, advanced to Dara; where he was engaged by the khalif's forces, who defeated him with very great slaughter. The partisans of the house of Ommiyah received likewise two other terrible defeats at Mosul and Akula; the former of which places, called sometimes New Niniveh, and by the Arabs Mawfel, was a city of Mesopotamia, seated upon the Tigris, about six days journey from Maipheracta; and the latter, supposed by Bar Hebræus to have been the same with Cûfa, was seated, according to Sharîf Al Edrisi, upon the Euphrates, about five stations from Baghdâd. After these actions, in which the rebels lost abundance of men, the khalif appointed John, the general of Phis, who had signalized himself so much on many occasions against the Arabs of Maipheracta, governor of a considerable extent of territory in that part of his dominions, and loaded him with presents. His brother Abd'allah Ebn Mohammed, who commanded the forces employed in the reduction of the rebel Burikha, Al Saffâh had before constituted governor of Mesopotamia. Salikh Ebn Sabikh, another of the khalif's generals, undertook an expedition into Armenia, and obliged the principal cities of that province to deliver hostages into his hands, as pledges for

*As also
during the
following
year.*

^d Theophan, ubi sup. p. 358. Georg. Cedren. ubi sup. p. 463. Dionys. Telmarenf. ubi sup. p. 109, 110. Jos. Sim. Asseman. in Dissertat. de Monophysit. pass. Renaudot. Lit. Orient. tom. ii. p. 271. Roderic. Toletan, ubi sup. cap. xviii. p. 17.

their future fidelity to the khalif. Some of these John, the general of Phis, soon after came to release; upon which, the people of Maipheracta would have persuaded Salikh to cut him off by treachery; but he escaped by the favour of Abd'allah Ebn Mohammed, who took him under his protection. Stephen, one of the Ommiyan commanders already mentioned, died suddenly this year at Harran.

*Al Sâffah's
death and
character.*

In the 136th year of the Hejra, commencing July 7th, 753, Abd'allah Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ali Abu'l Abbâs Al Sâffâh, the first khalif of the house of Al Abbâs, departed this life, either at Anbâr, according to Eutychius, or, as Abu Jaafar Al Tabari relates, at Al Hafhemiyah, a city erected by himself, at a small distance from the former, on Sunday, the 12th of Dhu'lhajja, the very day that he completed his 33d year. He died of the small-pox, and reigned about four years and nine months, according to the best Arab historians. He was, in his person, tall, handsome, and of a fair complexion; but his nose was slightly distorted. With regard to his disposition, he was discreet and munificent, had quick parts, and was extremely averse to shedding of blood; though he was obliged, contrary to his natural inclination, in order to preserve himself upon the throne, to massacre a prodigious number of the friends and adherents of the house of Ommiyah, besides those he slew in the different engagements he had with Merwân's forces, upon the Euphrates, at Damascus, and in Egypt. Isa Ebn Mûsa, his nephew, repeated the usual prayers over him at the time of his interment. As a proof of his singular munificence, we are told, that he made a present to Abd'allah Ebn Hafein Ebn Husein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb of two millions of derhems at one time; which exceeded every thing of the kind that had been done by any of his predecessors. He was the first of the khalifs who created a privy-counsellor, namely, Abu Moslema Ebn Al Halâl, whom he caused to be executed for an intention to transfer the khalifat from his family to that of Abu Tâleb; those of the house of Ommiyah making use of their secretaries of state as counsellors, whom they consulted on all emergent occasions. He had a very tender affection and high regard for the family of Mohammed, and was a prince of very pious sentiments. One day viewing himself in a glass, and perceiving himself in the flower of his age, he addressed himself to God in the following terms: "O God! I will not say what Solimân Ebn Abd'almâlec, a khalif of the house of Ommiyah, used to say, I am the king and prince of
of

of youth; I pray thee to preserve my life only for thy service, and to grant that I may enjoy a greater share of health than of any other blessing." The words were scarce out of his mouth, when he heard one of the slaves in his anti-chamber say to his comrade, "By what I see, there is only five days difference between your age and mine." The khalif was immediately struck with the expression, as much as if he had heard the divine decree intimating to him the certain period of his days; which, in effect, those words did, as he was in a short time after attacked by the small-pox, which carried him off about two months and five days after they were spoken. We are told by a Persian historian, that this khalif was surnamed Al Saffâh, because he did not obtain possession of the khalifat without an incredible effusion of human blood. In this prince's reign, as we are informed by the Christian writers, the emperor Constantine Copronymus constituted Ishak, a Christian bishop, and his particular favourite, patriarch of Antioch, and the East, and put to death Matratinus, for not receiving him in that character. That emperor likewise sent an order to the patriarch of Alexandria to admit Ishak in the above capacity, or, in case of refusal, to repair immediately to Constantinople; with which he did not think fit to comply. But Ishak and Athanasius, who succeeded him, dying soon after, George was advanced to the patriarchate of Antioch; and removed afterwards from that honourable post by the following khalif, Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr, who substituted in his room a Christian bishop, one of his most intimate friends. In the beginning of the khalifat of Al Saffâh, several engagements happened between his forces and those of Merwân in Egypt, before he could make himself absolute master of that country. The latter of those princes is said to have been extremely cruel to the Christians in Egypt, frequently threatening to cut off the patriarch of Alexandria's head, and ordering a scymitar to be brought him for that purpose; but receiving advice, that Al Saffâh's forces, under the command of Saleh Ebn Ali, had entered Egypt, he immediately passed the Nile, took post in the city of Geeza, or Al Jizah, the ancient Memphis, and laid Mefr, then the capital of Egypt, in ashes, together with all the corn and provisions at that time in the place. He afterwards seized upon a nunnery, at a small distance from Geeza, made all the religious therein prisoners, and amongst the rest a beautiful nun, whose chastity he offered to violate, in the manner already related. Abu

Jaafar Al Tabari seems to contradict himself in relation to the year of Merwân's death; intimating in one place, that it happened in the 132d year of the Hejra, and in another the following year. Some of the Arab authors inform us, that this Merwân was a beastly glutton, and so extremely fond of sheep's kidneys, that he could not forbear wrapping his hand in the corner of his vest whenever he saw a sheep, and tearing out that part; which he devoured immediately. They add, that, after the ravenous operation, he threw off his vest, and put on another; and that he left above ten thousand such greasy garments behind him^e.

Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr succeeds Al Saffâh.

Upon the death of Abd'allah Abu'l Abbâs Al Saffâh, his brother Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr, who, in Al Saffâh's life-time had been declared presumptive heir of the crown, was proclaimed khalif in the imperial city of Anbâr, then the capital of the Moslem empire. His brother, who deposited the will made in his favour in the hands of his uncle Ifa Ebn Ali, with orders to open it, and oblige the people to take an oath of fidelity to the new khalif as soon as he was dead, had appointed Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr chief of the caravan of pilgrims visiting Mecca this year; so that the latter was on his journey to Mecca when the former expired. Upon the arrival of the news of Al Saffâh's death, he immediately dispatched Abu Moslem to Cûfa, to manage his affairs. When Abu Moslem arrived there, in order to oblige the inhabitants to take the oath of allegiance to Al Mansûr, and proclaim him khalif, he found that his nephew Ifa Ebn Mûsa, had been attempting to usurp the khalifat; but the appearance of this great general, who was soon followed by Al Mansûr himself, destroyed all the towering projects of Ifa, and obliged him to implore pardon of the new khalif for his temerity and presumption, who granted him his life, upon condition that he should always remain in a private station. However, his uncle Abd'allah Ebn Ali, then governor of Syria, was not intimidated by this success, but assumed the sovereignty in that country, where he gave Al Mansûr abundance of trouble.

It may be inferred from Dionysius Telmarenfis, who lived about the time that the first khalif of the house of Al

^e Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 97—100. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 214, 215. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 394—397. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 124. Ism. Abulfed. in Ægypt. Vide etiam D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Marvan II. & Saffâh, p. 559. 730. 731.

Abbâs ascended the Moslem throne, or very soon after, that several skirmishes at least, if not bloody battles, happened in Syria between the partisans of that house and the adherents of the family of Ommiyah, in the last year of Abu'l Abbâs Al Saffâh. The particulars of these actions, however, have not been preserved; though we may conclude, from the general account given us by the afore-said writer and Theophanes, that the troops on both sides committed dreadful devastations in that rich and extensive province. The Persians, however, as Dionysius calls the friends of the house of Al Abbâs, proved superior to their enemies in this war, and dismantled all the fortified towns of Syria, except Antioch, whose fortifications they left entire. According to Roderic of Toledo, three suns, or two parhelia, were seen either this or the preceding year at Corduba in Spain. It has been observed by Rases, that no rain fell there either this or the following year; a drought which occasioned a great scarcity of provisions, if not an actual famine, in that fertile region, over which Yusef still continued to preside.

Hostilities continued between the houses of Al Abbâs and Ommiyah.

In the following year, being the 137th of the Hejra, which commenced June 27th, 754, Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Abbâs was inaugurated at Al Hâshemiyah, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, with all possible demonstrations of joy on the part of his subjects. His mother Salma, the daughter of Bashar, who had been only his father's concubine, was born at Basra. He was first saluted khalif at a place called Al Saffâh, i. e. *the Famous, the Bright, the Illustrious*; on which occasion he predicted that his reign would be glorious. His uncle, Isâ Ebn Ali assembled all the members of the house of Hâshem at Anbâr, in order to support his interest before his arrival. This, at that juncture, he judged a necessary precaution, being apprehensive that his nephew's title to the khalifat would be disputed by a powerful faction, and that, in consequence of such a contest, new troubles in the interior part of the empire must immediately ensue.

Abu Jaafar inaugurated at Al Hâshemiyah.

In the mean time Abd'allah Ebn Ali, Abu'l Abbâs's uncle, having been informed of his nephew's death, and that his other nephew, Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr, brother to the deceased, had been proclaimed khalif at Cûfa, came to a resolution not to recognize his authority; and in consequence of this determination, caused himself to be acknowledged in the same quality at Damascus. In vindication of his conduct on this occasion, he alleged, that when

Abu Moslem overthrew Abd'allah Ebn Ali.

Abu'l Abbâs Al Saffâh, the first khalif of the house of Al Abbâs, sent him to attack Merwân, the last khalif of the race of Ommiyah, he declared, that in case he could deliver him and his family from all future apprehensions of that dangerous enemy who disputed the empire with him, he should be called to the succession immediately after him; and that, having executed that prince's orders in relation to Merwân, he thought he had a right, in pursuance of this declaration, to aspire to the Moslem throne. To support his pretensions he raised a powerful army in Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia, and advanced with great expedition to the banks of the Masius, at a small distance from Nisibis, where he encamped. Abu Jaafar, receiving advice of this rebellion, sent Abu Moslem against Abd'allah, with all the forces he could assemble in Persia, Khorasân, and Irâk, who having harassed him without intermission for five months together, at last brought him to a general action, and defeated him entirely. This battle was fought on Tuesday the 26th day of the latter Tifri, a Syrian month, answering to our November, in the 137th year of the Hejra, and of our Lord 754. After the action Abu Moslem seized upon the enemy's camp, and made himself master of all their baggage; but considering them as Al Mansûr's subjects, and Moslems, he did not put many of them to the sword. Abd'allah's affairs being entirely ruined by this blow, he left the miserable remains of his army to shift for themselves, and escaped to Basra^f.

Abu Moslem assassinated by the khalif's order.

Though the house of Al Abbâs owed their elevation to the khalifat almost entirely to Abu Moslem, there had for some time been a considerable misunderstanding between that general and Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr. The latter perceiving the former, in his brother's life-time, to be so revered by the people of Khorasân, over whom he then presided, that he seemed to be independent even of the khalif himself, would have persuaded Al Saffâh to put him to death; but that prince, not being willing to push his ingratitude so far, could not be prevailed upon to follow his advice. However, he refused him the post of mirhaje, or chief of the caravan of pilgrims visiting Mecca, which he solicited for himself, and conferred it upon his brother Abu Jaafar, in the last year of his reign. This denial greatly mortified Abu Moslem, who thought his important ser-

^f Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. & Al Makîn ubi supra. Khondemir, ubi supra. Dionys. Telmarenf. ubi sup. Theophan. ad Ann. Constant. Copronym. 14^m. apud Jos. Sim. Asseman, ubi sup. ut & ipse Jos. Sim. Asseman. ibid.

vices to the house of Al Abbās gave him a right to any employment he should think fit to demand. Leaving, therefore, the khalif's court in disgust, he could not forbear saying, "that, as the house of Al Abbās were members of the prophet's family, and had possession of the gates of Mecca, they might have left him the honour he desired." In order likewise to manifest his discontent, he departed that city a day before Abu Jaafar, and carried an immense quantity of provisions with him upon the backs of two hundred camels, with which he regaled the principal pilgrims of the caravan twice a day; and, at the end of every entertainment, made each of them a present of a vest. The affront offered on this occasion to Abu Jaafar, which was highly resented by that prince, afterwards cost him his life; for, as soon as he came to the throne, though he retained Abu Moslem in his service in order to extinguish Abd'allah's rebellion, no one of his other governors of provinces being able to assist him with a sufficient body of troops at this perilous conjuncture, he seemed to meditate his destruction in earnest. Having received advice of the total overthrow of Abd'allah, the khalif, who was naturally of a covetous disposition, sent an officer to the army, to bring him a faithful and exact account of the plunder that was taken. This conduct appearing very strange to Abu Moslem, he said to the officer with some emotion, "I have hitherto given so good an account to the khalif of the lives and blood of so many thousand men, who have passed over the edge of my sword, since it has been drawn for his service, that he ought not to have doubted of my fidelity with regard to the spoil." Nor was he content with expressing his resentment in this manner; for, instead of obeying the khalif's order in marching into Syria and Egypt after the defeat of Abd'allah, he retired into Khorasan, where he lived as an independent prince, though without any formal renunciation of his allegiance to the khalif. However, at last, either by the artifices of his enemies, or too great a presumption of his own merit, he was drawn to court, and met with a most gracious reception, though, a few days after, he was assassinated by four persons posted in his chamber by Al Mansûr, for that purpose. The following detail of the circumstances preceding and attending this horrid action have been recorded by Abu'l-Faraj. Abu Moslem, by his distribution of vests amongst the Arab pilgrims that attended him to Mecca, and his repairing the roads as well as the fountains and wells of water, so necessary for the refreshment of those pilgrims, had acquired such reputation as excited the jealousy of Al Mansûr,

Manfûr, and induced him to resolve upon his destruction. To which he was farther induced by a letter brought from Abu Moslem, who left Mecca before him, and received advice of the decease of Al Saffâh upon the road, in which he condoled with him for his brother's death, without congratulating him upon his accession. Nor did he either halt upon the road till that prince came up, or return to him, as in point of duty he ought to have done; circumstances which greatly aggravated the affront, and made Al Manfûr more sensible of the contemptuous treatment he had received. From that moment he not only hated Abu Moslem, but was afraid of him, and could enjoy no sort of rest till he had effected his destruction. Abu Moslem, on the other hand, was convinced that he had incurred the displeasure of the khalif, and therefore consulted one of his friends at Raya, whether it would be proper to go to court? That trusty confidant advised him by no means to see the khalif, but to retire instantly into Khorasân. This advice he rejected, and making the best of his way to Al Manfûr's residence, it was told him, that he had left his counsel behind him at Raya; which expression afterwards passed into a proverb amongst the Arabs. Al Manfûr, upon his arrival, at first treated him with great marks of distinction, and ordered him to refresh himself that night in a proper manner; but next day, when he returned to court, he was assassinated by four of the khalif's guards, who had placed themselves behind a curtain for that purpose, as related before. Soon after Al Manfûr appeared, they rushed upon Abu Moslem, and, amidst his outcries for mercy, and loud professions of loyalty, immediately dispatched him. Upon his first appearance before the khalif that day, he upbraided him with the disrespect he had shewn him, and particularly with having inserted his own name before that of his sovereign in one of his letters, as well as with ridiculing, in conjunction with Mâlec Ebn Al Haitham, a letter which he (the khalif) had sent him. Abu Moslem endeavoured to excuse his former conduct, and, in order to excite the khalif's compassion, prostrated himself before him, but without effect, that prince wishing God might destroy him, if he did not instantly put him to death. He then clapped his hands, and the assassins appeared; upon which Abu Moslem cried out, "Preserve me, O emperor of the faithful, from your enemies." The khalif replied, "What more deadly enemy have I than yourself?" Some writers pretend, that this great general had an intention to transfer the khalifat from the house of Al Abbâs to the descendents of Ali, or rather at first to have

have settled the latter upon the Moslem throne; and that this was the principal cause of his destruction. Be that as it may, he is said to have killed six hundred thousand men in the various battles he fought for the house of Al Abbâs, and on other occasions. He is also said to have been a great glutton and epicure, to have consumed every day three thousand cheese-cakes or tarts, and a thousand sheep, besides oxen and fowls; and to have had a thousand cooks, and as much kitchen furniture as would load twelve hundred beasts of burden. He had three wives, with every one of which he lay only once a year. He was one of the most jealous and suspicious of mortals, and kept his wives confined in a castle, into which no one but himself was permitted to enter. They were supplied with necessaries through the windows of that prison; and whenever any of them was introduced to his embraces, she rode on a beast that was afterwards killed, and the saddle on which she sat burnt the night after it had been used, in order to prevent any man's making use of them for the future. He was indisputably valiant and brave, though, with regard to his intellectual abilities and humanity, authors are not perfectly agreed; some of the eastern historians representing him as prudent, merciful, and discreet, whilst others have characterized him as an officer of a fierce, merciless, and intractable disposition. A certain Moslem being once asked, whether Abu Moslem or Al Hejâj was the better man? he replied, "I will not say that Abu Moslem was better than any other man, but that Al Hejâj was worse than him." Some pretend that he was born in a village belonging to the territory of Merû, a famous city of Khorasân; others suppose him to have been extremely well versed in the writings of the ancient poets of his own nation, as well as in the moral traditions of the sayings and actions of Mohammed; and lastly, others maintain, that he was originally a slave, and of Curd extraction; but however this may be, as he had the principal share in that surprising revolution, which fixed the house of Al Abbâs upon the Moslem throne, and makes so great a figure in the Arab history, we thought it necessary to present our curious readers at least with the preceding short sketch of his life and character, as well as a circumstantial account of his tragical exit^s.

^s Khondemir, ubi sup. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar, ubi sup. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 100, 101. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 215—217. Eutyck. ubi sup. p. 398, 399. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 183, 184. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 360.

*Sinan, the
Magian
rebels a-
gainst the
khalif; and
is over-
thrown by
Jamhûr.*

After the death of Abu Moslem, Sinan, a Magian, or adorer of fire, of Naifabour, the metropolis of Khorafân, who had seized on Abu Moslem's treasures, excited the people of that country to a revolt against the khalif Al Mansûr; but he was soon defeated, though at the head of a hundred thousand men, and the province reduced to the obedience of the khalif, by Jamhûr Ebn Morad, who had been sent against him by Al Mansûr with a powerful army. That general having acquired an immense quantity of spoil in this expedition, the khalif was urged by his avaricious temper to send a person express to the army, to seize upon it; a circumstance which so disgusted Jamhûr, that he immediately turned his arms against his master: but Al Mansûr having ordered a powerful army to march against him, he abandoned the city of Raya, where he had cantoned his troops, at the approach of the khalif's forces, and retired to Ispahân, in order to possess himself of that city and its dependencies.

*Jamhûr
Ebn Morad
is defeated
by the kha-
lif's forces.*

In the following year, being the 138th of the Hejra, the khalif's forces, under the command of Mohammed Ebn Ashâat, pursued Jamhûr to Ispahân, where he had taken post with a body of troops; but, upon the approach of Mohammed, he retired with great precipitation into Aderbijân. Here, for some time, he maintained himself; but the khalif's army at last coming up with him, attacked him with incredible bravery, and entirely defeated him. Dionysius Telmarenfis intimates, that an engagement happened this year in the neighbourhood of Mesopotamia, between the governor of that province's son and one of the imperial generals, who had made an irruption into the Moslem territories; though we do not find an account of this action in any of the Arab writers. On the 9th of March, either the present or the following year, several shocks of an earthquake were felt in Palestine and Syria, which did very considerable damage. About this time, Theodorus, patriarch of Antioch, was banished into an obscure part of Palestine by the Arabs, for holding an illicit correspondence with the emperor, and discovering to that prince several secrets relating to the present situation of the Moslem affairs. On this occasion, the Christians were forbidden either to build or repair any churches, to expose publicly the cross in any part of the khalif's dominions, or, to enter into any religious disputes with the Arabs. Salem, one of Al Mansûr's generals, according to Theophanes, invaded Cappadocia the same year with an army of eighty thousand men; but was obliged to retire from that country

try with considerable loss, and without any other advantage than the acquisition of a few Armenian deserters, whom he conducted into the Moslem territories. John patriarch of Antioch, Michael patriarch of Alexandria, Timothy bishop of Edessa, Constantine bishop of Samofata, Dionysius bishop of Harrân, Sergunna bishop of Marde, and David bishop of Dara, who was afterwards created patriarch, all Monophysite prelates, flourished at this period. It appears from Roderic of Toledo, that the Angli, or English, about the 134th year of the Hejra, ravaged the borders of the Moslem conquests in Spain.

In the 139th year of the Hejra, Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah Ebn Heshâm Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân, after the entire ruin of his family in Asia, arrived in Spain. That fugitive prince, at this time about twenty-eight years of age, was recognized by the Arabs of that country for lawful khalif of the West, and is said to have reigned thirty-two years and several months; leaving his crown, according to some of the eastern writers, to his son Heshâm, in the 172d year of the Hejra. He erected the great mosque at Corduba, or Cordova, about two years before his death; and founded a monarchy, which remained near two hundred years. The Spanish chronicle informs us, that he was surnamed Al Adel, or the *Just*; and that he left eleven sons and nine daughters. That prince assumed the title of Emir Al Mûmenin, or emperor of the faithful, of Spain, and king of Corduba; and, after the defeat of Yusef, in the year of the Hejra 142, asserted his independency, and refused to pay any taxes to the eastern khalif. Al Mansûr imposed about this time, according to Theophanes, an additional tribute upon the Christians in his dominions, which even the monks and religious were obliged to pay, sealed up the furniture of their churches with his own seal; and, that it might be the more easily disposed of, put it into the hands of the Jews. Some authors pretend, that the khalif this year issued an order for the reparation and enlargement of the temple at Mecca; but it does not appear, from any Arab author, that this was ever carried into execution. On Tuesday, March 3d, a terrible earthquake happened in Jezira, or Mesopotamia, which, according to Dionysius Telmarenfis, demolished three considerable towns ^b.

*A prince of
the house of
Ommiyah
acknow-
leged khalif
in Spain.*

^b Khondemir, ubi sup. Ebn Amid, Chronic. Hispan. Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup. cap. xviii. p. 17. Rases, Hispan. Illustrat. ubi sup. p. 703. Francofurti, 1603.

The Rawandians attempt to assassinate the khalif.

Next year, being the 140th of the Hejra, beginning May 25th, 757, the khalif Al Manfûr sent Abd'al Wahab, his brother Ibrahim Ebn Mohammed's son, with an army of seventy thousand men, to Malatia or Melitene, a city of Armenia or Cappadocia; where he encamped, during the space of six months, and in that time refortified the town, which had a little before been dismantled by the Greeks. He also made it a place of arms, deposited a great part of his treasures there, and left in it a garrison of four thousand men. He likewise built a castle, or citadel, at Claudias, or Claudiopolis, a city of Cappadocia, according to Abu'l-Faraj. But the most remarkable event that happened this year, was the rebellion, or insurrection, of the Rawandians, an impious sect, who, according to Ebn Shohnah, held a metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, in the city of Al Hasheemiyah; of which we shall here give our readers a short and succinct relation. The Rawandians were descended, or at least received their name, from Al Rawand; and have been represented by several of the eastern historians as some of the first who strenuously promoted the interest of the house of Al Abbâs in Khorasân. But Abd'allah, the son of this Al Rawand, having been engaged in some disputes with Abu Moslem, who was very powerful in Khorasân, he came to an open rupture with him; the consequences of which were by no means favourable to Abd'allah Ebn Al Rawand, and his adherents, who were entirely defeated and dispersed, and obliged to hide themselves in the most obscure parts of that province. From this time to the present year, after Abu Moslem had been put to death by the khalif's order, Abd'allah lay concealed; but being now freed from all apprehensions of his most formidable enemy, he assembled all his followers in the city of Al Hasheemiyah, then the residence of the khalif, and, at the head of them, went in procession round Al Manfûr's palace, in the same manner as the religious Moslems go round the Caaba. By this ceremony they gave him to understand, that they invoked him as their deity, and scrupled not to pay him divine honours. The khalif being extremely incensed at such enormous impiety, ordered an hundred of the principal sectaries to be imprisoned. This severe treatment so irritated the rest, that, since Al Manfûr would not be worshipped as a divinity, they were resolved to assassinate him, and substitute another in his room. In order to facilitate the execution of which design, they conveyed an empty coffin to the prison where their companions were confined, under the pretext of carrying

carrying from thence a dead body, and released them all, one after another. Then they went in a body to the khalif's palace, with a resolution to murder him; but he, being a person of uncommon bravery, though he was surprised, with very few people about him, instantly mounted a mule, and immediately advanced towards the mutineers, with an intention to sell his life as dear as possible. In the mean time, Mâan Ebn Zaidat, who had kept himself concealed, in order to avoid the khalif's resentment, having been one of the chiefs of the Ommiyan faction, seeing the imminent danger Al Mansûr was in, sallied out of his retreat, put himself at the head of that prince's attendants, and charged the rebels with such fury, that he totally defeated them. This generosity of Mâan was so signal and unparalleled, that it became a proverb amongst the Arabs. The Rawandians were treated so roughly on this occasion, that they were all, to the number of six thousand, killed upon the spot; and the khalif delivered from instant death, when his case seemed to be absolutely desperate. However, the affront that had been offered him in his capital, so chagrined him, that he resolved to build a new city upon the banks of the Tigris, and there fix his residence. The foundations of which city, known from that time to the present by the name of Baghdâd, were laid five years after Abd'allah Ebn Al Rawand's revolt, and consequently in the year of the Hejra 145¹.

In the course of the same year, Al Mansûr removed his uncle Saleh Ebn Ali from the government of Egypt, and appointed Abd'almâlec Ebn Yezid to succeed him in that post. Theophanes seems to have had the Rawandians in view, when he informs us, that some of the Persians, or Maurophori, that is, of the faction of the house of Al Abbâs, after they had dissipated their substance, threw themselves headlong from the summits of towers, and other high buildings, in order to fly from thence to heaven; which strange and amazing conduct he attributes to demoniacal obsession. Some other actions he also relates of them, which to him seemed to proceed from the same source. The ringleaders of this infatuated faction, or sect, to the number of six, he farther tells us, the khalif ordered to be put to death, after they had been discovered, at Beroëa and Chalcis. It is probable, from what has been observed by Roderic of Toledo, that Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah reduced this year Malaga, Seville, and some other places of note in Spain.

*Other
events of
the 145th
year of the
Hejra.*

¹ Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 217, 218. Golii Not. ad Alfagan. p. 264—69. Ebn Shohnah, Eutyck. ubi sup. p. 398, 399.

Next

The Moslems make an irruption into the imperial territories.

Next year, being the 141st of the Hejra, the khalif deposed Abd'almâlec Ebn Yezid, whom he had constituted governor of Egypt, and appointed Mûsa Ebn Caab to preside over the people of that country in his room. About this period, the Moslems forbade the Christians to write the public accounts of the tribute paid the khalif by the several provinces of his empire; though afterwards, finding themselves incapable of penning such accounts, they were compelled to repeal the order that had been made. At this time, a body of the Arab troops made an irruption into the imperial territories, defeated a strong detachment of the Armenian forces, under the command of one Paulus, who attempted to oppose them near the river Melas, and then retired, with a considerable number of captives, after they had put many of the emperor's subjects to the sword. Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah gained several advantages over Yusef in Spain, and assembled a powerful army of Spanish Arabs at Seville, in order to support his pretensions to the khalifat in that country.

Abd'alrahmân meets with great success in Spain.

In the 142d year of the Hejra, Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr deposed Mûsa Ebn Caab, who had been advanced to the government of Egypt, and appointed Mohammed Ebn Afad to succeed him in governing the Egyptians. Some disputes are said to have arisen amongst the eastern Christians about the time of celebrating Easter, this present year. At the same period also, one Theodorus, a Syrian, in the district of Heliopolis, rebelled against the Arabs, and brought a considerable army into the field: but the khalif's forces at last entirely defeated him, and cut in pieces the whole body of the rebels he commanded. Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah likewise defeated Yusef at Corduba, pursued him to Toledo, and formed the siege of Veia, or Beia. In fine, this Yusef was attended by a series of misfortunes, and at last slain at Toledo, by some from whom he expected, and perhaps deserved, a better fate. When Abd'alrahmân, after the great success he had met with, marched with his army to besiege Valencia, the Christians, according to Rases, being struck with terror, applied themselves to the body of St. Vincent, then in their possession, for its protection, and carried it with them in their flight to the sea-side. These unhappy wretches were afterwards discovered by one Alibohaces, an Arab of distinction, as he was hunting, and the people who accompanied him, on the sea-coast of Algarve. The men and women the Arabs put to the sword, carried the children away into captivity, and left the body of the faint
upon

upon a narrow tract projecting into the sea, denominated Promontorium Sacrum by the ancients, and by the moderns, from this event, the Cape of St. Vincent. As for Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah, after the death of Yusef, he seized upon Corduba, as well as the famous garden in Arabic termed Razafa, and made himself master of all the Moslem territories in Spain. He also cut off Jirât Al Hadra, Beye, and other Arab commanders, who had revolted against him, and assembled a considerable force, in order to drive him from the throne. He slew great numbers of their followers in battle, hanged some, and put many others to various kinds of deaths; by which means, he perfectly settled himself in the khalifat of the West, restored the public tranquility, that had been so long disturbed, and entirely appeased all commotions in the Moslem part of Spain*.

The ensuing year, being the 143d of the Hejra, Mohammed Ebn Asad was removed, by the khalif's order, from his post, and Hamîd Ebn Kahtaba appointed to govern the Egyptians in his room. About this time, the repose of Africa was interrupted by some tumults and commotions, which were preceded by a solar eclipse that happened on Friday, August 15th, at ten o'clock in the morning. Theophanes seems to intimate, that the Rawandians committed some disorders in several parts of the Moslem empire, and particularly in the neighbourhood of Basra. It appears likewise from the same author, as well as from Dionysius Telmarenfis and Cedrenus, that a very remarkable comet, resembling a fiery beam, and therefore called by the Greeks *docites* (δοκίτης) was seen ten days successively in the eastern, and twenty-one days in the western part of the hemisphere, in the month of March of the present year.

The occurrences in the Moslem empire during the year of the Hejra 143.

Al Mansûr being informed, that Mohammed and Ibrahim, the sons of Abd'allah Ebn Al Hafân, had formed a design to dethrone him, he sent out several parties in quest of them; and, in order to discover the place of their retreat, he took with him Abd'allah, their father, and all his domestics, loaded with irons, into Irâk, where he examined them, and afterwards ordered them all to be closely confined. He also treated Mohammed, surnamed Al

* Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. Theophan. ubi sup. Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup. Rases, Andreas Resendius, apud Joan. Vassæum, in Hispan. Chron. Vide etiam Hispan. illustrat. p. 703. Francofurti, 1603.

Diybaj Al Mothhab in the same manner, and condemned him to be scourged with so much severity that he died in prison. After his death, his head was cut off, and exposed in all the principal towns of Khorasân; the populace there being at the same time given to understand, that this was the head of Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah; which step was judged requisite, in order to make them believe that Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Hafan was destroyed, and thereby cut off all hopes from this prince's faction, which was then very powerful in that country. Abu'l-Faraj informs us, that the khalif carried twelve of the sons of Hosein with him from Medina to Cûfa; where they were confined in so small a room, that none of them could sit down. The little air, therefore, they were allowed to breathe, soon becoming tainted by these unhappy men, they in a short time expired¹.

*The khalif
Al Manfûr
lays the
foundations
of Bagh-
dâd.*

In the 145th year of the Hejra, the khalif Al Manfûr laid the foundations of Baghdâd, the capital of the Babylonian, or Chaldæan, Irâk, as has been already remarked. To this undertaking he was excited by the affront offered him, or rather the assassination intended him, by the Rawandians, in the city of Al Hashemiyah; where they rebelled against him, and besieged him in his palace. Another reason assigned by Abu'l-Faraj for the erection of this metropolis, was, because the place chosen for its situation was at a greater distance from Cûfa; the inhabitants of which city had never been faithful to him, but always debauched his army, and promoted to the utmost of their power a desertion amongst his troops. Besides, the people of Irâk, who had persisted in their fidelity to him, represented, that by building his capital on a spot of ground near the conflux of the Sorat, or Shat Al Arab, the Euphrates, and the Tigris, it would be in a great measure secured from the insults and attacks of those who should ever have an intention to dispute the khalifat with him; and that by being situated, as it were, in the middle of the tract comprehending the districts of Basra, Cûfa, Wâset, Mawfel or Mosul, and Sawâda, and at no great distance from those cities, it would be plentifully supplied with all sorts of provisions, by means of those rivers. Having, therefore, chosen, for the site of his new

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 101, 102. Theophan. ubi sup. p. 363. Dionys. Telmarenf. apud Jos. Sim. Asseman. ubi sup. p. 111, 112. ut & ipse Jos. Sim. Asseman. ibid. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 218.

city, a delightful plain on the western bank of the Tigris, and the horoscope of a lucky day and moment, by the unanimous consent of his astrologers, he ordered the workmen, assembled on this occasion, and drawn from all the politest parts of the Moslem empire, to begin to lay the foundations of Baghdâd. The Persian geographer places this metropolis in his third climate, and informs us, that Khosrû, named Anushirwân, gave the plain on which it stands to one of his wives. This princess, who kept great numbers of sheep there, erected on the very spot where Baghdâd was afterwards built, a chapel, or oratory, which she dedicated to her principal and favourite idol, called Bagh; and, according to the last mentioned author, from this event, gave to all the open country forming that particular district the name of Baghdâd, that is, in the Persian tongue, *the Gift, or Present of Bagh*. In process of time, continues the Persian writer, this chapel came to serve for an oratory and retreat to a hermit of uncommon sanctity and austerity of manners. This anchorite accidentally met with one of the khalif's officers, who, whilst his master was riding on the banks of the Tigris, full of his new scheme, had strayed a little from the rest of that prince's attendants, and approached the ancient structure raised by the princess in honour of Bagh. The officer soon discovered to the hermit Al Mansûr's design; upon which the holy man told him, that according to a tradition which had long prevailed in the circumjacent territory, a city was to be built there by a person named Moclas; but that he could not perceive any affinity between this name and those by which the khalif was called. However, the officer, rejoining his companions, communicated to Al Mansûr what he had learned of the hermit, in relation to the erection of a city upon the spot he had chosen. The khalif, immediately alighting from his horse, prostrated himself on the earth, and returned God thanks for being pleased to destine him to be the author of so grand a work: the Moslems then present being surprised at this action, unable to discover any similitude or resemblance between the names, or rather surnames, of Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr, and that of Moclas, mentioned by the hermit; Al Mansûr told them, that having in his younger years taken one of his nurse's bracelets, to buy with it some provisions for himself and his brothers, who were all then in very necessitous circumstances, she ever after called him Moclas, which was the name of a famous thief, or highwayman, very well known in Khorasân.

*A farther
account of
the founda-
tion of
Baghdâd.*

But the Arab writers give a very different account of this matter. The spot on which Baghdâd at this time stands was a fine verdant plain, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, and had nothing, before the foundation of that city, upon it but the cell of a Christian monk, called Baghdâd : from him, therefore, if this author and Euty-chius may be credited, the new city received the name of Baghdâd. Others, however, inform us, that this monk, whom they call Dâd, possessed a beautiful garden, adjacent to his cell, of a very considerable extent ; and that the town, whose foundations occupied this spot, was from thence denominated Baghdâd, or *the Garden of Dâd*. The first city of this name was erected by Al Mansûr on the western bank of the Tigris ; from whence he detached a body of the Moslem troops, under the command of his son Al Mohdi, to the opposite bank. Here the young prince took post, and fortified the place on which he had encamped with a wall, in order to cover his troops, as well as the workmen employed by his father on the other side of the river from the incursions of the Persians, who seemed to have taken umbrage at the erection of a new metropolis so near their frontiers. Hence it followed, that the city, or rather that part of the city, soon after built upon the eastern bank of the Tigris, received the name of the Camp or Fortrefs of Al Mohdi ; and, in conjunction with the other, on the opposite bank, formed the city of Baghdâd. The first of these, as having its streets paved with stones, was also denominated Rufâfa ; a name likewise applied to other remarkable places in Jezira and Irâk. The khalif had a superb and magnificent palace both in the eastern and western parts of the town, which went under the appellation of the House of the Khalifat, or the Imperial Palace ; though the former, which, by way of eminence, was styled the Garrison, or the Royal Inclosure, was much more grand and superb than the latter. The eastern palace was surrounded on the land-side by a semicircular wall, that had six gates ; the principal of which seems to have been that called the Gate of the Prefects, whose entrance was generally kissed by the princes and ambassadors who came to the khalif's court. Those writers are greatly mistaken, who say that Baghdâd occupied the spot on which the ancient Babylon stood ; since the former seems to have been erected upon the foundations of Seleucia, and to have been divided by the Tigris in the same manner that the latter was by the Euphrates. Besides, there is a village, according to the Oriental geographers,

graphers, upon the Euphrates, called Babel, considerably to the north of Baghdâd, near which the traces of a very large city, supposed with greater reason to have been Babylon, are still visible : whereas nothing of that kind appears in the neighbourhood of Baghdâd. The deflection of the gates of the interior from those of the exterior city induced the Arabs, according to Abulfeda, to denominate the place Zauraa, that is, *oblique* or *crooked*, though others pretend, that the obliquity of the Kebla of its principal mosque gave this metropolis that name : for the city, at least that part of it erected on the western bank of the Tigris, was entirely round ; the khalif's palace being, as it were, in the centre of it, and having annexed to it the great mosque, whose Kebla was oblique, infomuch that the Moslems performing their devotions here, turned their faces towards the gate of Basra. With respect to the eastern part of Baghdâd, it consisted of an interior and exterior town, each surrounded by a wall ; and consequently the eastern city, or principal part of Baghdâd, had appertaining to it both an interior and exterior wall. Some time after the foundations were laid, the work went on but slowly. Abu Jaafar, intending to demolish Al Madâyen, that had formerly been the residence of the kings, or shâhs, of Persia, surnamed Khofrû, and to apply the materials of the buildings to the erection of his new city, found the stones of so wonderful a size, and the towers and walls of so surprising a height, that it would require much time, as well as a very extraordinary expence, to level with the ground all the fabrics, and transport the materials, of which those noble edifices were composed, from thence to Baghdâd. Besides, he considered, that it would be no small reproach to him to have it said, that he could not finish the metropolis upon which his workmen were then employed, without destroying such a pile of building as could scarce be paralleled in the whole world ; and this consideration induced him at last to abandon his first design. We may add, that the demolition of Al Madâyen, had he finally resolved upon it, would have been not a little retarded by the commotions that happened in his empire this very year.

Soon after the khalif Al Mansûr began to lay the foundations of Baghdâd, Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Hasan Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, whose head the partisans of the house of Al Abbâs had pretended to expose in all the principal places of Khorasân, was proclaimed khalif at Medina, and assumed the surname of Al Moh-

*Mohammed
Ebn Abd-
allah Ebn
Al Hasan
rebels, and
is cut off by
the khalif's
forces.*

di. In order to support his pretensions to the khalifat, he assembled an army of one hundred thousand men; but upon the approach of Isf Ebn Mûsa, whom Al Mansûr sent against him, the greatest part of his forces dispersed of their own accord, and the rest retired to the deep ditch, or entrenchment, which the prophet himself had ordered to be dug round Medina, by the advice of Salmân, the Persian, for the security of the city, and which Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Hafan, on this occasion, ordered to be immediately repaired. However, receiving advice, that Isf was marching against him, he drew his troops out of the entrenchment, dismissed as many of them as were unwilling to engage, and with the rest, amounting to about three hundred men, came to a general action with the khalif's forces; but being vanquished, he was so closely pursued by Isf, that the latter, at the head of his horse, entered the town, and, without much difficulty, made himself master of it. He also put Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Hafan himself to the sword, and cut off his head; which he sent as a present to Al Mansûr, who immediately ordered it to be carried in triumph through the principal provinces of the empire ^b.

*Ibrahim
Ebn Abd'-
allah
Ebn Al
Hafan,
who rebels,
is likewise
defeated
and killed
by Isf.*

In the course of the same year, Ibrahim Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Hafan Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb caused himself to be saluted khalif at Basra, and obliged the people of that city to take an oath of fidelity to him. He likewise seized upon Persia and Ahwâz; and, in order to maintain himself in the possession of the provinces that had submitted to him, he also took the field with an army of one hundred thousand men: but the khalif's nephew, Isf Ebn Mûsa, after the death of Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Hafan engaged him, put his forces to flight, and dispersed them in such a manner, that they could never afterwards rally. Ibrahim himself perished in the action; and his head being cut off, was sent by the general to Al Mansûr, who received it with all possible demonstrations of joy. Thus the khalif, by his prudence and bravery, or rather the valour and conduct of Isf, appeased those commotions that threatened destruction to his family, which success enabled him to resume the great work he had begun on the banks of the Tigris, and to give law to all his domestic enemies that had for some time been meditating a revolt.

^b Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi supra. Ism. Abulfed. de Vit. Mohammed. p. 75—77. Al Bokhari, Al Beidawi, D'Herbel. ubi supra, p. 168.

Theophanes informs us, that the troops employed by that prince in the reduction of the rebels to his obedience, whom he calls inhabitants of the Desert, amounted to about eighty thousand men. He likewise relates, that the Turks, passing the Caspian Streights, made an irruption into Armenia, killing many of the natives of that country, and taking a considerable number prisoners.

*The Turks
make an
irruption
into Ar-
menia.*

Next year they made a second irruption, through the Caspian Streights and Iberia, into the Moslem territories; but being opposed by a body of Arab troops, an engagement ensued, in which many on both sides were slain. We are likewise informed by the same writer, that Isa Ebn Mûsa, having been before appointed to succeed the khalif, was, by the following artifice, deprived of his reverfional right to the khalifat: Al Mansûr bribed his physician to give Isa a violent and soporiferous sternutatory medicine, in order to cure him of the vertigo, with which he was grievously troubled. This, continues our author, produced the desired effect; deprived Isa, for three days, of his senses, and rendering him entirely incapable of holding the reins of government; which symptoms being observed by the nobles and generals, who had been assembled by Al Mansûr for that purpose, they unanimously agreed to call Al Mohdi, the khalif's son, to the succession, after his father's death. However, Isa, recovering the use of his reason, received a large quantity of gold from the khalif; which he considered as a sort of recompence for the injury he had sustained. That some particular circumstances mentioned in this story might have really happened, we shall not take upon us absolutely to deny; but that the whole relation is strictly true, we are by no means disposed to believe, since we are assured by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, that Isa was removed from the succession after the death of Al Mansûr, the right to which had before been granted him, and declared apparent heir to the crown after Al Mohdi, the following year, not without much dispute and altercation. Dionysius Telmarenfis writes, that there was a dreadful inundation of the Tigris, which almost entirely destroyed the city of Mosul, and all the neighbouring towns, in the month of March, this present year¹.

In the succeeding year, Al Mansûr got into his hands Abd'allah Ebn Ali, his uncle, who had rebelled against

*Abd'allah
Ebn Ali
destroyed by
the khalif.*

¹ D'Herbel. ubi supra, p. 168. Theophan. ubi supra, p. 366, 367. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi supra. Dionys. Telmarenf. apud Jos. Sim. Asseman. ubi supra, p. 112. ut & ipse Jos. Sim. Asseman. ibid.

him, and been overthrown by Abu Moslem near Nisibis, in Mesopotamia, and destroyed him in the following manner. The khalif invited him to his court, swearing at the same time that he would not hurt him. This assurance induced Abd'allah to leave the city of Basra, whither he had retired, and lived in obscurity with his brother Solimân, and come immediately to Al Mansûr's residence. Soon after his arrival, the khalif ordered a house to be built for him, whose foundations should consist chiefly of salt; which being built accordingly, a great quantity of water was, by his order, poured upon them. This occasioned the fall of the house upon Abd'allah Ebn Ali, who was thereby crushed to pieces.

The workmen still employed at Baghdâd.

In the 148th year of the Hejra, the workmen employed in the erection of Baghdâd continued their operations with so much diligence and success, that they had almost put the last hand to the new city.

Baghdâd finished.

But in the course of the following year, being the 149th of the Hejra, this famous capital of the Moslem empire was finished. That part of it, situated upon the western bank of the Tigris, is said to have cost the khalif four millions of dinârs. The city, when finished, was perfectly round, enclosed by a double wall, and flanked with a considerable number of towers. The castle, or citadel, was in the middle of it, and commanded every part of the town. The palace in the western town was called the Palace of Al Mansûr, as that in the eastern city went under the denomination of the Palace of Al Mohdi. The khalif styled his new metropolis Medinat Al Salam, *the City of Peace*, either in allusion to the name of Jerusalem, or because, at the time when it was finished, all the commotions in his empire were appeased, and almost every nation in Asia had submitted, or was become tributary^k.

Bagdâd appears to have been raised out of the ruins of Ctesiphon, as well as those of Seleucia, and was not only denominated by Al Mansûr, Medinat Al Salam, or Medinat Assalam, but likewise Dar Al Salam, or Dar Assalam; which appellation was plainly of the same import with the former. Hence it was frequently called by the Syrians Medinat Selama, and by the Greeks Irenopolis; both of which are equivalent to the Medinat Assalam of the Arabs. We find

^k D'Herbel. ubi supra. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 122. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj ubi supra, p. 219. Eutyck. ubi supra. Ism. Abulfed. ubi supra. Georg. Jacob. Kehr. Monarc. Asiatico-Saracenic. stat. p. 8—12. Lipsæ, 1724. Sharif Al Edrisi, ubi supra, p. 204.

two opinions concerning the reason of the name Baghdâd mentioned by Abulfeda. According to the first, Bagh, in the Persic language, signified a *garden*, and Dâd was the proper name of the man on whose garden was erected Al Mansûr's new metropolis; of both which words the name of Baghdâd is apparently formed. If we pay any regard to the second, the spot on which this city stood was denominated Baghdâd by an eunuch, sent by Khostrû king of Persia, thither, from an idol named Bagh, worshipped in those parts of the East, and the present made him by that prince of the ground on which his temple stood; a *gift*, or *present*, in the Persic tongue, being expressed by Dâd. The same author observes, that Al Mansûr derived the appellation of Medinat Assalam, which he conferred upon his new capital, from Vadi Assalam, *the Torrent of Peace*, a name frequently applied by the Orientals to the Deglata, or the Tigris, on whose banks that capital stood.

The western part of Baghdâd, which in after-ages was considered as a sort of suburb, went also under the denomination of Karkh; though this name seems to have been more particularly applied to that part of the western town to which Al Mansûr commanded the market, that had been before kept in the neighbourhood of his palace, in order to remove the rabble to some spot at a greater distance from him, to be transferred. Here he likewise ordered a bridge to be constructed over the Tigris, to keep open more effectually a communication between this and Al Mohdi's part of the town. The name of Karkh was afterwards rendered famous by this market, which occasioned the erection of a considerable number of buildings. The Dar Al Khalîfa, that is, *the house, or palace, of the khalif*, in the western town, called Kafr Al Mansûr, *the palace of Al Mansûr*, as well as the other named Kafra Al Mohdi, *the palace of Al Mohdi*, made a very elegant figure. There was likewise a very superb palace in Baghdâd known by the name of Kafr Al Hasan Ebn Zohal, *the palace of Hasan Ebn Zohal*, besides several public buildings erected by the khalif Al Mostanser Bi'ilah, and particularly the famous college founded by that prince, denominated by the Arabs Al Madrasah Al Mostanseriah, which, for the beauty and elegance of its structure, the number of students it contained, as well as the learned men it produced, and the ample revenues settled upon it, has been represented by Abu'l-Faraj as excelling, in his time, every other house of learning in the known world. Amongst other students here, there
were

were three hundred, who applied themselves entirely to the study of the Mohammedan law, according to the decisions of the authors of the four chief sects of the Sonnites, or orthodox Moslems; every one of which sects had a professor in this college, who had a monthly salary settled upon him, for instructing seventy-five young men committed to his care in the principles of the sect to which he belonged. Every one of those students had likewise a very handsome daily allowance of all kinds of provisions assigned him. There was also a bath destined for the use of the students, and a physician maintained at the khalif's expence, who visited them every morning, to see whether any of them stood in need of his assistance. The college had also a kitchen, cellar, and an apothecary's shop, belonging to it, that the preceptors, and the young men educated therein, might be taken proper care of, both in sickness and in health. Besides Al Monstanfer Bi'llha's college, there was another famous college and gymnasium at Baghdâd, founded by Moez-addin Abu'lfeta Mâlec Shâh, the third sultan, or sultân, of the Seljûks of Irân; and another erected by his prime minister, or wazîr, Nezâm Al Molk; the first of which was called Al Madrasah, or Al Madrasat Al Hanîfiat; and the other Al Madrasat Al Nezamiat. For several ages Baghdâd must have abounded more with Moslem doctors, and other learned men of various kinds, than any other place in the Mohammedan dominions, except Mecca and Medina. It was also extremely populous, and contained several forts or castles, capable of making a tolerable defence, which derived their names from their founders; such were Tak Al Harani, Tak Al Atrif, Tak Al Aki, and others; the principal of which was Tak Al Asma, so called from Asma, the khalif Al Mansur's daughter, erected on the eastern bank of the Tigris, in which that part of the city to which the name of Rusâfa, or Al Rusâfa was more particularly applied. One of the gates of Baghdâd being fortified in a peculiar manner, received the appellation of Tak, or Taka. The language spoken in this city was one of the most polite and elegant dialects of the Arabic, as there was a greater concourse of nobility and learned men, who excelled in many branches of literature, for several ages, in this city, than in almost any other of the East. After what has been said of the flourishing state of Baghdâd, for so considerable a period of time, it will not appear strange, that there should have been a mint, in which
a vast

a vast number of dirhems, and dinârs were struck. At present, though it groans under the Turkish yoke, Baghdâd is a celebrated emporium and frontier of the Ottoman empire on the side of Persia, to which not only many merchants, but likewise an incredible number of passengers, travelling from Natolia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, into Persia, continually resort. It is the seat of a pasha, to whom every one of those passengers pay a sort of tribute, or toll, which amounts to a very large annual sum. The religion professed here is the Mohammedan, though various sects of Christians are tolerated, of which the Nestorians, who have a church, bear the greatest authority. The Jacobites and Armenians have no place of public worship, but go to the convent of the Capuchins, who administer the sacraments to them. There are several Jews likewise that reside constantly at Baghdâd, but many more who come thither annually, in order to visit the sepulchre of the prophet Ezekiel, which is said to stand about a day and a half's journey from the city. The real garrison about the middle of the last century, consisted of only three hundred Janisaries, commanded by an aga; though the pasha, whose house stood then upon the bank of the river, and made a good appearance, had under his command a body of six or seven hundred horse. There were also then about three or four hundred spahis, commanded by two agas, besides another body of horse, under two agas, that went under the denomination of men of courage. Indeed, the Ottoman troops at that time in and about the town amounted to about three thousand men. The city then was fifteen hundred paces long, seven or eight hundred broad, and about three miles in circumference. The walls were of brick, and strengthened with towers that resembled bastions; upon which the pasha had mounted sixty pieces of cannon, the largest of which were not above five or six pounders. There were four gates, three on the land-side, and one upon the river; over which there was a bridge of thirty-three boats, or rather pieces of timber, brought from Mosul and other places, fastened together on goats skins, blown up like bladders. The castle, or citadel, was in the city, near one of the gates called Al Maazan, on the north side, standing partly on the river, and surrounded by a single wall, adorned with turrets; upon which were planted, though without carriages, about one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon. The pasha was assisted, in the civil government of the place,

place, by a kâdi, who represented the mufti, and a tefterdar, who collected the revenues of the grand signor. There were five mosques, of which two were tolerably well built, and adorned with duomos, covered with varnished tiles of different colours; ten caravanferas, or inns, two of which were convenient enough, for the reception of travellers; and several bazars, or market-places, arched, to enable the merchants to endure the heats, and watered three or four times a day, for the same purpose. Commerce then flourished to a considerable degree, though not so much as when the city was in the hands of the king of Persia; sultan Amurath IV. upon his making himself master of it, having put most of the richest merchants to death. Many of the Shiites, or followers of Ali, were settled there, being so credulous as to believe that their great imâm lived at Baghdâd. The pilgrims that visit Mecca by land are obliged to pass through Baghdâd, and every one of them pays a tribute, or toll, equivalent to four piastres, to the pasha; which branch of the revenue brings annually a very considerable sum into the coffers of the grand signor. Tavernier informs us, that the rafedis, or heretics, who seem to be a branch of the Shiites, in his time, were so rigid and strict, that they would by no means either eat or drink with a Christian, and scarce with a Sonnite himself. In his time, the inhabitants of Baghdâd consisted of about fifteen thousand souls. For a more particular description of the present state of this celebrated city, we must refer our curious readers to Tavernier's Persian Travels.

Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah begins to erect a mosque in Spain.

About the 149th year of the Hejra, according to Dionysius Telmarenfis, the Manichees, or Manichæans, settled at Harrân in Mesopotamia, having been guilty of most execrable superstition, were treated with great severity by Al Abbâs, the khalif's governor of that province. The same year, Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah, the grandson of Heshâm, who had attained the Moslem throne in Spain, and been acknowledged lawful khalif of the West by the Mohammedans in that country, began to erect the great mosque at Cordova, or Corduba; which, after it was finished, was greatly revered by all the Moslems in that part of the world. Al Mansûr's arms having been attended with astonishing success, his subjects now enjoyed the sweets of peace, without the least discontinuance or interruption¹.

¹ Khondemir, Al Makin, Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, cap. xviii. p. 18.

Next year, being the 150th of the Hejra, the famous Abu Hanîfa Al Nooman Ebn Thâbet, the founder of the first of the four chief sects of the Sonnites, who was born at Cûfa in the 18th year of the Hejra, departed this life. He died in prison at Baghdâd, where he had been confined, because he refused to be made kadi, or judge; on which account he was severely treated by his superiors, yet could not be prevailed on, either by threats or ill usage, to undertake the charge; "choosing rather to be punished by them than by God," says Al Ghazâli; who adds, that being asked the reason of his declining the office, he replied, "If I speak the truth, I am unfit; but if I tell a lie, a liar is not fit to be a judge." It is said that he read over the Korân, in the prison where he died, not less than seven thousand times. The doctrine, or tenets, propagated by him, as well as the sect of which he was the author, went amongst the Sonnites by the name of Hanifah, or Hannifiyah. The Hanifites are called by an Arabian writer the Followers of Reason, and those of the other three orthodox sects, Followers of Tradition; the former being principally guided by their own judgment in their decisions, and the latter adhering more tenaciously to the traditions of Mohammed. The sect of Abu Hanifa formerly existed chiefly in Irâk, but now generally prevails amongst the Turks and Tartars. His doctrine was brought into great esteem by Abu Yûsef, chief justice under the khalifs Al Hâdi and Harûn Al Rashid. We must not forget to observe, that Abd'allah Bathalmiûs wrote a treatise concerning the divisions, or different sentiments, of the Hanifites; which, amongst the admirers of that sect, is universally admired^m.

The famous Abu Hanîfa dies.

About the 151st year of the Hejra, about the time the khalif Al Mansûr had fixed his residence at Baghdâd, Jeyûrjeyus, or George, Ebn Bakhtishua Al Jondisâbûri, a famous physician, and a Christian, was brought to court, in order to cure the khalif of a want of appetite and indigestion, under which he at that time laboured. The physician, attended by his scholar, or pupil, Isa Ebn Shahlâtha, being introduced to the khalif, discoursed with him both in Persian and Arabic with great fluency and elegance; assuring him at the same time, that, with the divine assist-

The khalif cured of a dangerous illness by a Christian physician.

^m Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 219. Poc. Not. in spec. Hist. Arab. p. 297, 298. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Abou Hauifah, p. 21, 22. & art. Hanifah, p. 429.

ance, he could cure him. The khalif, charmed with the gracefulness of his person, the elegance of his language, and, above all, the assurances he had given him, ordered a sumptuous and costly vest to be put upon him, assigned him one of the best apartments in his palace, and commanded his chamberlain Rabi to treat him with the highest marks of respect. George having in a short time effected a cure, Al Mansûr asked him one day whether he was married? The physician replied, that he had for his wife an old woman, who was extremely infirm, and not able to rise from her seat. Upon this intimation, the khalif ordered Salem, one of his eunuchs, to take with him three beautiful Greek girls, and a present of three thousand dinârs, to the apartment of George, who not being at home, he left them with Isa Ebn Shahlâtha, his scholar. But George, upon his return, after reprimanding Isa for receiving them, returned them to the khalif; who asking him, with great surprize, the reason of so strange and unparalleled a conduct, the physician told him, without any scruple or hesitation, that it was not lawful for a Christian to have more than one wife at a time. This declaration increasing Al Mansûr's astonishment, he dismissed him with uncommon expressions of esteem, and afterwards heaped favours upon him with greater profusion. About the same time, the khalif sent three bodies of his troops, under the command of his brother Al Abbâs, governor of Mesopotamia, Hafan Ebn Kahtaba, and Ebn Asad, to penetrate into the imperial territories. These forces were composed of Sindians, Alans, Khozars, Khazars, or Khazarites, Medes, Persians, Akulites, Arabs, Khofanites, Turks, and others; but did not meet with great success in their expeditions. The khalif himself, at the head of a powerful army, consisting of eighty thousand men, marched from Amida, Amid, or Edeffa, Tur-Abdin, and Tela-Kom, in the beginning of the campaign, and made an irruption into the northern parts of the Roman empire. He advanced to a fortress called Kamach, or Kamakh, upon which he continued his attacks the whole summer, but without success; so that he found himself at last obliged, after he had lost an incredible number of men, shamefully to abandon the siege.

*Some other
events of
the year
151.*

That year, a complaint being brought before Al Mansûr against the patriarch George, by the bishops who had been deprived of their authority at the synod of Sarug, and he being by them accused of exercising tyranny upon the Syrian,

Syrian clergy, the khalif ordered him to be put in irons, and gave his accusers leave to substitute another patriarch in his room. Upon which, by their unanimous suffrages, they advanced to that high dignity David bishop of Dara; whose lenity and moderation might justly have entitled him to the profoundest respect and veneration of all the Mesopotamian clergy, over whom he presided; though none of them, except those by whom he had been elected, paid any regard to his orders and decisions, he having been greatly censured for being so active against his predecessor. Hence a schism arose amongst the Jacobites; some of whom considered David as their patriarch, others adhered to George, and others acknowledged no patriarch at all.

In the following year, being the 152d of the Hejra, the celebrated Christian physician, George Ebn Bakhtishua Al Jondisâbûri, who had been so serviceable to the khalif Al Mansûr in the recovery of his health, was himself taken extremely ill. On this occasion, he asked the khalif's permission to return home, in order to see his son and family, and to be buried with his brothers, in case it should please God to put a period to his days. Al Mansûr desired him first, in answer to his petition, to embrace Mohammedism; and, in that case, promised him a certain admission into paradise, after his death: to which proposal George made answer, "O emperor of the faithful, I am determined to go to the place where my ancestors reside in the other world, whether that be paradise or hell." This reply excited the khalif's laughter, who thereupon returned, "But since you have been with me, I have been free from the maladies with which I was before afflicted; how, therefore, can I part with you?" The physician said he should leave behind him his scholar Isa, who was a very skilful professor of physic, and would take all possible care of his highness's health. The khalif then dismissed George, with a present of ten thousand dinars, and sent an eunuch to conduct him to his friends and relations, with orders to have his body conveyed to them, in case he should die upon the road. However, he arrived at home safe, under the eunuch's conduct. After his departure, Al Mansûr sent for Isa, whom, upon conversing with him, he found to be a person of profound erudition, and therefore substituted him in his master's place. Isa, after his advancement, began to grow contentious, and to behave in a very insolent manner, particularly to the Christian bishops and metropolitans, of whom he endeavoured to exact large sums
of

The khalif takes a new physician, and rebuilds a fortress, in the year 152.

of money. Attending the khalif once to Nisibis, or Nisibin, he had the insolence to write to the metropolitan of that city to send him the most valuable part of his consecrated vessels, or church-plate; threatening him with his resentment, in case of refusal, and making use of the following remarkable words: "Are you ignorant of my interest with the khalif? Do not you know that on me his health entirely depends, so that I can make him sick or well as I please?" This letter Cyprian, the metropolitan of Nisibin, found an opportunity of reading first to Al Rabi, Al Mansûr's chamberlain, and afterwards to the khalif himself. Al Mansûr, after he had received this intelligence, finding how he had been deceived, first deprived Isa of all the valuable presents he had made him, and then, after a severe reproof, discharged him his service".

The Christian territories invaded by a Moslem army, commanded by one Banaka.

In the 153d year of the Hejra, commencing January 3d, 770, one Banaka, or Ebn Aka, a Moslem general, according to Theophanes, undertook an expedition against the Christians, in order to retaliate an irruption which the imperial forces had made into Armenia the preceding year. He advanced first into Isauria, and from thence marched to a fortress called Syce, which he closely besieged. Advice of these hostilities being brought to the emperor, he ordered Michael, Manes, and Bardanes, three of his commanders, to march with a body of Bucellarians and Armenians, and other troops collected from some of the eastern provinces, against the Arabs, and force them to raise the siege. The imperial generals, in pursuance of the orders they had received, assembled their forces, and, in conjunction with a fleet fitted out by the citizens of Cibyra, that had entered the port of Syce, immediately advanced to the relief of the place. Banaka, being apprised of their approach, made the necessary dispositions to engage them; and at length defeated them with great slaughter. It is remarkable, that the Arabs, in this action, made the first onset with the same outcries and howlings that the Turks utter, in order to intimidate the enemy, when they begin the attack, at this day. After this defeat, Banaka, who had made himself terrible to the Christians, by the depredations he had committed in the imperial territories, and the captives he had carried off the foregoing year, ravaged all the neigh-

^a Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 223, 224. Abu Jaafar. Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 103. Dionys. Telmarenf. apud Jos. Sim. Asseman. ubi supra, p. 113, 114. ut et ipse Jos. Sim. Asseman. ibid.

bouring district in a dreadful manner. However, he could not reduce the fortrefs, but was obliged to return, without having made any considerable conquest; though he acquired some valuable spoils, and took several prisoners, in this expedition.

Next year, being the 154th year of the Hejra, the khalif sent one of his commanders, called Mualabitus, or Al Mohallebi, with a numerous army into Africa; but we have no farther account of his proceedings. Al Fadl, surnamed Barinar, another of that prince's generals, made an incursion into the Christian territories, and carried off about five hundred prisoners. The people of Mopsuestia, or Al Masîsa in Cilicia, receiving intelligence of this incursion, detached a body of troops, levied amongst themselves, in order to cut off his retreat; but Al Fadl defeated this detachment, and put the Mopsuestians to flight, with the loss of a thousand men. The khalif went this year to Jerusalem, where he celebrated the great fast of Ramadân; and obliged many Christians to retire from thence into the dominions of the Greek emperor. About the same period, Mûsa Ebn Mosaab, the khalif's governor of Mosul, raised a violent persecution against the Christians of the Jacobite persuasion; which, by means of his deputies, or inferior officers, whom he had appointed to preside over several considerable cities of Mesopotamia, he extended to other parts of that province. One of these was Adam Ebn Yezid, the lieutenant of Amid, Arzan, Al Rûm, and Mayafarkin, who, in cruelty and barbarity, surpassed all the rest. One Zoaras, or Zoara, a monk belonging to the convent of St. Matthew at Mosul, having conceived an invincible aversion to his brethren, accused them to Jaafar, Al Mansûr's son, of having concealed the treasures of Heshâm, Merwân, and other khalifs, besides an immense quantity of gold and silver of their own. Upon which information, that prince sent a detachment to plunder the convent, and strip the religious, of every thing valuable belonging to them; then he issued an edict to oblige the Christians to transmit him an exact account of all the rich furniture contained in the churches and monasteries of Mesopotamia: but Jaafar dying, that edict was revoked, and the valuable effects taken out of the convent of St. Matthew were restored. At this time, a body of five hundred slaves, being chiefly Sindians and Khazars, or Khazarites, attempted to seize upon the imperial treasury in Harrân; but being repulsed by Al Abbâs, the governor, they were soon dispersed, and several of them executed. Al Mansûr sent officers likewise,

*The trans-
actions of
the year
154.*

this year, to collect, with the utmost rigour and severity, the capitation exacted of the Christians settled in Armenia, Syria, and Mesopotamia; and to impress the mark of slavery upon the foreheads, necks, arms, breasts, and shoulders, of that unfortunate people; severities which drove many of them into the imperial territories. Hence probably arose the custom of having certain marks and characters painted on the arms and other parts of those who visited Jerusalem, which in some degree prevails at this very day. The khalif also ordered the walls and fortifications of Callinicum to be repaired. The same year, a notorious villain, born in a village called Rama, in the neighbourhood of Tacrit, after he had been a monk for several years in the convent of St. Matthew at Mosul, threw off the monastic habit, and declared himself a convert to Mohammedism. This man, however, afterwards returned to the Christian faith, assumed the name and character of a prophet in the territory of Dara, where he pretended to foretel future events, and to threaten destruction to the Christians of Mesopotamia, unless they speedily repented of their sins; and had the impudence to place himself in the episcopal chair belonging to the cathedral church of Dara. Here likewise, though he was only a deacon, he communicated to presbyters the benediction, to consecrate oil mixed with spittle, and to distribute potions of this mixture amongst the populace, as a remedy that would effectually cure all disorders; by which he amassed great sums of money. The news of which proceedings being brought to Cyriacus, the bishop, he caused the impostor to be carried immediately before David the patriarch, who ordered him to be conducted to Harrân, and thrown into prison. We must not forget to observe, that about this time flourished Theophilus Edeffenus, by nation a Maronite and by profession an astronomer. He wrote a history, in which he makes 5197 years to have elapsed between the creation of the world and the commencement of the æra of Seleucus. He also translated the Iliad of Homer into the Syriac language °.

*The Arabs
seize upon
some dis-
tricts of
Assyria and
Mesopota-
mia.*

The following year, being the 155th year of the Hejra, Abd'allah Ebn Ali Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah Ebn Hadij died in Egypt, over which country he had been ap-

° Theophan. ubi supra, p. 376. Jos. Sim. Asseman. Dissertat. de Monophysit. Dionys. Telmarenf. apud Asseman. ubi supra, p. 114, 115. ut & ipse Asseman. ibid. Gregor. Bar-Hebræus, apud Jos. Sim. Asseman. in Biblioth. Orient. Clementino-Vatican. tom. ii. p. 311, 313—315. Romæ, 1721.

pointed

pointed to preside by Al Mansûr; who sent Mûsa Ebn Ali Ebn Riyâh Al Lakhmi thither to succeed him. Mûsa continued in that post, which he filled with credit and reputation, till the death of the khalif. In the 155th year of the Hejra, a great drought prevailing in Mesopotamia, the Arabs of Al Thalabia and Maad, with their flocks, camels, and other beasts of burden, made an irruption into that country and Assyria, seizing the districts of Musal, Beth-Garme or Bajarma, Heza, Marga, Canisapor, Resin, Kok or Cocha, and Salakh or Salacha. Beth-Garme, or Bajarma, was a tract of Assyria, containing the cities of Dakuka, Shahar-Kadta, Buazicha, and others that we find enumerated by Elias Damascenus, the Nestorian bishop, and called Germa by Agathias Scholasticus. It was a bishop's see, and had Constantine for its bishop in the year of our Lord 969. Marga was a town, or pretty large village in the territory of Mosul. Kok, or Cocha, may possibly have been the same city with the Coche of Arrian, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Eutropius, seated upon the Tigris, at a small distance from Ctesiphon and Selucia.

The khalif Al Mansûr, returning from Jerusalem to Baghdâd, constituted Mûsa Ebn Mosaab, in the room of Al Abbâs, his governor of Mesopotamia. He also ordered the inhabitants of Akula to repair the walls and fortifications of their city at their own expence. Having by treachery cut off Patricius, the lieutenant of the Greater Armenia, he seized upon his immense treasures, and deposited them in his own coffers. The Arabs, or Moslems, also opened a great number of sepulchres in Mesopotamia, in quest of gold and silver. At the same time two hundred and eighty heads were brought from Africa into Syria, and exposed to public view, by way of triumphal parade, in several places. The schism amongst the Christians of the Jacobite persuasion in Mesopotamia, some of whom adhered to David, as their patriarch, and others to George, who had been imprisoned by the khalif at Baghdâd, still continued.

*The khalif
returns
from Jeru-
salem to
Baghdâd.*

In the 157th year of the Hejra, a famine made terrible havock in every part of Mesopotamia; insomuch that the Christians were obliged to live upon flesh in Lent. This was followed by a plague, which swept away the greatest part of the inhabitants of that province. Meanwhile Mûsa Ebn Mosaab, the khalif's governor, treated the Christians of all denominations with the utmost rigour and severity.

*A famine
and plague
in Mesu-
potamia.*

*Al Man-
sûr's death
and cha-
racter.*

The following year, being the 158th of the Hejra, commencing November 11, 774, Al Mansûr set out from Baghdâd, in order to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca; but he was taken ill upon the road, and found himself so indisposed at the castle of Abdawaya, that he sent for his son Al Mohdi, who attended him in this pilgrimage, in order to take his final leave of him. He gave this young prince some salutary advice in relation to his future conduct, and laid his last commands upon him; which, according to Abu'l-Faraj, were delivered in the following terms: "I command you to treat publicly your relations with the greatest marks of distinction, since this conduct will reflect no small degree of honour and glory upon yourself. Increase the number of your freed-men, and treat them all with kindness, as they will be of great service to you in time of adversity; but neither this, nor the other injunction, will you fulfil. Enlarge not that part of your capital erected on the eastern bank of the Tigris, as you will never be able to finish it; but this work (said he) I know you will attempt. Never permit any of your women to intermeddle in affairs of state, nor to have too much influence over your counsels; but this advice (subjoined he) I know you will not take. These are my last commands, or, if you please, my dying advice; and to God I now recommend you." Then he took his leave of him, and they were both drowned in tears. From Abdawaya he went to Cûfa, and then continued his journey, though he grew worse and worse every station, till he arrived at Bir Maimun, that is, the *Well or Fountain of Maimûn*, where he expired on the 6th of Dhu'l-hajja, very early in the morning. He was carried from thence to Mecca, where, after an hundred graves had been dug, that his sepulchre might be concealed, he was interred. He lived sixty-three, and reigned twenty-two lunar years, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, Eutychius, or Sa'id Ebn Batrik, and Abu'l-Faraj. With regard to his person, he was tall, lean, of a swarthy complexion, and a long thin beard. He is also said to have tinged himself with something that gave him a darkish hue, and to have changed the colour of his grey hairs every month with two thousand drachms of musk. As to his disposition, he was of a mild temper in private, and could bear even with the impertinences of boys; but when he appeared in public, arrayed in his royal robes, even all the senior part of his subjects stood in awe of him. He was a prince of great prudence, integrity, and discretion,

tion, and of a very engaging and amiable conversation. He was also magnanimous and brave, and extremely well versed in all the arts of government; but these good qualities were greatly sullied by some of a contrary nature; for he was covetous to such a degree, that several very ridiculous stories have been told of him. He was likewise, on some occasions, implacable and cruel, of a fierce aspect, and imperious mien. He loaded some of his subjects with irons on bare suspicion, and butchered others with marks of pleasure. He left behind him in his treasury six hundred million of dirhems, and twenty-four million of dinârs. We are told by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, that he paid his cook by assigning him the heads and legs of the animals dressed in his kitchen for his own use; and that he obliged this servant to procure all the fuel and vessels he had occasion for at his own expence. The following story of him is too remarkable to be passed over in silence. Before he was elevated to the sovereign dignity of khalif, he ranked amongst his most familiar friends Azhar Baheli, a man of great merit, and considered as one of the most authentic doctors in all points relating to traditions. This person observing that Abu Jaafar, when settled upon the throne, did not enter into any particular conversation with him as formerly, resolved to present himself before him at one of his public audiences. As soon as the khalif perceived him, he demanded what he wanted there: Azhar answered, that he was come to congratulate him on his elevation to the khalifat. Abu Jaafar immediately ordered him a purse with a thousand dinârs in it, and then dismissed him with the following words: "Do not give yourself the trouble to come here any more." Notwithstanding which injunction, the following year Azhar presented himself again before him. The khalif looked upon him with a very stern countenance, and asked him what brought him thither? Azhar replied, "I was informed that your highness was greatly indisposed, and came hither, as one of your most faithful slaves, to enquire after your health." Upon which Abu Jaafar ordered him another purse with the same sum in it; and said to him sternly at parting, "Do not come to teize me here any more for the future:" but this caution did not hinder Azhar from appearing before him again the following year. The khalif, as soon as he saw him, said to him in great wrath, "Will you never cease to importune me?" Azhar answered, "Formerly I never received any thing but civilities from your majesty; I come, therefore, now to learn what has occasioned such

an alteration in your conduct." The khalif answered, "As the civilities you mention had no manner of foundation, so they left behind them not the least impression in my mind; because, by not seeing you as I used to do, I have contracted a habit of not seeing you at all." In short, Al Mansûr dismissed him, without giving him any thing. This story has been handed down to us by Yafêi, who tells us, that the khalif, by the patience and liberality exhibited on this occasion, deviated from the usual tenour of his conduct; as he was in general both very sordid and avaricious, and of a hasty and passionate temper. He ordered a capitation tax to be levied upon the people of Cûfa of a dawaneh or obole, an inconsiderable brass coin, to defray the expence of digging a ditch, or entrenchment, round the town, for the security of the place; for which reason he was surnamed, in contempt, Abu Dawaneh, *the Father of the Dawaneh or Obole*, by the inhabitants of that city.

Some other particulars relating to him.

Some of the eastern writers relate, that a dysentery, or bloody flux, put a period to this khalif's days, and that he died at Mecca; though the latter opinion, however positively asserted, was undoubtedly a mistake. Khondemir reports, that a few days before he was attacked by the malady that carried him off, he found four Arabic verses inscribed upon a wall, to this effect: "O Abu Jaafar, the time of your death is come! Your days are determined, and God's irrevocable decree is arrived. Consult as many augurs, soothsayers, diviners, and astrologers as you please, your time is soon to expire, and the thread of your life to be cut by the distemper that is to prove fatal to you." The khalif, who was himself well versed in the knowledge of the stars, had always some philosophers and mathematicians in his train. According to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, Al Mansûr discovered, written upon the wall of a caravan-fera, or inn, four other verses in Persian, the sense of which was as follows: "The kingdoms and riches of this world are not given, but only lent us. Let no one, therefore, think himself sure of them, or value himself too highly upon their account. Whoever fixes his heart upon, and places his chief confidence in them, will be covered with shame, when he is obliged to return them to him from whom he received them." Some authors inform us, that this khalif's governors of Egypt exacted such enormous sums of money, by way of tribute, of the people of that country, not sparing even the poorest artificers and meanest mechanics, that they were reduced to the extreme

tremest poverty, and forced to feed upon dogs and dead bodies. Al Mansûr, and Constantine Copronymus, the Greek emperor, are both said to have died within the course of the same year. The former understood the Mohammedan law better than most of his age, having been instructed in that science by some of the most celebrated Moslem doctors, whom he greatly honoured, and did not think it beneath him to be considered as their scholar, even after his elevation to the khalifat^p. The most illustrious actions of this prince, according to some of the Oriental historians, were his conquests of Armenia, Cilicia, and Cappadocia; to which others add the founding of the famous city of Baghdâd. We are told by Ebn Shohnah, that when he took his final leave of his son Al Mohdi, he made use of the following terms: "I was born, my son, in the month of Dhu'lhajja; I was proclaimed khalif in the same month; and I am strongly inclined to believe that I shall die in it; for which reason I am now endeavouring to perform my last pilgrimage, in order to be rendered a proper object of the divine mercy."

S E C T. II.

From the Accession of Al Mohdi, Son of Abu Jaafar, to the Death of Al Amin.

WHEN Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr expired at Bîr Maimun, he had no other attendants but his domestics, and Rabî, his freed-man. The latter, for some time, kept his death concealed, and pretended to have a conference with him; in which, as he asserted, the khalif commanded him to exact of all present the oath of allegiance to Al Mohdi, his son, as his immediate successor, and to Isa Ebn Mûsa, his cousin-german, as the next heir apparent of the crown. Soon after the conclusion of that ceremony, he communicated to them the news of Al Mansûr's death. He also dispatched a courier to Al Mohdi with advice of that event, and of the first step that had been taken at Bîr Maimun in his favour. Upon the arrival of the courier

*Al Mohdi
mounts the
throne.*

^pGreg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 220. Khondemir, Nigiarist. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 104, 105. Eutyech. ubi supra. Theophan. ubi sup. p. 378. Dionys. Telmarenf. apud Jos. Sim. Asséman. ubi sup. p. 116. ut & ipse Jos. Sim. Asséman. ibid. Ebn Shohnah, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Manfor, p. 552, 553.

at Baghdâd, then the residence of this prince, he was unanimously proclaimed khalif by the inhabitants of that city. Some of the eastern writers inform us, that Omm Mûsa, Mohammed Al Mohdi's mother, was the daughter of Al Mansûr Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Sahar Al Hamyari, of the tribe of Hamyar. Isa Ebn Mûsa, as soon as intelligence of Al Mansur's death was imparted to him, began to entertain thoughts of assuming the sovereign authority at Cûfa, where he then resided; and, in order to facilitate the execution of his scheme, fortified himself in that city; but Al Mohdi, having been apprized of his intended defection, sent Abu Horeira, with a detachment of a thousand horse, to bring him to Baghdâd, where Al Mohdi not only prevailed upon him to recognize his authority, but likewise persuaded him to relinquish his right to the succession in favour of his son Mûsa Al Hâdi, for the sum of ten thousand, or, according to some of the MS. copies of Abu'l-Faraj, ten million of dinârs. Soon after the new khalif's accession Yusef Ebn Ibrahim Al Yazam, declaring against Al Mohdi, assembled in Khorasân a body of troops, in order to dispute the khalifat with him. This impostor, pretending to act the prophet, seduced a great number of Al Mohdi's subjects at Bûsa or Bêsa, probably the Fêsa of Abulfêda, an ancient city of Persia, about ten parasangs east of Estakr, or Istakhra, where he first erected his standard. The khalif, therefore, sent an army against him, which entirely defeated him, dispersed all his followers, and brought him bound to Al Mohdi, by whose order he was publicly crucified at Baghdâd. According to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, this Yusef Ebn Ibrahim Al Yazam was governor of Khorasân; though, if we believe Abu'l-Faraj, he first set up for a prophet at Bûsa, and was overthrown by Yezid Ebn Yezid, one of Al Mohdi's most experienced generals.

*The Arabs
make an
incurſion
into the
imperial
territories;*

In the 159th year of the Hejra, Al Mohdi appointed Mohammed Ebn Solimân, the Syrian, governor of Egypt; but presently removed him from that exalted post, and substituted Mûsa Ebn Ali in his room. It appears from Theophanes, that a body of Al Mohdi's troops made an incurſion into the imperial territories in the course of the present year, and carried off some Moslem prisoners, who had been confined in a cave called Causis.

*as likewise
another the
following
year.*

Next year, being the 160th of the Moslem æra, the khalif sent Isa Ebn Lokmân Al Jamjami to govern in Egypt, instead of Mûsa Ebn Ali, dispatched thither for the same purpose the preceding year, whom he thought fit to depose,

pose. The Arab forces, under the command of Othmân Ebn Kaka, one of the Moslem generals, according to Theophanes, made another irruption into the dominions of the Greek emperor, and plundered the country in a dreadful manner.

In the 161st year of the Hejra, the Christians, according to Theophanes, invaded Syria with an army of a hundred thousand men, and defeated a body of Arabs that pretended to oppose them; of whom they killed five emirs, or principal officers, and two thousand men upon the spot.

The Christians invade Syria.

In the 162d year of the Hejra, the khalif Al Mohdi removed Isa Ebn Lokmân Al Jamjami from the government of Egypt, in favour of Wadih Ebn Al Mansûr. About the same time, he commanded Hafan, one of his generals, to march into Phrygia, at the head of a powerful army, to revenge the loss he had sustained, when the imperial forces invaded Syria the last year. Hafan, in pursuance of his orders, advanced to Dorylæum in that country, invested it, and attacked it for seventeen days with incredible fury: but finding himself, at the end of that term, greatly distressed for want of provisions, and all his forage consumed, he was obliged to decamp, and retire to Amorium; which town likewise for one whole day he closely besieged: but being informed, that the place was amply furnished with all kinds of provisions and military stores, besides a numerous garrison to defend it, he thought proper to raise the siege, and return home. The imperial troops were not strong enough to harass him in his retreat; nevertheless, he lost a very considerable number of men, without the least advantage gained during this unfortunate campaign ^q.

The Arabs undertake an expedition against the Christians;

In the following year, Al Mohdi sent his son Harûn Al Rashîd, who was afterwards khalif, with a formidable army, to undertake an expedition against the Greeks. The khalif attended his son Harun part of the way, and then took his leave; appointing Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, his counsellor, to assist him with his advice. However, he afterwards joined him in the neighbourhood of Haleb, or Aleppo; though it does not certainly appear, that he was present at any of the military operations. On the contrary, we find it intimated by Theophanes, that he left the army, and went to Jerusalem, before the opening

and another the following year.

^q Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra. Theophan. p. 380, 381.

of the campaign. Harûn, after he had conferred with his father in the plains of Dabek, advanced to Samalek, battered that fortress with his catapults, and reduced it after thirty-eight days siege; though, when he entered the place, he found it almost a heap of ruins. After the reduction, or rather destruction of this town, Harûn returned home; contenting himself with the glory he had acquired. We learn from Theophanes, that the khalif raised a violent persecution against both the Christians and Jews settled at Hems, and in other parts of his dominions, this year ¹.

Al Mokanna rebels against the khalif.

About the same time there happened another event, which not a little embarrassed the khalif's affairs. Hakem Ebn Hâshem, originally of Meru, in Khorasân, who had been an under-secretary to Abu Moslem, the governor of that province, and afterwards turned soldier, passed thence into Mawarâ'nahr, where he pretended to be a prophet: he is generally named by the Arab writers Al Mokanna, and sometimes Al Borkai, that is, *the Veiled*, because he used to cover his face with a veil, or a gilded mask, to conceal his deformity, having lost an eye in the wars, and being otherwise of a despicable appearance; though his followers pretended he did it in imitation of Moses, lest the splendor of his countenance should dazzle the eyes of the beholders: he made a great many proselytes at Nakhshab and Kash, deluding the people with juggling performances, which they swallowed for miracles, and particularly by causing the appearance of a moon to rise out of a well for many nights together; whence he was also called, in the Persian tongue, Sâzendeh mah, or *the Moon-maker*. This impostor, not content with being reputed a prophet, arrogated to himself divine honours, pretending that the Deity resided in his person: and the doctrine whereon he built this assertion was the same with that of the Gholaites, who affirmed a transmigration, or successive manifestation, of the Divinity through and in certain prophets and holy men, from Adam to these latter days (of which opinion was also Abu Moslem himself); but the particular doctrine of Al Mokanna was, that the person in whom the Deity had last resided was the aforesaid Abu Moslem, and that the same had, since his death, passed into himself. The faction of Al Mokanna, who had made himself master of several fortified places in the neighbourhood of the above mentioned cities, growing daily more and more

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. Theoph. p. 380, 381.
powerful,

powerful, the khalif was at length obliged to send an army to reduce him; at the approach whereof Al Mokanna retired into one of his strong fortresses, which he had well provided for a siege, and sent his emissaries abroad to persuade people that he raised the dead to life, and foretold future events: but being closely invested by the khalif's forces, when he found there was no possibility for him to escape, he gave poison in wine to his whole family, and all that were with him in the castle, and, when they were dead, he burnt their bodies, together with their cloaths and all the provisions and cattle; and then, to prevent his own body's being found, he threw himself into the flames, or, as others say, into a tub of aqua fortis, or some other preparation, which consumed every part of him but his hair: so that when the besiegers entered the place, they found no creature in it, except one of Al Mokanna's concubines, who, suspecting his design, had hid herself, and discovered the whole matter. This contrivance, however, failed not to produce the proposed effect amongst the remaining part of his followers; for he had promised them that his soul should transmigrate into the form of a grey-headed man, riding on a greyish beast; and that, after a certain number of years, he would return, and give them the earth for their possession: the expectation of which promise kept the sect in being for several ages, under the name of Mobeyyidites, or, as the Persians call them, Sefid jâmehghiân, that is, *the Clothed in White*, because they wore their garments of that colour, in opposition, as is supposed, to the khalifs of the family of Al Abbâs, whose banners and habits were black.

After Abu Sa'id, Al Mohdi's general, had reduced Al Mokanna's faction to the obedience of the khalif, Ibrahim Ebn Sâleh Ebn Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Abbâs was sent to preside over Egypt. The same year the khalif ordered his son Harûn Al Rashîd to penetrate into the Christian territories, with an army of ninety-five thousand men. Harûn, having entered the dominions of the empress Irene, defeated one of her commanders, who had advanced at the head of her forces to oppose him; though, according to Theophanes, the Greeks gained the advantage in that action. After this battle, Harûn laid several of the imperial provinces waste with fire and sword, spread a terror over the rest, and alarmed even the city of Constantinople itself. This progress induced the empress Irene to purchase a peace of the khalif, by agreeing to pay him an annual tribute of seventy thousand pieces of gold; which,

Harûn Al Rashîd invades the territories of the empress Irene.

which, for the present, delivered her subjects from the depredations of the Arabs. After the ratification of the treaty, Harûn retired, loaded with spoils, and covered with glory. It has been remarked by some of the Oriental writers, that, one day in the last Arab month of this year, the sun, a little after its rising, became totally darkened in a moment, without being eclipsed; when neither any fog, nor any cloud of dust appeared to obscure it. The frightful darkness, occasioned by this surprising event, continued till noon, to the great astonishment of the people settled in the countries where it happened. The same authors likewise observe, that no account of any prodigy like this has been transmitted down to us by any of the historians of former ages *.

Abu Hanîfa's sect.

In the 165th year of the Hejra, commencing August 26, 781, the Hanîfites, or Hanefites, made a considerable figure in and about the city of Baghdâd. To what has already been said of their founder Abu Hanîfa, we shall add the following particulars. Mâlec Ebn Ans, the author of the second orthodox sect of the Moslems, who was born at Medina, being once engaged in conversation with Abu Hanîfa, who was a native of Cûfa, told him, that Ali had observed the Cûfans to be quarrelsome and seditious; Abu Hanîfa replied, that the people of Medina were taxed with hypocrisy by the Koran. According to the sentiments of this doctor, those points that have been imparted to us by God and his prophet Mohammed, are to be received with entire submission; of those that have been handed down to future ages by the Companions, or contemporaries, of the prophet, the best are to be chosen; but that with regard to the tenets and opinions of the doctors who followed them, men are at liberty either to admit or reject them, as the persons from whom they come were weak and fallible like ourselves. Hosein Waez, in his commentary upon the Koran, relates, that Abu Hanîfa, having once received a blow on the ear, said to the person who had the temerity to give it him, "I could return you injury for injury, but that I will not do; I could carry my complaint to the khalif, but such a part as this I shall not act; I could at least represent to God in my prayers the outrage you have offered me, but against this I shall take care to be upon my guard; lastly, at the day of judgment, I could demand vengeance of God for this

* Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. Theoph. Chron. p. 382—385. Aut. Lebtarikh, Khondemir, Ebn Shonah.

violence,

violence, but far be it from me to pursue such a vindictive conduct; if that great and terrible day should this moment arrive, and my intercession could take place, I would not enter into paradise without you." The principal of his works are the *Mefnad*, that is *the Prop*, or *Support*, wherein he establishes all the essential points of Islamism upon the authority of the Koran and the most received traditions; a treatise, entitled, *Fikkelam*, that is to say, *Scholastic Divinity*; and a sort of catechism, or instruction, that bears the title of *Moallem*, or *the Master*. In the last of these pieces he maintains, that as long as a Moslem continues in the faith, he cannot become an enemy to God, though he may fall into enormous sins; that such sins cannot destroy the validity of faith; and that grace is by no means incompatible with sin. These kind of propositions induced Vazai to attack his tenets; which he did in a book, entitled, *Ekhtelaf Abu Hanîfa*, or *the Contradictions of Abu Hanîfa*. All the principal eastern historians agree, that Abu Hanîfa excelled all the learned Mohammedans of his age, not only in the knowledge of their law, but in the practice of all the duties it enjoins; that his life was extremely austere, and entirely detached from the things of this world, on which account he has always been considered by the Sunnites as the chief and first imâm of the Moslem law; and that his sentiments have been rejected by none but the Shiites, or followers of Ali, who are despised as schismatics by the orthodox Mohammedans. We shall conclude what we have to say on this head with observing, that Mâlec Shâh, third sultan of the Seljûks of Irân, erected a superb mausoleum in honour of Abu Hanîfa at Baghdâd, and joined to it a college for the use of the youth educated in the principles of his sect, in the year of the Hejra 485, or of Christ 1092¹.

Had not the empress Irene been entirely governed by her fears, she might have cut Harûn Al Rashîd and all his troops to pieces, or starved them to a surrender, since they were in a very distressed and calamitous situation when the treaty was signed, as we find mentioned by Abu'l-Faraj. Harûn entered Baghdâd in the month of Al Moharram, and was attended by a considerable number of Christians, who had been restored to their liberty by virtue of the preceding treaty. The peace concluded between the Greek empress and the khalif continued about three years. Soon after

¹ Lamai, in *Defter Lathif*, cap. i. Aut. Rabi Al Akhiar. Hosein. Waez. in *Comment. ad Al Kor. Moham.* cap. iii. Vazai, in *Ekhtelaf Abu Hanîfa*. Al Zamakhshar. Korder. Marghinan. Dainur. Sobahazmun. Al Jannab. &c.

Al Rashîd's arrival at Baghdâd, he was declared next heir to the crown after his elder brother Mûsa Al Hâdi. About the same time, Al Mohdi caused diligent search to be made after all his subjects who were infected with Zêndicîsm, and put to death as many of them as fell into his hands. Amongst the rest, he ordered Saleh Ebn Abd'allah and Yafâr Ebn Yarad to be executed, under the pretext of their having been suspected of favouring those who professed that species of infidelity: but Yafâr Ebn Yarad is supposed to have suffered the punishment inflicted upon him, for publishing some satirical verses upon Al Mohdi and his counsellor Yakûb Ebn Dawd, which have been preserved by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari.

Ibrahim Ebn Saleh removed from the government of Egypt.

In the 167th of the Hejra, Al Mohdi removed from the government of Egypt Ibrahim Ebn Saleh, and appointed Mûsa Ebn Mafaab, or Moses the son of Mafaab, as he is called by Dionysius Telmarenfis, who had formerly been the khalif's governor of Mesopotamia, to succeed him. Every part of that prince's vast dominions seems to have enjoyed an uninterrupted repose at this period.

Mûsa Ebn Mafaab assassinated in Egypt, and succeeded in the government of that country by Fadl Ebn Saleh,

In the 168th year of the Hejra, Mûsa Ebn Mafaab was assassinated in Egypt. This tragical event happened in the month of Shawâl, and was probably occasioned by a tyrannical and oppressive administration. His deputy Amer Ebn Omar took upon him the government of that province, till the arrival of Fadl Ebn Saleh Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Abbâs, who was sent by the khalif from Baghdâd to succeed Mûsa Ebn Mafaab in his lucrative and exalted post.

Al Mohdi dies.

In the following year, Al Mohdi sent to his son Harûn Al Rashîd, then in the province of Jorjân, to repair immediately to court; he having formed a design to secure to him the Moslem throne immediately after his death, and entirely to exclude his eldest son, Mûsa Al Hâdi, from the succession; but Harûn, considering this as an iniquitous step, would not comply with his father's order; so that the khalif found himself obliged to undertake a journey into Jorjân, in order to have a conference with his younger son Al Rashîd. When he arrived at Arud, or Al Rud, in the district of Mâfabdân, one of his favourite mistresses, whom he had commanded to attend him, gave him a poisoned pear, which had been presented to her by another of the khalif's concubines, named Hafana, who thought she had too great an ascendant over him, and therefore resolved to destroy her. The khalif seeing it by accident, was so tempted by its appearance that he ate it without hesitation, and soon expired in exquisite torture; a circumstance

cumstance which greatly afflicted Hafana, as she had no intention to hurt him, when she communicated the poisoned fruit to her hated rival. This tragical event happened on the twenty-second day of the month Al Moharram. The khalif was buried near a walnut-tree, under whose boughs he used sometimes to repose himself. He was near forty-three years of age at the time of his death, and reigned ten years, one month, and fifteen days. His son Harûn Al Rashîd, who was with him when he expired, said the prayers over him at the time of his interment. Some writers pretend, that, one day, as he was hunting, he pursued a wild beast into an old ruined house; where, being obliged to make a great effort to pass through a low door, his horse carried him with such force against it, that he broke his back; so that he expired upon the spot. This khalif, in imitation of his father Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr, is said to have performed a pilgrimage to Mecca, though with more pomp than devotion; as he spent in that journey about six millions of dinârs. Amongst other things with which he loaded the camels that attended him, he carried such a prodigious quantity of snow, that it served not only to refresh him and all his retinue in the burning sands of Arabia, but likewise to preserve all the delicious fruits he took with him in their natural freshness, and to afford him ice-water to drink, during his abode at Mecca, the inhabitants of which place had scarce ever seen any snow before. Whilst he was there, according to some authors, he enlarged the portico of the Caaba, and issued orders for demolishing many houses at Medina, to give a greater extent to the mosque containing Mohammed's tomb; a circumstance which was by no means approved of by the superstitious followers of the Moslem law. It was at this time also that a Moslem brought one of the prophet's slippers, and received from him for it a present of ten thousand dirhems; after having bestowed this gratification, turning towards some of his courtiers, he said, "Mohammed never saw this slipper; but, if I had refused accepting of it, the people would have believed that it had really belonged to Mohammed, and that I had despised it; for they are naturally prejudiced in favour of the weak against the strong." This prince often changed the governors of provinces, and their ministers, lest some of them should usurp too great a degree of power, and even assume the supreme authority. He likewise restored large sums of money that his father had extorted from his subjects, released a great number of prisoners, and attended to affairs of state with great diligence
and

and application. He frequently held councils, in order to punish the violences and oppressions exercised by the grantees upon the lower part of the people, and to make the latter amends for the losses they had sustained. He appointed persons of great gravity and discretion, and such as were extremely well versed in the Mohammedan civil law, to assist in the courts of justice, that, by their presence, they might prevent all illegal decisions. Having one day, by way of reprimand, said to one of his civil officers, "How long will you be guilty of these faults?" the other very sagaciously replied, "As long as it shall please God to preserve your life for our good, so long shall we commit faults, and your clemency will pardon them."

*Who were
his princ-
pal coun-
sellors, or
prime mi-
nisters.*

His first privy counsellor, or prime minister, was Moâ-wiyah Ebn Abd'allah Al Ashari; but he did not continue long in that exalted station. After his dimission, he advanced to that post Yakûb Ebn Dawd Ebn Tahmar, surnamed Tahamash, a person of great wit and a most engaging conversation, who was in such high favour with the khalif, that he not only trusted him with the management of all his affairs, but likewise permitted him to partake of all his diversions. This indulgence excited the envy of the courtiers, who entered into several cabals against him, and at last found an opportunity of accusing him to Al Mohdi of favouring the partizans of the Alidæ, or family of Ali, and, consequently of being an enemy to the house of Al Abbâs. This accusation, though it did not gain entire credit with the khalif, made nevertheless some impression upon him. In order, therefore, to try him, Al Mohdi commanded Yakûb to put to death one of the descendants of Ali, whom, he pretended, he could not permit to live any longer; and, to induce him to obey this command with the greater alacrity, he made him a present of one hundred thousand dirhems, and bestowed upon him in marriage one of the most beautiful ladies of his seraglio. Yâkûb having communicated this order to the person destined to suffer, was addressed by him in the following terms: "Give me the life which it is now in your power to take away, and you will by that clemency avoid the confusion which you must necessarily be in at the day of judgment, when you appear before my great ancestor Ali, if you spill my blood, which he regards as his own." These words so sensibly touched Yakûb Ebn Dawd, that he gave the person devoted to destruction the money he had received from the khalif, and enabled him to make his escape. This circumstance having been discovered

covered to Al Mohdi by Yekûb's new wife, such strict search was made after the prisoner, that he was retaken in a short time, and confined in an apartment provided for him in the khalif's palace. Yakûb was then summoned to appear, and charged with forwarding his escape; a charge which that nobleman denying, and swearing by the head and life of the khalif, that he had put the prisoner to death, the Shiite who had been seized, and put under arrest in the palace, was immediately produced. Yakûb, being confounded at this sight, had nothing to urge in his vindication, and was therefore immediately ordered by the khalif, to prison, where he remained till the sixth year of the khalifat of Harûn Al Rashîd. But that prince having released him, he retired to Mecca, and resided there till his death. After Al Mohdi had removed him from the honourable post he for some time filled, he substituted Kabâd Ebn Saleh, a person of uncommon abilities, in his room^a.

Hafana, to whom Al Mohdi's death has been ascribed by some of the eastern writers, having been commanded by the khalif to attend him in his journey to Jorjân, imagined that his intended conference with his son Harûn Al Rashîd was owing to the advice of Theophilus of Roha, or Edeffa, the son of Thomas Edeffemus, a Christian, and his chief astrologer, whom he consulted on all emergent occasions. She, therefore sent him an insolent message; upbraiding him for his past conduct, and wishing that God would soon deliver them from him, by putting a period to his days. To which message he replied, that he had never attempted to persuade the khalif to undertake the journey she mentioned; that, with regard to the time of his death, the approach of which she so earnestly desired, he knew it was fixed, and at hand; but that nevertheless this was not owing to her prayers, and that as soon as she should be informed of it, she ought to cover her own head with dust. The meaning of the latter part of this answer she did not understand till twenty days after the astrologer's death, when that of Al Mohdi himself likewise happened; but then she easily comprehended the purport of his prediction, which stood in no need of any farther interpretation. To what has been already observed of this Theophilus Edeffemus we shall here add, that the style of his Syriac version of the Iliad is reckoned very

*Theophilus
Edeffemus
dies a little
before the
khalif.*

^a Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup p. 108, 109. Khon. demir, Ebn Shohnah, Nezam Al Moik, in Wassaia.

elegant and nervous by some of the Arab writers; and that he seems to have translated the *Odyſſey*, as well as the *Iliad*, into that language, according to Abu'l-Faraj ^w.

*Al Mohdi's
phyſician
Iſa, a great
favourite.*

Al Mohdi had another great favourite beſides his principal aſtropher, or rather aſtronomer, Theophilus Edeſſenus, and that was Iſa, his phyſician, ſurnamed Al Sidalâni, or *the Apothecary*, becauſe he was originally of that profeſſion, and did not pretend to any great ſkill in phyſic. Al Khizarân, one of Al Mohdi's favourite concubines, a native of Medina, being indiſpoſed, ſent a maid with ſome of her urine to a phyſician, in order to learn the cauſe of her diſtemper; giving her a ſtrict charge at the ſame time not to diſcover the perſon from whom ſhe came. The maid went directly to the ſhop of Abu Koreiſh (for ſo likewiſe was Iſa called), and ſhewed him her lady's urine, telling him, that it belonged to a poor woman, who ſtood in great need of his aſſiſtance. "A poor woman! (ſaid he); no, this came from an illuſtrious princeſs, who is with child of a king." The maid immediately reported this declaration to Al Khizarân, who afterwards made Iſa a preſent of two ſumptuous veſts and three hundred dinârs, and promiſed to procure him admiſſion into the khalif's family, if the latter part of what he had told the maid ſhould prove true. This circumſtance greatly aſtoniſhed Abu Koreiſh, who publicly declared, that what he had ſaid muſt have proceeded from a divine impulſe, ſince he ſpoke at random, and in reality knew nothing of the grand perſonage by whom the maid had been ſent on this occaſion. However, Al Khizarân being brought to bed of a prince, afterwards named Muſa Al Hadi, who ſucceeded his father in the khalifat, ſhe communicated the whole affair to the khalif; who was ſo well pleaſed with it, that he ſent for Abu Koreiſh, made him his phyſician, though, upon examination, he found him not to underſtand much of phyſic, and heaped many favours upon him. But notwithstanding his good fortune, Abu Koreiſh, or Iſa Al Sidalâni, was never honoured with a place amongſt the principal phyſicians by the Arabs ^x.

*A deſcription
of Al
Mohdi's
perſon and
character.*

Al Mohdi was tall and handſome, though he had a white ſpeck in his right eye, and, like the generality of the Arabs, was of a ſwarty complexion. With regard to his diſpoſition, he was liberal and munificent, or, according to

^w Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi ſup. p. 228. Greg. Bar-Hebræus, apud Joſ. Sim. Aſſeman. in Biblioth. Orient. Clementino-Vatican. tom. ii. p. 311, 313, 315. Romæ, 1721. Georg. Jacob. Kehr. ubi ſup. p. 32. ^x Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi ſupra, p. 229, 230.

others,

others, prodigal and profuse, as he dissipated in a very short time the immense treasures left him by his father Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr. He was also magnanimous and brave, and extremely beloved by his subjects, on account of his impartial administration of justice, and the aversion he always discovered to an effusion of human blood. He has likewise been considered by some of the Arab writers as religious and devout; though others have not been so willing to admit that part of his character. Being once in the mosque at Cûfa, and upon the point of beginning the public prayers, one of the rabble said to him, "I have not yet performed the ablution, and yet I would willingly join with you in the public prayers." Upon which, the khalif stopped in the middle of the mosque, till the Arab had washed and purified himself in a proper manner. In his pilgrimage to Mecca, he was attended by a person of great sanctity, named Al Mansûr Al Hajani, who being with him in the Caaba, when he distributed large sums amongst the people, the khalif said, "Do you, Al Mansûr, desire nothing of me?" The other replied, "I am ashamed to desire any thing in the house of God but God himself." Al Mohdi, upon his return from the pilgrimage, found himself so touched by the pious sentiments inspired by that devout expression, that he threw himself upon the ground, and addressed himself to the Deity in the following terms: "If I, O Lord, am to be punished, I shall cheerfully undergo whatever chastisement I deserve; but, O Lord, look upon none of the faithful as thine enemies on my account." After which supplication he made Al Mansûr Al Hajani, for the reproof he had given him, by suggesting that he ought never to confound earthly with heavenly things, a present of ten thousand dinârs. It has been regarded, likewise, as an instance of this khalif's liberality, as well as of his inclination to encourage learned men, that he ordered Merwân Ebn Abu Hafas, one of his subjects, for seventy distichs of Arabic verses that he had composed, the sum of seventy thousand dirhems. The following remarkable story is too entertaining to be omitted.

Al Mohdi, being one day engaged in a hunting-match, strayed from his attendants, and, being pressed with hunger and thirst, was obliged to betake himself to an Arab's tent, in order to meet with some refreshment. The poor man immediately brought out his coarse brown bread and a pot of milk to the khalif. Al Mohdi asked him if he had nothing else to give him; upon which the Arab went

*A pleasant
adventure
befalls this
khalif.*

directly to fetch a jug of wine, and presented it to him. After the khalif had drunk a good draught, he demanded of the Arab whether he did not know him? The other having answered, that he did not; "I would have you know then (replied Al Mohdi), that I am one of the principal lords of the khalif's court." After he had taken another draught, he put the same question to the Arab as before; who answering, "Have not I already told you that I know you not?" Al Mohdi returned, "I am a much greater person than I have made you believe." Then he drank again, and asked his host the third time, whether he did not know him? to which the other replied, "that he might depend upon the truth of the answer he had already given him." "I am then (said Al Mohdi), the khalif, before whom all the world prostrate themselves." The Arab no sooner heard those words than he carried off the pitcher, and would not suffer his guest to drink any more. Al Mohdi being surprised at his behaviour, asked him why he took away his wine? the Arab replied, "Because I am afraid that, if you take a fourth draught, you will tell me you are the prophet Mohammed; and if by chance a fifth, that you are God Almighty himself." This gentle rebuke so pleased the khalif, that he could not forbear laughing; and being soon rejoined by his people, he ordered a purse of silver, and a fine vest, to be given the poor man, who had entertained him in so hospitable a manner. The Arab, in a transport of joy for the good fortune he had met with, exclaimed, "I shall henceforth take you for what you pretend to be, even though you should make yourself two or three times more considerable than you have done."

Mûsa Al Hâdi succeeds Al Mohdi in the 169th year of the Hejra.

Harûn Al Rashîd, Al Mohdi's second son, being with his father at the time of his death, obliged all the people about him, and particularly those who were members of the house of Hâshem, to take the oath of allegiance to his brother Mûsa Al Hâdi, who was unanimously proclaimed khalif by the inhabitants of Baghdâd, whither he repaired from Jorjân, upon the first news of his father's death. On his arrival he constituted Al Rabî, or Rabîa, his prime minister, or visir; and the same year, according to Abu'l-Faraj, he massacred great numbers of his subjects who had embraced Zendicism, because they ridiculed the pilgrims who went in procession round the Caaba. The

7 Ahmed Ebn Mohammed. Abd'al Jaafar Al Kazwini, in Nig-hiarist.

Arabs, who professed Zendicism, according to Ebn Kassem, were a sort of Sadducees, or rather Manichees, who maintained the existence of two principles, Light and Darkness, and permitted marriage to be contracted between the nearest relations. At first the Zendicees taught, that men ought to preserve themselves from sin, applied their thoughts entirely to the other world, despised the good things of this, and abstained from all animal food: but, in process of time, they introduced the worship of the two principles above mentioned, denied that the first degrees of consanguinity prohibited marriage, and despised all the other religions of the country where they lived.

Soon after Al Hâdi's accession, Hosein Ebn Al Ebn *Hosein Ebn*
Hasan rebelled against Al Hâdi, and caused himself to be *Ali Ebn*
proclaimed khalif at Medina; the inhabitants of which *Hasan re-*
city declared openly for him. From thence he marched *bels against*
to Mecca, and put to the sword all the pilgrims who were *him.*
known to be members of the house of Al Abbâs. This revolt, nevertheless, cost the family of Ali very dear: for the khalif, having defeated Hosein, cut off his head, together with a great number of his adherents, and deprived his family of all the pensions and appointments that they had enjoyed by a particular privilege. Hosein had the character of a valiant and very liberal prince: he is said to have distributed forty thousand dinârs, which the khalif had one day given him, amongst the citizens of Baghdâd and Cûfa, and afterwards to have retired to his house at Medina in a furred vest only, without even a shirt under it. Before he took up arms against the khalif, he ordered a proclamation to be published, whereby he enfranchised all the slaves who should desert their masters, and enlist in his service. By this expedient he formed a considerable army, which he flattered himself would enable him to dispute the khalifat with Al Hâdi, and even enable him to mount the Moslem throne: but his forces were defeated by a handful of regular troops sent against them by the khalif.

Next year, being the 170th of the Hejra, Mûsa Al *Al Hadî*
Hâdi, finding himself now firmly settled upon the throne, *dies.*
formed a design to exclude his brother Harûn Al Rashîd, notwithstanding the good offices he had done him, from the succession. His view was to advance his own son Jaafar to the khalifat, who was not yet arrived at the age of puberty: but Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, a person of great reputation for his prudence, and who filled the important post of visir, endeavoured to dissuade him

from carrying such a design into execution, by representing, that the Moslems would not be satisfied with a khalif, who could not perform divine service in the mosque, conduct them in their pilgrimage to Mecca, and march at their head against an enemy. The khalif pretended to be convinced by his reasoning, and to approve of his advice; but he gave Harthamah, a person in whom he could entirely confide, private orders to kill his brother Harûn, and Yahya his visir: for that purpose, he kept him one night concealed in his palace; but, about midnight, Harthamah heard the voice of Khizarân, the khalif's mother, calling him by his name, and bidding him come and behold Al Hâdi dead upon his bed. That prince died suddenly of a cough, which seized him after he had drank a glass of water: he was jealous of his brother Harûn, and the more so, as their mother had discovered a greater affection for the latter than the former on several occasions: but she prevented his project from taking effect, by giving him a subtle poison that carried him off by coughing and sneezing. Affadi, a Persian poet, composed a distich upon this tragical event, wherein he says, that the blood of two brothers is the same, as being formed of the same milk, and that the brother who sheds this is a homicide of his mother as well as of his brother. Some of the Arab historians relate, that Al Hâdi first endeavoured to destroy his mother, by sending her a poisoned goose; but that this scheme not meeting with success, she soon after smothered him with a pillow, as she attended him in a fit of sickness. Be that as it may, he died at Baghdâd, or rather Isabâd, a place without the city, on Friday the fourteenth day of the Latter Rabi, after he had reigned one year two months and twenty-two days. He was buried near the spot where he died, and his brother Harûn Al Rashîd performed the funeral service over him: he is said by some authors to have been, at the time of his death, twenty-four, by others twenty-five, and, lastly, by others twenty-six years of age ².

*Al Hâdi's
mother ac-
cessary to
his death.*

When Al Hâdi commanded Harthamah to assassinate his brother Harûn Al Rashîd, and Yahya his visir, he assigned the following reason for that order, viz. because the latter was his declared enemy, and had, by his seditious discourses, attempted to alienate the affections of his subjects from him, as well as used his utmost endeavours

² Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 110. Khondemir, Affad. Poet. Pers. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 231. Eutyck. ubi supra.

to engage them in favour of the former. He also commanded him, after that double execution, to put to the sword all the descendants of Ali that could be found in his dominions, and then, with a body of his troops, to surprise the city of Cûfa; to which, after he had drawn from thence all the partizans of the house of Al Abbâs, he was to set fire, and reduce it to ashes. Harthamah would have excused himself from being concerned in so bloody a scheme, by alleging that he had not a number of troops sufficient to execute such an important design. But the khalif threatened him with death if he did not comply with his orders, left him abruptly, and retired into the private apartments of his palace; from whence a few moments after arrived intelligence of his expiring suddenly in the manner already related. We are told by Abu'l-Faraj, that Khizarân, who governed with arbitrary power, having one day pressed Al Hâdi, with unusual warmth, to grant her a favour she had promised to obtain for one of her dependents, and meeting with a repulse, she retired in great emotion, declaring she would for the future never prefer any petition to him. Upon which, he said to her, in an angry tone, "Keep within your doors, and mind your own business; if I should hereafter be informed, that any of my officers apply to you for favours, I will order his head to be cut off. How comes it about, that my courtiers attend your levee, from morning till evening, in such crouds? What is the meaning of this? Have you not a wheel and a distaff wherewith to employ yourself, or a book to put you in mind of your duty, or lastly a house to reside in?" This reproof enraging her to the last degree, she instantly vowed revenge; and accordingly ordered the maids she sent to attend him, in a fit of sickness that soon ensued, to suffocate him. As soon as he was dead, she commanded Harthamah to apprise her younger son Harûn of what had happened, that he might have an opportunity of immediately asserting his right to the Moslem throne. Hence it appears, that different accounts of this prince's death, as well as the true cause of it, have been transmitted to us by the best original historians ^a.

With regard to his person, Al Hâdi had a large mouth, with a contracted upper lip, was tall, corpulent, and of

A description of his person, and character.

^a Ahmed Eben Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, in Nig hiarist. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 231. Khondemir, Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup.

a fair complexion; extremely robust, and an excellent horseman. In his disposition, he was magnanimous and brave, as well as liberal on some occasions; though he has not been represented by any of the Arab writers as very profuse of his favours. He one day repeated an Arabic verse, and desired Yusef Al Sokail, a celebrated poet, to produce some others of the same sort, which he immediately pronounced, and received for a reward no more than ten dirhems. However, we are told by another author, that Murwân Ebn Abu Hâfedh, a very eminent Arab poet, having once presented some of his pieces to him, this prince who was a good judge of such performances, as evidently appear from some of his poems still extant, discovered such beauties in them, that he was extremely pleased, and said to him, "Chuse for your trouble, by way of recompence, either to receive immediately thirty thousand dirhems, or one hundred thousand after you have gone through all the delays and formalities of the exchequer." The poet answered pleasantly, "Give me thirty thousand now, and one hundred thousand hereafter." Which repartee was so pleasing to Al Hâdi, that he ordered the entire sum of one hundred and thirty thousand dirhems to be immediately paid him without deduction.

*Al Hâdi
is succeeded
by his brother
Harûn
Al Rashîd.*

Al Hâdi's death was no sooner known than Harûn Al Rashîd was saluted emperor of the faithful in the night between the 14th and 15th of the Latter Rabî, by the citizens of Baghdâd; and the inhabitants of the provinces soon followed their example. Al Rashîd was at this time about twenty-two years of age, and a great favourite of his mother Khizarân, who greatly contributed to his accession. The night that Al Hâdi died, Khozaima Ebn Hâzem rushed into his son Jaafar's chamber, dragged him out of bed, and threatened immediately to cut off his head, if he did not instantly acknowledge Harûn Al Rashîd for his sovereign; a proposal which he embraced without hesitation. As Jaafar's recognition of the new khalif's authority was attested by some Moslems of distinction, whom Khozaima had brought with him for this purpose, the service done Harûn Al Rashîd, on this occasion, proved extremely acceptable to that prince. Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Baïmac, being informed of Al Hâdi's death, came to Al Rashîd to acquaint him of the news, soon after his brother expired; and before his departure, another of the new khalif's friends arrived, to congratulate him upon the birth

birth of a son, called first Abd'allah, and afterwards Al Mamûn, who, after his brother Al Amîn, ascended the Moslem throne: so that the same night was remarkable for the death of one khalif, the accession of another, and the birth of a third. Al Rashîd had likewise another son, named Mohammed, and afterwards Al Amîn, born in the month of Shawâl this year; which last, though he was younger than Al Mamûn, succeeded his father in the khalifat. This young prince's mother was Zebeida, the daughter of Jaafar, the son of the khalif Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr. Al Rashîd called Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac his father, and, for his constant and faithful attachment to him, constituted him his prime minister, or visir ^b.

The surname Al Rashîd denotes *the Righteous, the Director, or the Just*. As the night of Al Hâdi's death was so famous for the relation it bore to the three khalifs, it has been denominated by some of the Arabs, the night, or rather the day, of the family of Hâshem. It appears from Abu'l-Faraj, that Al Rashîd, being extremely troubled with the head-ach, commanded Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, his visir, to send for Bakhtishua, the son of George abovementioned, from Naifabûr; whom, after his arrival at Baghdâd, he presented with a sumptuous vest, besides many other things of great value, and made him his chief physician ^c.

The following year, being the 172d of the Hejra, commencing June 11, 788, the khalif Al Rashîd appointed his younger son Al Amîn his successor in the empire; and after him, settled the right of succession upon his elder son, Al Mamûn. He also made the latter of those young princes the prefect of Khorasân, and all the adjacent regions, extending as far as Hamadân; and committed to Jaafar Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac the care of his education. About the same time, the daughter of the king of the Khozars, or Khazarites, known likewise by the name of the khakan, being brought to Fadl Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, died at Barthaa; and her attendants returned to her father's court, where they reported that she was poisoned. This information induced that prince to make preparations for a war with the khalif. Soon after, a body of the Moslem forces made an irruption into the im-

The Western khaliff dies.

^b Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 231. Al Makin ubi sup. p. 112. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 406, 407. ^c D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Haroun Al Raschid, p. 431. Georg. Jac. Kehr, ubi sup. 23.

perial territories, and penetrated as far as Ephesus. Abd'alrahmân Ebn Moâwiyah Ebn Heshâm Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân, the western khalif of the house of Ommiyah, died this, and not the preceding, year, as we find asserted by Roderic of Toledo, after he had reigned about thirty-three years in Spain.

A civil war in Spain.

Next year, being the 173d of the Moslem æra, in the month of September, the Arabs made another irruption into the territories of the Greek emperor, and defeated a Christian army sent by that prince to oppose them. Diogenes, an imperial officer of great merit and bravery, together with several other commanders, and a vast number of soldiers, perished in the action. About this time, a civil war commenced between Heshâm, Abd'alrahmân's eldest son, who succeeded him in the western khalifat, and his brother Solimân, who presided over the principality of Toledo, in Spain. The armies commanded by those two princes came to a general action near a fortress called Bulche; where, after a sharp engagement, Solimân was routed, with very great slaughter, and Toledo obliged to open its gates to the victor, after it had sustained a vigorous siege. Solimân fled to Murcia, where he sold to his brother Heshâm his pretensions to the principality of which he had been deprived, for seventy thousand dinârs; then he crossed the sea to Barbary, and was not seen for some years afterwards in Spain ^c.

The Arabs defeat the imperial fleet.

In the 174th year of the Hejra, Al Rashîd sent a powerful navy, with a strong body of land-forces on board, to invade the island of Cyprus; which was attacked by the Christian fleet, under the conduct of Theophilus, duke or prince of Cibra, off the Chelidonian promontory. The Christians, after a long action, were entirely defeated, and Theophilus himself was taken prisoner. Being brought before the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, and refusing to embrace Mohammedism, he was put to death, by that prince's order, according to Theophanes, an instance of severity; which, we must own, appears to us by no means probable, it being directly repugnant to one of the principal Moslem institutions.

Some good physicians attend the khalif's court.

In the following year, the khalif sent Mûsa Ebn Isa Ebn Mûsa Al Hâshemi into Egypt, to preside over the government of that country. About the same time, Jaafar Ebn

^c Theophan ubi supra, p. 392. Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, Sale's Prelim. Disc. p. 144.

Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac being taken extremely ill, the khalif sent his own physician Bakhtishua to attend him; who having cured him, Jaafar chose the doctor's son Gabriel for his physician, and made him many very valuable presents. Gabriel soon after cured Jaafar of another disorder, by which he acquired a great degree of reputation. One of Al Rashîd's concubines stretching out her hand, in yawning, it immediately grew stiff, and remained extended in such a manner that she could not draw it back: nor could the prescriptions of the most able physicians of the court, relieve her. Gabriel, being recommended by Jaafar, he waited first upon the khalif, and desired him to command her to appear publicly at his levee; which being done, he immediately approached her, and began, before the whole circle of courtiers, to take off her cloaths. This freedom threw her into such confusion, that she made a violent effort with her whole force to prevent him; and seized upon her garment with the part affected: upon which, turning to the khalif, he exclaimed, "Emperor of the faithful, she is cured." Then she was ordered to move her hand upwards and downwards, backwards and forwards, and in all directions, several times; after which, she found the use of it perfectly restored. This success was so agreeable to Al Rashîd that he made Gabriel a present of five hundred pieces of money, and ever after honoured him with his esteem. At this time, Al Rashîd had likewise for his physician Yohana, or Yahya Ebn Masawiyah, a Syrian, of the Christian religion, who, at the khalif's request, interpreted, or explained, the writings of the ancient physicians, and served him and his successors in the same capacity till the reign of Al Motawakkel. He was greatly honoured at Baghdâd, and composed several physical treatises in a very elegant style. He likewise founded a sort of school, or gymnasium, wherein he instructed his scholars, or young students, who were very numerous, in every branch of literature, especially medicine. He was a person of humour, and several of his facetious sayings have been preserved by Abu'l-Faraj. Contemporary with this Yahya was Saleh Ebn Nahala, an Indian, who performed several remarkable cures, and made no mean figure at Al Rashîd's court ^d.

It was at this juncture, that Al Rashîd declared Mohammed Al Amîn his immediate successor, according to

^d Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 235—240.

*Al Amîn
declared
the khalif's
immediate
successor.*

Abu

Abu Jaafar Al Tabari; though that event seems to have been placed three years higher by Abu'l-Faraj. The poet Salem Al Hâfher made some verses on this occasion, which highly pleased Al Amîn's mother Zebeida, the granddaughter of the khalif Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr; on which account she ordered him many valuable presents. We are told likewise, that Zebeida founded this year the city of Tauris, in the province of Aderbijân, as her husband had before built another, from him named Harunia, on the confines of Cilicia, Syria, and Armenia.

*A rebellion
extinguished.*

Next year, being the 176th of the Mohammedan æra, beginning April the 29th, 792, Yahya Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hasan Ebn Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Taleb declared himself independent, in opposition to the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, in the province of Deylam, and raised a powerful army to support him in his defection. To extinguish this rebellion, Harûn sent an army of fifty thousand men, under the command of Fadl Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, whom he had appointed to preside over Ray, or Raya, Jorjân, Al Jebâl, in the Persian Irâk, and Tabaristân. Fadl, on his arrival in Khorasân, wrote a kind letter to Yahya, and persuaded him to submit to the khalif; who, upon Fadl's intercession, promised to take him into his protection. Upon which, Yahya disbanded his troops, and went with Fadl to Baghdâd; where he at first met with a gracious reception from Al Rashîd, but was afterwards put in irons, and closely confined.

In the 177th year of the Hejra, a body of the imperial forces advanced to Tarsus in Cilicia, with an intent to invade the Moslem territories; but were obliged to retire without accomplishing their design. Abd'almâlec, one of Heshâm's generals in Spain, likewise marched at the head of a formidable army as far as the cities of Narbonne, or Narbonna, and Girona, reduced them, as well as all the other places of strength situated between them and the Moslem frontiers, and acquired such a large quantity of plunder in this expedition, that the fifth part of it, which came to Heshâm's share, amounted to the value of forty-five thousand dinârs. With this treasure that prince finished the great mosque at Corduba, which had been founded by his father; and obliged the Christian inhabitants of the country he had conquered, and many others of their brethren settled in the neighbouring provinces, to whom he was grown extremely terrible, to carry materials for that purpose to Corduba, where he then resided. Heshâm also erected several new mosques in different places, and built the

the famous bridge at Corduba, which remained as a monument of his magnificence for several ages. Consulting a skilful astrologer, in order to know the length and fortune of his reign, he was told, that he should not preside over the Moslems of Spain eight complete years; but that his khalifat there should be prosperous. This prediction at first greatly affected Heshâm, who remained silent for some time after it was delivered, though he amply rewarded the astrologer. He afterwards applied himself to the exercise of the political virtues, administered justice to the poor with so much impartiality, and treated the people in general, both Moslems and Christians, with such affability and beneficence, that he was almost adored by the whole body of his subjects. He first invaded Galicia in the 175th year of the Hejra, where he committed dreadful devastations; but, on his return, was met and attacked by Veremund, or Bermudo, though with what success we are not told by any good author. Some of the Spanish writers, however, inform us, that after the reduction of Narbonne, Girona, and the other places above mentioned, he made an irruption into Biscay and Asturias, ravaging the country; but that at last he received a signal overthrow from the forces commanded by Alphonfus, or Alonzo II. who drove him from these provinces with the slaughter of seventy thousand men. It must nevertheless be owned, that this last article has not been so much as mentioned by any of the most authentic Arab historians ^e.

In the following year, being the 178th of the Hejra, Al Rashîd ordered Ishak Ebn Solimân Al Hâshemi to retire from Egypt, and made Hazima Ebn Ayan his lieutenant there: but Hazima did not long remain in possession of that honourable post; being soon after banished by the khalif. He was succeeded by Abd'almâlec Ebn Saleh Ebn Ali Al Hâshemi, who appointed Abd'allah Ebn Al Mofabbib to collect the tribute imposed on those who refused to profess Islamism, as well as the customs, and on some occasions to officiate for him in the mosque. It appears from Theophanes, that some commotions happened at this period in Armenia; and that the people of that country delivered the fortress of Camach, or Kamakh, into the hands of the Arabs ^f.

Some commotions in Armenia, and Camach betrayed to the Arabs, in the year 178.

^e Roderic. Toletan, ubi supra, cap. xviii. xix. xx. p. 18, 19. Joan. Vaf. Hispan. Chronic. Vide etiam Hispan. Illustrat. tom. 1. p. 705, 706. Francofurti, 1603. ^f Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 406, 407. Theophan. ubi supra, p. 395, 396.

*Al Rashîd
performs a
pilgrimage
to Mecca on
foot.*

In the course of the next year, being the 179th of the Hejra, Al Rashîd consulted all the principal doctors of the law at Baghdâd, to know whether he was obliged to undertake a journey on foot to Mecca, in consequence of a vow he had formerly made. That prince being in great perplexity and distress, and even almost overwhelmed with the afflictions he found himself obliged to sustain in the khalifat of his brother Al Hâdi, vowed to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca on foot, if it should please God ever to deliver him out of those troubles. However, after his elevation to the khalifat, many of his courtiers remonstrated to him, that he was under no obligation to visit the Caaba in the manner he had proposed. Upon which he thought fit to apply to the doctors for their decision in so momentous a point; and they being unanimously of opinion, that his former vow was obligatory, he set out from Baghdâd for Mecca, went thither, and returned to his capital on foot; a pilgrimage which was never afterwards performed in this manner by any future khalif. We are told, that the roads through which he passed were covered with rich carpets, and a variety of stuffs of very considerable price.

*Mâlec Ebn
Ans dies.*

In the 179th of the Moslem æra, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, died Abu Abd'allah Mâlec Ebn Ans Al Asbehi Al Medini, the founder of the second orthodox sect, who is said to have paid great regard to the traditions of Mohammed. He went among the Arabs by the name of the Imâm of the City of the Flight, being a native of Medina. In his last illness, a friend going to visit him, found him in tears, and asking him why he wept, he answered, "How should I not weep; and who has more reason to weep than I? Would to God that for every question decided by me, according to my own opinion, I had received so many stripes! then would my accounts be easier. Would to God I had never given any decision of my own!" Al Ghazali thinks it a sufficient proof of Mâlec's directing his knowledge to the glory of God, that, being once asked his opinion as to forty-eight questions, his answer to thirty-two of them was, that he did not know; it being no easy matter for one who has any other view than God's glory, to make so frank a confession of his ignorance. A certain person having once demanded of him whether it was lawful to use a porpoise, or sea-hog, for food, he answered in the negative; and, in support of his decision, observed, that though it was really a fish, yet the name it bore made it pass for a hog, which every Moslem was absolutely forbidden to eat. The doctrine of Mâlec is chiefly

chiefly followed in Barbary and other parts of Africa. His death was much regretted by the khalif. That prince having one day desired him to come to the palace, in order to instruct his sons, the Moslem doctor replied, "Knowledge will not wait upon any person; but is itself to be waited upon." "You are in the right (said Harûn); and therefore they shall attend you in the place to which other children resort for your instruction." They accordingly went every day to the mosque where Mâlec taught in public. The Moslems of the West are said to have waged war with Alonzo II. in Galicia, this year, with very ill success; the forces of that prince having sallied out upon them from the mountains, entirely defeated them, cut many to pieces, taken a considerable number prisoners, and driven all the rest out of the province. Soon after which event, Heshâm departed this life, in conformity to the foregoing prediction, before he had completed the eighth year of his reign. He was succeeded by his son Hakem, who sat twenty-six years ten months and twenty days upon the Moslem throne in Spain².

In the 180th year of the Hejra, Al Rashîd removed Mûsa Ebn Isa Al Hâshemi from the government of Egypt, and made his brother Abd'allah Ebn Al Mohdi lieutenant of that country a second time. He also entered the dominions of the Greek emperor either this or the following year, with a formidable army, took the city of Thebasa in Lycaonia, called Al Safsâf by some of the Arab writers, ravaged the neighbouring territory in a dreadful manner, and then retreated with an immense quantity of plunder, and without having sustained any considerable loss. This year also, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, died Heshâm Ebn Abd'alrahmân, of the house of Ommiyah, and was succeeded by his son Hakem Ebn Heshâm in the kingdom, or khalifat, erected by the Moslems in Spain. Hakem, or Al Hakem, was a prince of great prudence and resolution, being attended in most of his enterprizes with success. His life-guards consisted of five thousand men, three thousand of which, if we believe Roderic of Toledo, were renegadoes, and two thousand of them eunuchs. Part of them were destined for the defence of his person, and the other part he placed as a garrison in his capital city. He caused justice to be impartially administered to the poorest of his subjects, brought even the greatest to condign punishment

*Al Rashîd
invades the
territories
of the
Greeks.*

² Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. Al Bokhari, Ism. Abulfed. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 539, 540. Lamai, Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup. cap. xx. xxi. p. 19.

for their crimes, and was extremely charitable, liberal, and munificent. According to Theophanes, the Arabs received a terrible defeat this year from the Greeks, at no great distance from Ephesus; but the Arab historians have not taken the least notice of this action, of which even the Greek author himself has handed down to us very few particulars. Solimân and Abd'allah, who had been driven by their brother Heshâm into Africa, having been informed of that prince's death, and of his son Al Hakem's accession to the crown, assembled about this time a body of troops, to dispute the western khalifat with the latter, and made the necessary dispositions for returning into Spain.

*The occurrences of
the year
182.*

Next year, being the 182d of the Hejra, Al Rashîd sent an ambassador, with magnificent presents, to the court of Charlemagne, king of France, and emperor of the West, who was admitted to an audience at a place between Verceil or Vercelli, and Ivrea, the Vercellæ and Eporedia of the ancients, and received with great marks of distinction by that prince. Theophanes insinuates, that the Arabs made an impression, about this time, upon the imperial territories, and penetrated as far as Amorium in Phrygia with a very considerable force; but were soon obliged to retire with some prisoners they had taken, without having effected any thing of consequence. We are told by Roderic of Toledo, that Solimân and Abd'allah landed with a body of troops in Spain, and fixed their head-quarters at Valencia, in order to expel their nephew Al Hakem, about the present year. The Moslem empire consisted now of the extensive provinces of Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Persia, Armenia, Natolia, Media or Adherbijân, Babylonia, Assyria, Sindia, Sijistân, Khorasân, Tabrestân, Jorjân, Zablestân or Sablestân, Mawarâ'lnahr or Great Bukhâria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, and others, that rendered it the most formidable and puissant state in the world. The Moslems were likewise in possession of most of the provinces of Spain, together with some part of France; though the prince that presided over them seems to have been independent on Al Rashîd, who might, at this juncture, with great propriety, have been styled the khalif of the East ^h.

In the 183d year of the Hejra the khakan sent a numerous army through the Caspian streights, called by the

^h Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 115. Scriptor. Rer. Germanicar. à Carolo M. usque ad Fridericum III. p. 58. ad fin. Vit. Carol. M. Argentorati, 1702. Theophan. ubi sup. p. 397. & alib. Georg. Jac. Kehr, ubi sup. p. 22. Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup. cap. xxi. p. 19.

Arabs Bâbalabwâb, or the *Gate of Gates*, to make an irruption into the Moslem territories. These hostilities were committed against the khalif by the khakan, in order to revenge his daughter's death; who having been betrothed to Fadl Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, and coming to Bartha'a, to be married to that prince, died there a natural death; upon which the retinue that attended her reported, though without the least appearance of truth, that she was privately destroyed. This information greatly incensing the khakan, that prince's forces, by his order, entered Mawarâ'nahr, put a great number of the khalif's subjects in that province to the sword, and carried off above a hundred thousand prisoners. Either this or the following year, one of Al Rashîd's generals, called Abimelec by Theophanes, with a body of troops ravaged the provinces of Cappadocia and Galatia; upon which a negociation was set on foot between the khalif and the empress Irene for an accommodation, but without effect. Towards the close of the present year, Mûsa Ebn Jaafar Ebn Mohammed Ebn Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâled, who had been imprisoned at Baghdâd, was put to death by Al Rashîd's order. He left eighteen sons and twenty-three daughters behind him, and was buried in the western, or old city of Baghdâd. About this time Solimân and Abd'allah assembled their forces at Valencia, and had several brisk rencounters with some parties and detachments of Al Hakem's troops; though nothing decisive happened during the course of it in Spain.

The khakan makes an irruption into the khalif's territories.

In the 184th or 185th year of the Mohammedan æra, Abimelec made another irruption, with a body of light-armed troops, into the imperial territories, and penetrated to Mangana. From thence he sent a detachment to the stables of Stauracius, which carried off the horses, and one in particular that the empress Irene herself sometimes used. Another body of the Arabs invaded Lydia, where they committed terrible depredations, and returned home loaded with booty. A third body of troops of the same nation attacked the imperial forces commanded by Peter, a patrician, put them to flight, and made themselves masters of all their baggage, provisions, and military stores: the Christians suffered extremely in the action. In the 184th year of the Hejra, the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, according to Ebn Shohnah, likewise sent Ibrahim Ebn Aglab into the western part of Africa, to take upon him the government of a tract of very considerable extent there. About the same time Al Hakem gave his uncles battle, and routed them with incredible slaughter. Solimân, one of them,

The Christians defeated by the Arabs, and Al Hakem obtains a complete victory in Spain.

was killed upon the spot; and Abd'allah, the other, with great difficulty, made his escape to Valencia, where he was shut up by the victor's troops. This memorable battle, fought in the 184th year of the Hejra, if we credit Roderic, so often cited, determined the fate of Spain.

The khalif divides the government of his dominions amongst his three sons.

In the 186th year of the Hejra, beginning January 10, 802, the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd performed another pilgrimage to Mecca, which proved very expensive. After the performance of all the prescribed ceremonies at Mecca, he went to Medina, and distributed large sums of money in alms amongst the poorer inhabitants of both those cities. He also called his son Al Kasem to the succession, after Al Mamun, and surnamed him Al Mutaman. He is said by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari and Khondemir, to have divided the government of his extensive dominions amongst his three sons in the following manner: to Al Amîn, the eldest, he assigned the lieutenancy of the provinces of Syria, Irâk, the three Arabias, Mesopotamia, Assyria, Media, Palestine, Egypt, and all that part of Africa conquered by his predecessors, extending from the confines of Egypt and Ethiopia to the Streights of Gibraltar, with the dignity of khalif: to Al Mamun, the second, that of Persia, Kerman, the Indies, Khorasân, Tabrestân, Cablesân, and Zablesân or Sablesân, together with the vast province of Mawarâ'nahr; and to his third son Al Kasem, Armenia, Natolia, Jorjân, Georgia, Circassia, or Tcherkassia, and all the Moslem territories bordering upon the Euxine Sea. With regard to the order of succession, it has been already observed, that Al Amîn was to mount the throne after his father, Al Mamun after him, and then Al Kasem Al Mutaman. About this time Al Hakem pardoned his only surviving uncle Abd'allah, permitted him to reside in the city of Valencia, settled upon him a pension of a thousand dinârs a month, engaged to make him an annual present of five thousand more, graciously received his sons, and gave one of them his own sister in marriage; by which means peace and tranquility were entirely restored to the Moslem conquests in Spain¹.

The house of Barmac disgraced.

In the following year Al Rashîd put his favourite Jaafar Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac to death; for which severity different reasons have been assigned by different authors. Some pretend, that when the khalif was determined to confine Yahya Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hasan Ebn

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 115, 116. Khondemir, Aut. Lobb Al Tawarikh, Ebn Shohnah, Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. Roderic. Toletan, ubi supra, p. 19, 20.

Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, he committed him to the care of Jaafar, who suffered him to make his escape by night, and even sent a person to conduct him to Fâmia; which conduct being resented by Al Rashîd, though he at first seemed to approve of what Jaafar had done, it was the principal cause of his destruction. Others assert, that the khalif being so vastly fond both of Jaafar and his own sister Abbâsa, that he could not long be absent from either, in order to enjoy their company and conversation together with the less inconvenience to them, gave her in marriage to him; permitting him to look upon her as much as he pleased, but enjoining him never to touch her. Notwithstanding which injunction, Jaafar being once intoxicated, or rather both of them being young and inflamed with mutual passion, the marriage was privately consummated, and she became pregnant. After the expiration of the usual term, she was brought to bed of twins, which Jaafar sent to Mecca, in order to avoid the fury and resentment of Al Rashîd; but the khalif being soon acquainted with what had happened, ordered Jaafar's head to be cut off, sent his brother Al Fadl, and his father Yahya, to prison at Al Rakka, where they remained till the day of their death, and commanded his sister Abbâsa, who had likewise been confined, together with her two children, to be thrown alive into a well, which was afterwards filled up; though he is said to have shed tears before this command was carried into execution. Others relate, that the khalif ordered Jaafar to be beheaded, because he had built a house that cost him twenty thousand dinârs; which his master considered as an evident proof of his having embezzled the public money; and lastly, others affirm, that Al Rashîd having taken a dislike to the house of Barmac, and being afraid of Jaafar and his father Yahya, having imparted all his secrets to them, he found himself obliged to treat them in the foregoing manner: but whatever was the motive to this surprising conduct, Jaafar was executed in the palace by Mafrur on Saturday, in the month of Al Moharram, by the khalif's order, when he had scarce completed the thirty-seventh year of his age. Nor could his mother, though she had been Al Rashid's nurse, prevail upon the khalif to release her husband Yahya, and her other son Al Fadl, who had been Harûn's counsellors during the space of seventeen years, from their confinement; he persisting inflexibly in his intention to depress that once favourite family, which was now become the object of his aversion, and having written

to all the governors of provinces to confiscate the effects belonging to every member of it, that should be found in any part of his dominions. It may not be improper to inform our readers, that the Barmacidæ, or Barmecidæ, called by the Arabs Baramaca, or Barameca were one of the most illustrious families of the East, being originally descended, according to some authors, from the ancient kings of Persia; though, if we pay any regard to the sentiments of Al Zamakhshari, they deduced their origin from the city of Balkh. This writer relates, that the first of this family erected the stately and magnificent mosque at Balkh, called Neu Bahar; which name in Persic signifies *New Spring*, or *New Garden*; and that they constructed this noble edifice upon the model of the temple at Mecca. The outside of it, in imitation of what was done to the exterior part of the Caaba, they covered with rich damask, and surrounded the whole with three hundred and sixty chapels, into which the pilgrims, of whom there was a great concourse, usually retired, in order to perform their devotions. As the founders were the proper intendants, or keepers of this temple, and considered that post as inseparably connected, by the right of patronage, with their family, they assumed from thence the name of Barmac, or Barmec, and ever afterwards retained both the title and the name.

That family highly esteemed in after-ages;

The first who reflected lustre on this family, which most eminently distinguished it from many others that had before made a much more considerable figure, was the aforesaid Yahya Ebn Khâled, named at length Abu Ali Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, a person endued with the greatest civil and military virtues, and chosen by the khalif Al Mohdi for governor to his son Harûn Al Rashîd. He had four sons, Fadl, Jaafar, Mohammed, and Mûsa, who by no means degenerated from their father's virtues, but raised the glory and reputation of their house to the highest pitch. It may not be amiss to remark, that after this illustrious family had been abandoned by fortune, and fallen under the khalif's displeasure, the people had a more lively sense than ever of the important services the members of it had done them. The exalted merit and excellent qualities of those great men then appeared in a stronger light than even when they were in the zenith of their power; insomuch that, in after-ages, they found as many historians to celebrate their virtues, as did the greatest conquerors and most powerful princes of the East.

The

The elevated sentiments their contemporaries entertained of their rare and uncommon merit, in some measure appears from the following remarkable story, which has been preserved by a Persian historian. The khalif Harûn Al Rashid, after he had disgraced the house of Barmac, forbad his subjects ever to mention that family, upon pain of death, on any occasion. But, notwithstanding this prohibition, an old man, named Mondir, placed himself one day upon an eminence, which served him for a sort of pulpit, opposite to one of their houses, then deserted, where he entertained all that passed by with a detail of the glorious and amiable actions of those great men. The khalif, being acquainted with his temerity, ordered the man to be brought before him, and condemned him to die, for treating his prohibition with such contempt. Mondir received his sentence with pleasure, and only desired leave to speak two words to the khalif before his execution. This request being granted, the two words he mentioned were drawn out into a long discourse; in which he insisted upon the obligations he was under to the family of Barmac with such force, that the khalif heard him without impatience, was affected with his words, and not only gave him his life, but likewise made him a present of a very rich gold plate, that he himself used. The old man having received this valuable present from the khalif's own hand, and being, according to the eastern custom, prostrate on the ground, said, by way of acknowledgement to his munificent benefactor, "See here a new favour that I have received from the house of Barmac!" Which words were so remarkable, that they afterwards passed into a proverb, current in every part of Asia^k.

and by
their con-
tempora-
ries.

Though almost all the members of this family, as well as their domestics, and other dependents, were involved in the common destruction, yet Mohammed Ebn Yahya did not meet with the least molestation, nor receive even the slightest injury. From whence it appears, that his conduct gave no manner of umbrage to the khalif, and consequently that he was not affected by the cause, whatever it might have been that produced the amazing alteration in that prince's disposition towards the race of Barmac. With regard to Yahya himself, he is said by some authors to have died in prison at Al Rakka. As for Jaafar, his

Mohammed
Ebn Ya-
hya, one of
the mem-
bers of this
family,
escapes.

^k Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'al Jaafar Al Kazwini, in Nighiarit,

son, after Mafrur had struck off his head, his body was cut in pieces, and part of it fixed upon every one of the gates of Baghdâd. The head also, by the khalif's order, was exposed to public view on the bridge over the Tigris, in the neighbourhood of that city¹.

Al Rashid forces Nicephorus to accept of a peace upon his own terms.

In the course of this year Al Rashîd received a letter from Nicephorus, soon after he had been advanced to the imperial dignity, commanding him to return all the money he had extorted from Irene, though this had been secured to him by the last treaty concluded with that princess, or to expect soon to see an imperial army in the heart of his dominions. This insolent letter so incensed the khalif, that he immediately assembled his forces, and advanced to Heraclea, ravaging the country with fire and sword. For some time, also, he blocked up the city, and intimidated the emperor so much, that he submitted to pay an annual tribute to the khalif. Harûn, upon these terms, granted him peace, and returned with his army to Al Rakka. But a hard frost soon after happening in those parts, Nicephorus took it for granted that the severity of the season would prevent Harûn from making him another visit, and therefore broke the preceding treaty. Of which infraction the khalif receiving advice, he instantly put himself again in motion, resumed the military operations, and, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, forced the emperor to accept of the terms prescribed him, and to pay the tribute that had formerly been imposed. It appears from a Persian historian, that Nicephorus, before hostilities commenced, made Harûn a present of several excellent swords, all which the khalif cut in two with his famous sword Samsamah, as if they had been so many radishes, in the presence of the Greek ambassador, who brought them. This Samsamah was a sword that had fallen into Al Rashîd's hands amongst the spoils of Ebn Dakikan, one of the last Hamyaritic princes of Yaman; but is said to have belonged originally to a valiant Arab, named Amru Ebn Maadi Carb, under whose name it generally went amongst the Moslems. There did not appear the least flaw in the blade, after the proof Harun had made of it; a circumstance which clearly evinced the strength of his arm, as well as the goodness of the sword. It is said, that Amru Ebn Maadi Carb once gave this sword to a certain prince, who complained that it did not produce the desired effect; upon which, that brave man took the liberty

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 117.

to tell him, that he had not sent him his arm with his sword.

The next year, being the 188th of the Hejra, the khalif sent an army to invade some of the imperial provinces, which penetrated as far as Safsâf. Nicephorus, being informed of this irruption, advanced at the head of his forces against the Arabs, and attacked them with incredible fury; but was vanquished with the loss of forty thousand men, and received himself three wounds in the action. After which victory the Moslems ravaged all the adjacent territory in a dreadful manner, and then returned home laden with the spoils acquired in this successful expedition ^m.

Nicephorus defeated by the khalif's forces.

About the same time, a body of the khalif's forces penetrated into Phrygia, overthrew an imperial army sent to oppose them, and retired into the Moslem territories without having sustained any considerable loss.

Harûn invades Phrygia the following year. The khalif undertakes an expedition against the Greek emperor.

In the 190th year of the Hejra, Harûn Al Rashîd marched into the imperial provinces with an army of one hundred and thirty-five thousand men, besides a great number of volunteers, and others who were not inrolled amongst his troops. He first laid siege to Heraclea, took it, and reduced it to ashes; after which conquest, he made himself master of several other towns. He is said to have carried with him from Heraclea no less than sixteen thousand prisoners; and, after the conclusion of this expedition, to have made a descent on the island of Cyprus, the people of which country he pillaged and plundered in a dreadful manner. This success so intimidated Nicephorus, the Greek emperor, that he immediately sent the tribute due to Harûn, and concluded a peace with the khalif upon the terms he thought fit to prescribe; one of which was, that the city of Heraclea should never be rebuilt. Whilst Harûn was employed in this expedition, Rafe' Ebn Al Leith revolted at Samarkand, and assembled a considerable force to support him in his defection. The citizens of Toledo, at this time, rebelled against the western khalif, Al Hakem, in Spain. But that prince sent his son Abd'alrahmân, then only fourteen years of age, with an army against their city, who, by the assistance of one Ambroz, governor of Saragosa and Huesca, who betrayed them, after they had admitted him into the town, found

^m Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 233. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 118. Eutych. ubi supra. Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'al Jaafar Al Kazwini, in Nigharist. Ahmed Ebn Yusef, Al Jannab. Vide etiam Theophan. ubi supra, p. 402.

means to enter the place, without the trouble and fatigue of a siege, put five thousand of them to the sword, after he had decoyed them to an entertainment, and entirely extinguished the rebellion that had begun to shake Al Hakem's throne. We are told by Theophanes, that the greatest part of a body of light-armed troops, sent by the Greek emperor into Syria, to act against the khalif, perished, without effecting any thing, this campaignⁿ.

Rafe' Ebn Al Leith makes a great progress in the conquest of Khorasân.

The next year, being the 191st of the Hejra, the khalif removed Ali Ebn Isa Ebn Mâhân from the government of Khorasân, probably because he was not sufficiently attentive to the motions of Rafe' Ebn Al Leith, and appointed Hazima Ebn Ayan to succeed him in that post. The new lieutenant had no sooner entered upon the government of the province assigned him, than he sent his predecessor, who had exercised unheard-of tyranny upon the people of Khorasân, in chains to Harûn Al Rashîd. The rebel Rafe' Ebn Al Leith having made a formidable progress in the conquest of Khorasân, Harûn resolved to march against him in person.

The khalif sends his son Al Mamûn against him.

The general rendezvous of his forces was in the plains of Rakka, from whence he advanced at the head of them to Baghdâd. Having supplied the troops with every thing necessary at that place, he continued his march to the frontiers of Jorjân, where he was seized with an illness which grew more violent after he had entered that province. Finding himself not able to pursue his route, he resigned the command of the army to his son Al Mamûn, appointed many experienced officers to serve under him, ordered him to march directly to Meru in quest of the rebels, and he himself retired to Tus in Khorasân, twelve parasangs from Nisabur. We are told by Khondemir, that the khalif saw in a dream at Rakka, before he departed from that place, a hand over his head, full of red earth, and at the same time heard the voice of a person pronouncing these words, "See the earth in which Harûn is to be interred." Upon which, he demanded where he was to be buried? and was instantly answered by the same voice, "At Tûs." This warning greatly discomposing him, he communicated the dream to his chief physician Gabriel, the son of Bakh-tishua, who told him, that this ought to give him no manner of concern, as dreams were only phantoms produced

ⁿ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi supra, p. 234. Georg. Jac. Kehr, ubi supra, p. 12. Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, cap. xxii. xxiii. p. 20, 21. Theophan. Chronograph. p. 406.

by the fumes which the humours of the body sent into the brain; and that the expedition to Khorasân, in order to extinguish the rebellion of Rafe' Ebn Al Leith, he was upon the point of undertaking, had given place to this imagination. He added, that no better remedy could be thought of to dissipate his melancholy, than to pursue some favourite diversion that might draw his attention another way. The khalif, therefore, by his physician's advice, prepared a magnificent entertainment for his principal courtiers, which continued several days. He afterwards put himself at the head of his troops, and advanced to the confines of Jorjân, where he was attacked by the distemper; which increasing, he found himself obliged to leave the army, and retire to Tus; where the prediction communicated to him in his dream was fulfilled. In the month of September this year, according to Theophanes and Cedrenus, the Arabs made a descent upon the island of Rhodes, committed dreadful depredations, and at last retired into their own dominions with an immense quantity of spoil.

The 193d year of the Hejra, answering to October 25, 808, was famous for the death of the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, who departed this life the third of the latter Jomâda at Tus; being then, according to Eutychius, forty-six, or, if we believe Abu Jaafar Al Tabari and Abu'l-Faraj, forty-seven years of age. Upon his arrival at Tus, to which place the violence of his distemper obliged him to retire, he sent for his physician, Gabriel Ebn Bahtishua, and said to him, "Do you remember, Gabriel, my dream at Rakka? We are now arrived at Tûs, the place, according to what was predicted in that dream, of my interment. Send one of my eunuchs to fetch me a handful of the earth in the neighbourhood of the city." One of his favourite eunuchs, named Mafrur, was immediately dispatched to bring a little of the soil of the place to the khalif; who soon returned, and brought a handful of red earth, which he presented to Harûn with his arm half bare: at sight of which, the khalif cried out, "In truth, this is the earth, and that the very arm, that I saw in my dream." His spirits failing him, and his malady increasing, he died three days after this explanation, and was buried in the same place, where a stately monument was afterwards erected in honour of the imâm Ali Ebn Mûsa Ebn Jaafar, called by the Persians the imâm Riza, going under the appellation of Mashhad Riza, or the sepulchre of Riza, at this day. Some authors relate, that both these princes were interred at Senabâd, a village about a parasang distant

*Harûn Al
Rashîd's
death, and
character.*

stant from Tûs; and that Sawri Ebn Al Motez, who presided over the districts of Nisabur and Tûs in the days of Mahmud Gazni, adorned the spot where Harun and Riza lay inhumed with many superb and magnificent buildings. Bashir Ebn Al Leith, Rafe' Ebn Al Leith's brother, was brought to the khalif in chains, when that prince was at the point of death; who, at the sight of him, declared, that if he had only time enough left him to speak two words, he would say, "kill him;" and immediately ordered him to be cut to pieces in his presence which order being executed, he soon expired. Harûn sat about three-and-twenty years upon the Moslem throne. As to his person, he was tall, corpulent, and of a fair complexion; he had thick bushy hair, which had begun to grow grey, a handsome face, and a black beard: his head he took care to have shaved as often as he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. With regard to his disposition, he was a person of such singular humanity, that, in this point, he could scarce be paralleled by any of his predecessors, of great liberality, especially to poets, being excessively fond of the Arab poetry, and even capable of writing verses himself, magnanimous and brave, and so devout, that he is said to have gone eight or nine times on pilgrimage to Mecca, whilst he was khalif. He spent a considerable time in prayer every day, except when he was sick, and, during the performance of his devotions, made a hundred incurvations. He also distributed every day a thousand dirhems amongst the poor, and carried with him a hundred learned men to Mecca; and when he did not go thither himself, he took care to furnish three hundred persons with proper accommodations for that journey. None of the preceding khalifs entertained so great a number of counsellors, judges, learned men, and poets. Al Asmaghi relates, that on a certain day, he found Al Rashid in tears, upon discovering a passage in the poetical works of Abu'l Abâiha, which he applied to himself, and seemed to interpret as a prediction of his death. His first counsellors were Yahya Ebn Khâled Ebn Barmac, and his two sons Al Fadl and Jaafar; after whose dismissal he took Al Fadl Ebn Al Rabi. He is said likewise afterwards to have delivered the privy seal to Ali Ebn Baktar. Ismael Ebn Sabîh also served him in the capacity of prime minister to the day of his death. This khalif was extremely fond of learned men, and cultivated himself some of the sciences. He obliged Malec, the author of the famous book intitled Mawtha, to write an explication of that piece;

piece; who, when the khalif would have shut the door of the chamber wherein that explication was made, boldly told him, that knowlege was of no manner of service to the great, except they communicated it to those of a lower degree. But, in order to have an adequate idea of the state of learning in the Moslem empire during this khalif's reign, and perfectly to understand on what foot he set the sciences, we must refer our readers to the history of Tawadûd Katûn and Harûn, as well as the works of divers ancient authors, which he caused to be translated into Arabic: a detail of them may be found in the Bibliotheque of M. D'Herbelot°.

It has been observed by some of the Oriental historians, that Al Mohdi made his son Harûn a present of a most beautiful ruby ring, which he wore himself, as an earnest of the succession, to which he was called after his brother Al Hâdi; and that the last of these princes, immediately after his accession, sent an eunuch to demand it, as of right belonging to him. This unreasonable demand so incensed Harûn, that in the eunuch's presence, he pulled it off his finger, and threw it into the Tigris, where it remained till Al Hâdi's death: but no sooner had he taken possession of the khalifat, than he commanded some divers to search for it; casting into the river, a leaden ring, in order to direct them, from the same part of the bridge where he stood, when the eunuch demanded Al Mohdi's ring of him. The divers were so fortunate on this occasion as to find the thing sought for, without any difficulty or toil; which accident was considered as a certain prognostic of a happy and auspicious reign. One of these authors relates, that the famous Saladin, in the year of the Hejra 560, lost a ruby ring, of almost inestimable value, which was as luckily found again as this of the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd.

Harûn finds a ring that he had thrown into the Tigris.

In the 180th year of the Hejra, Al Rashîd being seized with an apoplectic fit, the physicians met at his palace, to consult about the proper means of relieving him; when Gabriel, the son of Bakhtishua, then but a very young man, declared, that in his opinion, a vein was immediately to be opened. This prescription was opposed by Al Amîn, but agreed to by Al Mamûn, as the only expedient that could be thought of to save his father's life.

The khalif recovers from an apoplectic fit;

° Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, Eutych. et Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. Khondemir, Ebn Hawkel, Ism. Abulfed. Yakut Ebn Abd'allah Al Hamathi, Golii Not. ad Alfragan, p. 185—188. Al Asmaghi et Abu'l Abahia, apud Al Makin, ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 433, 853, et alib. pass.

The khalif, therefore, was blooded without delay, and recovered; in the sequel, Al Mamûn related to him the whole affair, and was ever after his particular favourite. As for Gabriel, Harûn was so pleased with his conduct on this occasion, that he made him his principal physician, and settled upon him a pension of one hundred thousand dirhems.

*as does his
favourite
mistress
from an-
other dis-
order.*

When Abd'allah Ebn Al Mohdi, the khalif's brother, was prefect of Egypt, he made a present to Harûn of a most beautiful damsel, of whom that prince was passionately fond. This girl being once extremely ill, and the court-physicians not being able to procure her any relief, the khalif found himself obliged to apply to his brother for a doctor from Egypt. Abd'allah upon this application, sent him the patriarch of Alexandria, who had great skill in physic, and who soon cured her of her distemper. This event so pleased the khalif, that he ordered all the churches that had been taken away from the Melchites in Egypt to be restored them, and gave the patriarch a large sum of money for the cure he had performed. This patriarch, whose name was Balâtian, or Balatianus, died in the forty-seventh year of his patriarchate, and was succeeded by one Estât, or Eustatius, at Alexandria, in the sixteenth year of the khalifat of Al Rashîd. Eustatius was originally a flax-dresser; but finding a treasure accidentally in the place where he beat his flax, he became a monk in the monastery of Al Kofair, was at last made the head of his convent, and built the church of the Two Apostles, together with a bed-chamber for the bishop. He lived, after his advancement to the patriarchate of Alexandria, only four years; and, after his death, one Christopher was elevated to that high dignity, who having been afflicted with a paralytic disorder, appointed a certain bishop, named Peter, to discharge the duties of his function. He continued, however, in that sublime post, though very infirm, thirty-two years. In the eighth year of Al Rashîd's reign, Theodoritus was constituted patriarch of Antioch, and presided over the Christians there seventeen years. We are told by Sa'id Ebn Batrik, or Eutychius, that there was so remarkable a solar eclipse at Alexandria, after evening-prayer, in Harûn's reign, that the stars appeared, and the people were struck with terror, inasmuch that they fell down upon their knees, and implored the divine protection.

Harûn being one day told that there was a fool at Baghdâd, who pretended to be God, he sent for him, in order
to

to converse with him, and discover whether he was really a fool or an impostor. At his first appearance the khalif said to him, "A man was brought before me some days ago, who made himself a fool, and wanted to pass for a prophet sent by God. I commanded him immediately to be carried to prison, and from thence to be brought to his trial, after the conclusion of which, being condemned, he had his head struck off." The fool, having heard these words, replied, "You acted on this occasion as became one of my faithful servants; that wretch never received the gift of prophecy from me, nor had he ever any order or mission on my part." The author, who has handed down to us this story, adds, that according to the principles of the Mohammedans, one who is insane, and has lost the use of his reason, can say nothing but what is true, since it is God who speaks in him. On the contrary, he who pretends to be a prophet, and to be sent by God, when he really is not so, is an impostor, and can utter nothing but lies. The greatest part of the Moslems believe, that fools are agitated by the spirit of God, and of course reverence them as saints transported by the divine love; and, in conformity to this sentiment, as M. D'Herbelot has rightly observed, it is a saying not uncommon in these western parts of the world, that "truth is in the mouth of children and fools".

*Harun's
conference
with a fool
at Bagh-
dad.*

This khalif, being in Egypt, said once to his courtiers, "The king of this country formerly boasted himself to be God; I therefore, in abhorrence of such pride, intend to confer the government of it upon one of the meanest of my slaves." In consequence of which intention, he chose for this purpose Hozaib, an Ethiopian, a person of a most rude and clownish disposition. The king hinted at here is Pharoah, who is represented in the Khoran as saying to his people, "I am more great and powerful than all your Gods: I am your sovereign God and master." The Egyptians having once complained to this Hozaib, after he had been made their governor, that the cotton they had sowed on the banks of the Nile was carried away by an inundation of that river, he asked them, by way of consolation, why they had not sown wool there? believing that wool and cotton were produced in the same manner.

*He ap-
points an
Ethiopian
slave go-
vernor of
Egypt.*

Ebn Kassef has remarked, that the strong castle of Saff in Natolia, called by the Turks at this day Belejek, was

*He took
Saff.*

p Aut. Lathaif, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Haroun Al Raschid, p. 432.

taken from the Greeks by the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, who obliged the emperor Nicephorus to pay him tribute, as we have already observed; but that this was retaken from the Arabs by the Greeks, who kept possession of it till the time of Othmân, the son of Ortogrol, the founder of the Othmân or Ottoman empire.

*His advice
on a parti-
cular occa-
sion to his
son.*

Amongst the remarkable sayings of this khalif, the following has been preserved by Sâdi. Al Amîn, his son, having one day desired him to punish a man for speaking ill of his mother Zebeida, he consulted his officers of justice upon the punishment proper to be inflicted on that offender. After which consultation, he addressed himself to Al Amîn in the following terms: "I would advise you, son, to forgive him, as this will be an action worthy of a great and magnanimous prince; but if you cannot absolutely repress your desire of vengeance, you may treat his mother in the same manner that he has treated your's."

*His adven-
ture with
a woman
whose
house had
been pil-
laged.*

The khalif being once marching at the head of his troops, a woman came to him to complain that some of his soldiers had pillaged her house. Harûn immediately made answer, "Hast thou not read, woman, in the Koran, that when princes pass with their armies through places, they destroy them." "True (replied the woman); but then it is also said in the same book, that the houses of those princes shall be desolate for the acts of injustice they have committed." This bold repartee, and the good sense of the woman, was so well received by the khalif, that he immediately ordered reparation to be made her for the damages she had sustained.

*He took for
his master
Asmâi.*

He took for his instructor in the Mohammedan law the celebrated doctor Asmâi, or Asmaghi, who being willing to examine things to the utmost rigour of the law, would frequently have obliged him to make a false step, if he had not been extremely well upon his guard. On such occasions as these, Harûn used to say to him, "You are more learned than I; but I have more sense and prudence than you." This sage's name at length was Abu Sa'id Abd'almâleç Ebn Koraib Al Asmâi. He was born in the year of the Hejra 122, and died in the 215th or 216th year of that æra, when the khalif Al Mamûn sat upon the Moslem throne. He excelled in the art of grammar and eloquence, was extremely well versed in the most authentic traditions, and had a perfect knowledge of the Koran. These valuable qualities so endeared him to Harûn Al Rashîd, that he did not think it beneath him to take him

him for his master ; but the scholar was resolved to give the first lesson, and that such a one as was worthy his high rank and capacity. He ordered Asmâi never to offer to teach or instruct him in public, and not to be too forward or officious in giving him his advice in private ; to stay till he was asked his opinion, and then to content himself with giving a clear and precise answer to the questions put to him, without any superfluous additions ; above all things, to take care not to attempt preoccupying him in favour of any of his notions, or exacting of him too high a regard for his authority ; not to dwell too long on the histories and traditions he should relate to him, without his particular permission ; to bring him back with softness, and without any reproachful words, to the paths of justice, if he should ever depart from thence in his decisions ; principally to point out to him the things that were most proper for the discourses he was to make in public, in the mosques and other places ; and, finally, never to talk to him in obscure and mysterious terms, such as were not easily to be understood. This doctor was something under a middle size, of great vivacity and penetration, and had a mind capable of the greatest undertakings. He was the author of many pieces ; the principal of which were *Osul Al Kalam*, *The Foundations of Scholastic Divinity*, and *Fahuat-wa-Al-Naderat*, *Rare and curious Things*. We must not forget to observe, that Isa Ebn Jaafar said the funeral service over the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, at the time of his interment ; and that Al Hasan Ebn Al Tahtah was governor of Egypt, in the room of Malec Ebn Daham, whom he removed a little before his death, when he expired *.

Upon the arrival of a courier from Tûs with the news of Al Rashîd's death, his son Mohammed Mûsa Al Amîn was proclaimed khalif, or emperor of the Moslems, at Baghdâd, about twelve days after his father's decease, though he had been declared khalif at Tûs the very morning Al Rashîd died. His mother was Zebeida, the daughter of Jaafar Ebn Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr : he was at Baghdâd when his father expired. Al Mamûn, this prince's brother, had been called to the succession after him, by an express declaration which Harûn, in order to render it the more authentic, had caused to be hung up in the Caaba : he had likewise been indulged by his father

After Al Rashîd's death, his son Mohammed Mûsa Al Amîn is proclaimed khalif.

* Asmai, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Asmai, p. 39. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 120. Georg. Jac. Kehr, ubi sup. p. 23.

with

with the perpetual government of Khorasân, together with the command of all the troops cantoned in that province. Notwithstanding which precautions, Al Amîn, after his accession, formed a design to exclude him from the khalifat, deprived him of the furniture and moveables of the imperial palace in Khorasân, which had been left him by Al Rashîd, and, in open violation of his father's will, and the former declaration of that prince, which had been renewed a little before his death, ordered the forces in Khorasân to march directly to Baghdâd. These injuries not a little incensed Al Mamûn, who thereupon expostulated with Al Fadl Ebn Al Rabi, the general of those forces; but without effect; he punctually obeying the orders he had received from the new khalif. However, Al Mamûn took care not to be wanting in his fidelity to his brother: he obliged the people of Khorasân to take the oath of allegiance to Al Amîn, and reduced to reason some seditious spirits that had actually excited a considerable body of the inhabitants of his province to a revolt.

*The khalif
excludes
his brother
from the
succession.*

Al Amin being extremely addicted to drunkenness and gaming, and thereby become incapable of all manner of application to business, chose Al Fadl Ebn Al Rabî for his prime visir, and entirely abandoned to him the government of his dominions. Fadl was a very able minister; though, fearing Al Mamûn's resentment, if ever he should ascend the Moslem throne, for the ill offices he had formerly done him, he gave his master very bad advice, and such as in the end proved the total ruin of them both. He told him, that his brother Al Mamûn had gained the affection of the people of Khorasân by the good order and police he had established in his government; that his unwearied application to administer justice to those over whom he presided, had so attracted their esteem, that the forces of the whole province were entirely at his devotion; that his own conduct had by no means been relished by his subjects, whose minds were almost totally alienated from him; and that, therefore, he had only one part to act, which was, to deprive his brother of the right of succession that had been left him by his father, and transfer it to his son Mûsa, though then but an infant. The khalif, unhappily for himself, followed the counsel of his prime visir, ordered Al Mamûn's name to be omitted in the public prayers on Fridays, and in the discourses made afterwards to the people by the imâm, which the Moslems call khotbah, and declared Mûsa, though still in his tender years, the presumptive heir to the crown. After which
degra-

degradation of Al Mamûn, Al Amîn surnamed Mûsa, at that time not above five years old, Al Nâtik Billah, Al-Nâtick Belhak, or rather Al Nâtik B'lhak, i. e. *One who reasons and discourses in a manner agreeable to God, or according to truth.* But several of the Moslems, after Mûsa had been proclaimed his father's immediate successor, by way of ridicule, nicknamed him Natha Billah, that is to say, *one who, by the grace of God, begins to speak.* The khalif also sent for his other brother from Mesopotamia, the government of which province his father Harûn had conferred upon him; and recalled Al Mamûn to court, under the pretext that he wanted his assistance in his councils. This unparalleled treatment so irritated Al Mamûn, that he was resolved to come to an open rupture with his brother, in order, if possible, to frustrate his wicked designs. Instead, therefore, of going to Baghdâd, as Al Amîn had commanded him, he cut off all communication between his province and that capital; pretending, that, as his father Harûn had assigned him the lieutenancy of Khorasân, he was responsible for all the disorders that might happen there during his absence. He also coined money, and would not suffer Al Amîn's name to be impressed upon any of the dirhems or dinârs struck in his province. He also prevailed upon Rafe' Ebn Al Leit Ebn Sayâr, who had been for some time in open rebellion against the khalif, to join him with a body of troops, whose example was soon after followed by Harthema Ebn Aafan; a circumstance which put him in possession of all the vast territory of Khorasân. Here he bore an absolute sway, officiated in the mosque as imâm, and from the pulpit constantly harangued the people.

In the following year, being the 195th of the Hejra, the khalif Al Amîn finding that he had missed his aim, and that his brother Al Mamûn set him at defiance, declared war against him, and sent Ali Ebn Isa to invade Khorasân with an army of sixty thousand men. Before his departure, Zebeida, as we are told by Abu'l-Faraj, Al Amîn's mother, and mother-in-law to Al Mamûn, intreated that general to consider the latter as her own son, or at least the son of Harûn Al Rashîd; and, if he refused to obey the khalif's orders, three days after they had been imparted to him, to bring him in silver chains to Bagdhâd.

Al Mamûn being informed that Ali Ebn Isa had begun his march for Khorasân, and even advanced to the frontiers of that province, made the necessary dispositions for giving him a proper reception. He put on foot all the

He declares war against his brother.

His forces overthrown by those of Al Mamûn.

troops he could raise with the utmost expedition, and gave the command of them to Tâher or Thâher Ebn Husein, afterwards the founder of a considerable dynasty, and one of the greatest generals of the age; who, being a man of undaunted resolution, chose only a body of four thousand men, whom he led against Ali Ebn Isa, then encamped on a spot of ground about ten leagues from the city of Ray. Ali, seeing so small a number of troops, was transported with joy, and promised himself an easy victory over them; not considering that these were all choice men, and the flower of Al Mamûn's forces. He, therefore, walked about carelessly in his camp, without any manner of precaution, which negligence being observed by Dawd, surnamed Siyâh, or, as some of the manuscripts of Abu'l-Faraj have it, Shâh, one of Thâher's subalterns, he, with a small party, surprised Ali in his camp, cut off his head, and immediately brought it to Thâher Ebn Husein; who instantly dispatched a courier with it to Al Mamûn, then at Merû, the capital of Khorasân. The courier made such haste, that he arrived at Merû in four days time, though that city is near four hundred leagues distant from Ray, presented the head to Al Mamûn, and brought him the news of a victory obtained by his general over the enemy without striking a stroke; for the khalif's troops betook themselves to flight, as soon as it was known that Ali had been assassinated in his camp. This is the relation of Al Mamûn's first instance of success handed down to us by the Persian historians: but the Arab writers relate this affair in a different manner. Al Mamûn, according to them, joined Harthema Ebn Aafan with Thâher in the command of his forces, and ordered them to attack Ali, then posted on an advantageous spot of ground, about five parasangs from Ray. Those generals, in pursuance of their orders, marched up to Ali Ebn Isa's camp, and gave him battle. For some time Ali's right and left wings behaved well, and forced those of Thâher and Harthema to give way; but Al Mamûn's main body having broke that of the khalif in such a manner, that the troops which composed it could never afterwards rally, and then fallen upon the two wings which had so pushed those of Thâher and Harthema in the beginning of the action, Al Amîn's troops could not stand their ground, but were forced to betake themselves to a precipitate flight. What increased the general confusion, on this melancholy occasion, was the death of Ali Ebn Isa himself, who was killed by an arrow let fly at him by the aforesaid Dawd Siyâh, in the heat

heat of the action. Ali's head was afterwards cut off, and sent as a present to Al Mamûn, who amply rewarded Thâher and Harthema for the important services they had done him. If we can believe Abu'l-Faraj, Ali thought himself so sure of an easy victory, that he told his men they had nothing farther to do, in order to obtain it (or, as the Arabic text of that author expresses it, to break Thâher to pieces like a tree) than to march over the hill of Hamadân. However the preceding accounts may vary in other respects, they seem to agree in this, that the dispersion of the khalif's forces, as well as the loss of Ali, was in a great measure, if not solely, owing to a want of precaution in that general; who could by no means be induced to think, that the enemy would have the courage to attack him, or even dare to look him in the face.

Al Mamûn, having received advice of the death of Ali Ebn Isa Ebn Mâhân, his brother's general, and the entire defeat of the army under his command, assumed the title of khalif, ordered Al Amîn's name to be omitted at the time of divine service in his turn, and made the necessary preparations for carrying the war into the very heart of the Moslem dominions. For this purpose he divided his forces into two bodies, and commanded both of them to march into Irâk by different routes. One of them obeyed the orders of Thâher, who directed his march towards Ahwâz; and the other was led by Harthema, who took the road of Holwân; both of them proposing to meet in the neighbourhood of Baghdâd, and, after their junction, to form the siege of that city. In the course of their march this year, Al Mamûn's troops defeated a body of the khalif's forces, and reduced the city of Hamadân, together with several other places of strength, without any considerable loss. In the mean time, Al Amîn removed Hâtem Ebn Harthema Ebn Aafan from the government of Egypt, and substituted Hâyar Ebn Al Ashab in his room. According to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, Thâher, with the body of troops under his command, took post in the territory of Holwân, and fortified his camp, to secure it from all insults of the enemy, towards the close of this campaign^h.

Al Mamûn assumes the title of khalif.

Al Mamûn, who now openly disputed the khalifat with his brother, failed not to improve the great advantages he had gained. He sent an express to Thâher, commanding him to pursue his march with the utmost expedition, and reach, if possible, the frontiers of Irâk, before Al Amîn

The farther progress of Al Mamûn's arms.

^h Ebn Shohnah, Ism. Abulfed. in Hist. Univer.

could send any formidable army into the field. That general, therefore, upon the arrival of the express, made the necessary dispositions for immediately opening the campaign: but he had no sooner moved out of his winter-quarters, in order to recommence the military operations, than he received advice of the approach of two armies, consisting each of twenty thousand men, that were advancing to give him battle; but, by the assistance of his emissaries and spies, he found means to sow the seeds of discord and dissension between Ahmed Ebn Marid Al Shaibani and Abd'allah Ebn Hamid Ebn Kahtaba, who commanded them; so that, instead of acting in conjunction against the common enemy, they turned their arms against one another. This dissension enabled Thâher to make himself master of Holwân, which he took by capitulation, and then marched directly to Ahwâz. Here he attacked a body of the khalif's forces; but being weakened by the loss of a detachment he had left in garrison at Holwân, under the command of Harthema Ebn Aafan, who had joined him before his arrival at that place, nothing decisive happened on either side. The indolence and supineness of Al Amîn had hitherto been one of the principal causes of the surprising progress of Al Mamûn's arms in so short a time, and given such offence to the people of Baghdâd, that they were universally disposed to an insurrection. Of which unaccountable negligence, the following most remarkable instance has been mentioned by some of the eastern writers. When a courier arrived from the army, with the bad news of Ali Ebn Isa Ebn Mâhân's death and defeat, and imparted it to the khalif, he found him fishing, and so little concerned at what had happened, that he said to him, "Don't disturb my diversion; for Kuthar, my freedman, has taken two large fishes, and I none at all." Being, therefore, become odious to the citizens of Baghdâd, by such an infamous neglect of public affairs, they unanimously entertained thoughts of withdrawing their allegiance from him. To which revolt they were farther excited by Al Hafan Ebn Ali Ebn Isa Ebn Mâhân, a person of great power and authority in the army, after his arrival from Rakka at Baghdâd. They, therefore, deposed him on the eleventh day of the month of Rajeb, confined him and his mother Zebeida, and took the oath of fidelity to Al Mamûn; though afterwards repenting of what they had done, they drove Hafan out of the city, took Al Amîn out of prison, and placed him again upon the throne. They also, in a little time, seized Hafan, and brought him to the khalif,

that

that he might receive the reward of his late treasonable practices. That prince, however, not only forgave him, but likewise, after having supplied him with large sums of money, carriages, horses, arms, and all sorts of military stores, sent him to command the troops posted in the neighbourhood of Holwân : but he had no sooner reached the opposite bank of the Tigris than he endeavoured to make his escape. Of which intention Al Amîn being apprized, he immediately sent a detachment in pursuit of him ; which at last coming up with him, after a brave defence, cut him to pieces, and brought his head to the khalif. Two of his servants also that attended him, and in conjunction with him, behaved with such unparalleled resolution, that they several times repulsed the detachment, met with the same fate.

In the mean time, Thâher Ebn Hofein made a most rapid progress with the troops under his command. Having advanced to Ahwâz, and attacked a body of the khalif's forces posted there, as has been already observed, he obliged them to retire; though the action by no means ended in their entire defeat. However, it so intimidated the commandant of Ahwâz, that he thought fit to surrender that fortress to him. This success opened him a way to Wâset upon the Tigris, and facilitated the conquest of that place. He afterwards marched with his army to Al Madâyen, almost within sight of Baghdâd ; the inhabitants of which town opened their gates to receive him, upon the first news of his approach. The rapidity of these conquests, and Al Amîn's infamous administration, excited the people of Egypt, Syria, Hejâz, and Yaman, unanimously to declare for Al Mamûn, who was thereupon immediately proclaimed khalif in all those provinces. All things thus apparently tending to a revolution, that prince took upon him to constitute several governors of provinces, and in particular appointed Ayâd Ebn Mohammed to preside over the people of Egypt, in the room of Hâtem Ebn Harthema Ebn Aafan, whom he deprived of the government of that country. He also made the proper dispositions for improving the vast advantages he had gained, and even for putting an end to the war in which he found himself engaged the following campaign¹.

In the 197th year of the Hejra, his forces, under the command of Thâher Ebn Hofein and Harthema Ebn Aa-

Thâher takes several towns; which induces Egypt, Syria, Hejâz, and Yaman, to declare for Al Mamûn.

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makn, ubi sup. p. 127. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 121. & alib.

*Al Mamûn's
forces form
the siege of
Baghdâd.*

fan, appeared upon the banks of the Tigris, in the neighbourhood of Baghdâd, and formed the siege of that capital. As the khalif Al Amîn himself was shut up in that place, and it had a numerous garrison, the besieged made a vigorous defence, and destroyed a great number of the enemy. The besiegers, however, played upon the town incessantly with their catapults, and the garrison, in their turn, annoyed them greatly with the same sort of military machines. The latter, likewise, made continual sallies, and fought like men animated by despair, though they were always at length beaten back into the town with considerable loss. In short, the siege continued through the whole course of this year; during which time the greatest part of the city called Aker Al Mohdi, or *the Camp of Al Mohdi*, erected on the eastern bank of the Tigris, was either demolished or reduced to ashes by Al Mamûn's troops. The citizens also, as well as the garrison, were reduced to the last extremity by the length and violence of the siege.

*Al Amîn
assassinated.*

In the beginning of the next year, the khalif Al Amîn, having been deserted by his troops, as well as the principal men of Baghdâd, who had kept a private correspondence with Thâher Ebn Hosein, found himself obliged to retire to the old town on the western bank of the Tigris, called the city of Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr. However, he did not take this step before the citizens of Baghdâd, intimidated by Thâher Ebn Hosein, had formally deposed him, and proclaimed his brother Al Mamûn khalif. Thâher immediately caused that town to be invested, planted his catapults against it, and at last carried it by famine. Al Amîn being thus reduced to the necessity of putting himself into the hands of one of Al Mamûn's generals, chose to implore the protection of Harthema Ebn Aafan, whom he judged to be of a more humane disposition than Thâher Ebn Hosein, which having obtained, he embarked in a shallop, or small vessel, upon the Tigris, in order to reach that part of the camp where Harthema was posted; but Thâher being informed of his design, which he imagined, if carried into execution, would eclipse the glory he had acquired, laid an ambush for him, which Al Amîn had not the good fortune to escape. Upon his arrival in the neighbourhood of Harthema's tent, Thâher's soldiers rushed upon him, sunk his boat, drowned all his attendants, and imprisoned him in Ibrahim Al Talhi's house. Here he was soon after assassinated by some of Thâher's servants, who cut off his head, and carried it in triumph

triumph to their master; by whose order it was the next day exposed to public view in the streets of Baghdâd. Thâher afterwards sent it to Al Mamûn in Khorasân, together with the ring or seal of the khalifat, the sceptre, and the imperial robe; at the sight of which that prince fell down on his knees, returned thanks to the Almighty for his wonderful success, and made the courier who brought them a present of a million of dirhems^a.

Some of the eastern writers relate, that Al Amîn, a little before his death, dreamed that he sat upon a very high thick wall, and saw, at the same time, Thâher sap-*Some farther particulars relating to him.* ping its foundations; nor did he appear to desist from that operation till the wall he undermined was absolutely levelled with the ground. This dream had such an effect upon Al Amîn, as the Arabs are naturally superstitious, that he resolved never to deliver himself up to the mercy of that general. Other prognostics likewise, according to the Oriental historians, preceded this prince's death. Finding a moth in his cloaths the very day he was killed, as soon as he saw it, through an unaccountable impulse, he cried out, "God deliver me from every great misfortune that may happen!" Ibrahim Ebn Al Mohdi being one night with him, a little before the surrender of old Baghdâd, called the city of Al Mansûr, in the golden palace, he sent for one of his singing-girls, named Da'f, to entertain them with some of her songs. After they had exhilarated themselves with a few glasses of wine, she sung some verses taken out of the works of the celebrated poet Al Nâbigha Al Ja'di, that have been preserved by Al Makîn; which he could not forbear considering as pre-
sages of his approaching fate, and in consequence of which, he exclaimed with a sigh, "When destiny defeats our projects, we ought to look upon all precautions as useless." The same night, which did not precede this prince's assassination above two or three days, Ibrahim Ebn Al Modhi and the khalif, heard a voice clearly and distinctly pronouncing these words, from the neighbouring bank of the Tigris, "The subject of your conversation is determined;" which being afterwards repeated, threw him into such an excess of grief and affliction, that he immediately fell from his seat. We are told by Abu'l-Faraj, that Al Amîn was supplied with the vessel in which he attempted to escape out of Thâher's hands, by Har-

^a Abu Jaafar Al Tabar, Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 127, 128. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi supra, p. 241, 242. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 414, 415. Khondemir, Theophan. Chronograph. p. 421.

thema Ebn Aafan himself, who accompanied him; that Thâher's men, who gave chase to them in little boats, attacked them with stones and naphtha, and at length sunk their shallop; that Harthema was with much difficulty saved, being dragged out of the Tigris by the hair of his head; that the khalif was taken with only an old ragged mantle over his shoulders, and a turban upon his head, at no very great distance from Basra; that he was confined in a house, to which Thâher's soldiers conducted him, till midnight; and that several persons, sent by Thâher for that purpose, upon entering the room where he was, with drawn scymitars in their hands, immediately dispatched him, and cut off his head, which was soon after carried by a courier to Al Mamûn in Khorasân. This tragedy was acted either on the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth day of the month Al Moharram, before Al Amîn had completed the thirtieth year of his age, and after he had reigned four years and about seven or eight months. He had a handsome face, little eyes, and thick bushy hair: he was tall, fat, extremely robust, and of a fair complexion. Some of the eastern writers represent him as very liberal, though at the same time rash, imprudent, cruel, entirely attached to his pleasures, and indolent to the last degree. As a farther instance of his infamous supineness, it may be observed, that he and his freedman Kuthar were playing at chess, without the least apprehension of any impending danger, when Al Mamûn's forces pushed the siege of Baghdâd with so much vigour, that the city was upon the point of being carried by assault. Soon after his accession he purchased at extravagant prices great numbers of eunuchs, who were brought from all parts of his dominions to Baghdâd, and constantly attended him day and night: these, with his free women, of whom he was likewise extremely fond, chiefly shared his favours; and he is said to have divided all his jewels, besides many other things of inestimable value, amongst them. He also commanded the different provinces of the empire, to send to his court all such persons as were the most expert at chess, and other games then in vogue amongst the Arabs, to whom he allowed pensions, and passed the most considerable part of his time amongst them. Amongst the vessels which he constructed on the Tigris, one resembled a lion, another an elephant, another a vulture, another a serpent, and another a horse. He scarce ever associated either with his officers or relations, but gave himself up almost entirely to women, wine, and

and diversions of various kinds. His principal counsellors or visirs were Al Fadl Ebn Al Rabî, Ismael Ebn Sabih, and others; his judges, Ismael Ebn Hamâd Ebn Abu Hanifa, Abu'l Bahra Ebn Waheb, and Mohammed Ebn Samâ'a; the captain of his guards Ali Ebn Isa Ebn Mâhân; and his chamberlain Al Abbâs Al Fadhl Ebn Al Rabî. The inscription on his seal was, "Mohammed trusteth in God." In his days, according to Eutychius, the emperor Nicephorus departed this life; and in the third year of his khalifat, if may credit the same author, Thomas, surnamed Tamrik, was advanced to the patriarchate of Jerusalem, in which high station he remained about ten years. In short, as this khalif, whose body was buried at Baghdâd, most shamefully neglected all affairs of government, no very memorable event or celebrated action occurred during the whole course of his reign^b.

S E C T. III.

*From the Accession of Al Mamûn, brother to Al Amîn,
to the Assassination of Al Motowakkel.*

THE same day that Al Amîn was assassinated, the people of Baghdâd proclaimed his brother Al Mamûn the second time khalif. His mother was Marajel Al Bâdagheisia. At the time of Al Amîn's death, Thâher Ebn Hosein occupied the eastern, and Harthema Ebn Aafan, the western part of Baghdâd. Hamîd Abd'al Hawîd Al Tûfi was posted also with a body of troops at a place about four parasangs from that city. Soon after his accession, the new khalif removed Thâher Ebn Hosein, whom he appointed to preside over Syria and Mesopotamia, from the government of Irâk, and substituted Al Hosein Ebn Sahal in his room. He likewise deprived Ayâd Ebn Mohammed of the lieutenancy of Egypt, and sent Al Motalleb Ebn Abd'allah Al Jerâ'i to succeed him in that post; but this governor being soon deposed, Al Abbâs Ebn Mûsa Ebn Isa Al Hâshemi was dispatched to Egypt, to take upon himself the direction of affairs in that country. About the same time, the new khalif, whose name was afterwards Abu'l Abbâs Al Mamûn Abu

He is succeeded by his brother Al Mamûn.

^b Khondemir, Al Nabigha Al Ja'di, apud Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. & Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 129, 130. ut & ipse Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. & Al Makin, ibid. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 242, 243. Eutych. ubi supra, 414—417.

Jaafar Abd'allah Ebn Harûn Al Rashîd appointed Al Fadl Ebn Sahal his visir; or rather, according to the Persian historians, confirmed him in that exalted charge, to which he had advanced him before his elevation to the Moslem throne. The khalif also gave Al Fadl the title, or surname, of Dhi'l Riyâfatain, i. e. *the Person having two Principalities, or sublime Employments*, because he committed to his care the civil and military government of all his dominions.

Mohammed Ebn Tabâtibâ rebels against the khalif.

In the following year, being the 199th of the Hejra, the new khalif, who resided still at Merû in Khorasân, was alarmed with the news of commotions in several parts of the empire; the most alarming of which was that excited by Mohammed Ebn Ibrahim Ebn Ismael Ebn Ibrahim Ebn Al Hafan Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, commonly called Mohammed Ebn Tabâtibâ, at Cûfa. The people of that city being incensed at Al Mamûn, for permitting Al Fadl Ebn Sahal, his visir, to govern solely by his own authority, were easily prevailed upon by Mohammed Ebn Tabâtibâ to espouse the interest of the house of Ali, or, as they termed it, that of the prophet himself: Mohammed, therefore, did not find it difficult to assemble a considerable body of the malecontents; the command of whom he gave to Abu'lsarâyâ, an officer who had served under Harthema Ebn Aafan, the preceding year. This officer, not thinking himself rewarded according to his merit, left Harthema in disgust, retired to Cûfa, and took the oath of allegiance to Mohammed Ebn Tabâtibâ, as the prophet's lawful successor. Being now at the head of his new master's forces, he drove Al Hafan Ebn Sahal's deputy from Cûfa, and in several engagements defeated the troops sent against him by the khalif's governor of Irâk. This success enabled him to advance to Basra, of which he gained possession without any considerable loss. By these signal advantages, Mohammed Ebn Tabâtibâ's forces, under the conduct of Abu'lsarâyâ, began to grow formidable, and to give great inquietude to the khalif; especially since the scene of action, as well as the neighbouring tract now wholly occupied by the rebels, was situated at so small a distance from the city of Baghdâd itself.

Rebellions in various parts of the empire.

It appears from Roderic of Toledo, that the people of Calahorra, the Calaguris of the ancients, rebelled likewise, about this time, against Al Hakem, the western khalif, in Spain. Upon receiving advice of which revolt, that prince sent Abd'alkarim, one of his generals, with an
army

army to bring them to a sense of their duty. It may also be inferred from Theophanes, that one usurper made himself master of Damascus, with the territory appertaining to it; another ravaged Palestine; a third set up for himself in Egypt; and a fourth in the western part of Africa, in the course of the present year. But of these rebellions no clear and distinct account has been handed down to us by any of the Arab historians^c.

The next year, being the 200th of the Hejra, was remarkable for several material occurrences. Hafan Ebn Sahal, the governor of Irâk, having finished his military preparations for reducing the rebels of that province to the obedience of the khalif, sent Harthema Ebn Aafan with a powerful army against Abu'lsarâyâ; who, after the death of Mohammed Ebn Tabâtibâ, had caused the authority of Mohammed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Zeid Ebn Ali Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb to be recognized by the troops under his command. Abu'lsarâyâ, finding himself incapable of making head against the khalif's forces, fled to Cûfa, and even abandoned that city upon their approach. After Harthema Ebn Aafan had possessed himself of the place, and taken the inhabitants under his protection, he sent a detachment in pursuit of Mohammed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Zeid and Abu'lsarâyâ, who had made their escape; who soon came up with them, took both of them prisoners, and conducted them, by Harthema's order, to Al Hafan Ebn Sahal, the governor of Irâk. Several of their accomplices likewise, who were taken at the same time, were conducted, under the same escort, to the place of the governor's residence. After they had been brought before him, and some conversation had passed between them, Al Hafan sent Mohammed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Zeid to Al Mamûn, then at Merû in Khorasân; but ordered one of his executioners to cut off the head of Abu'lsarâyâ. The rebellion being suppressed in Irâk, Harthema Ebn Aafan took a journey to the khalif's court at Merû; where he accused Al Fadl Ebn Sahal, his visir, of concealing from him the true state of his affairs, and advised him to reside at Baghdâd, that he might be, as it were, in the centre of his empire, and consequently much nearer the greatest part of his frontiers. On the other hand, Al Fadl, being apprized of this accusation, told the khalif, that Harthema

Abu'lsarâyâ is beheaded, and the rebellions in Irâk and Arabia extinguished.

^c Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup. cap. xxiv. p. 21. Theophan. ubi sup. p. 421.

had excited Abu'lfarâyâ to the late revolt, and done him many ill offices in other respects. This information so exasperated Al Mamûn, that he commanded Harthema to be first severely bastinadoed, and afterwards thrown into prison; where he was soon put to death by an assassin sent thither by Al Fadl for that purpose. About the same time, Abd'alkarim, after he had besieged Calahorra in Spain, obliged the people of that place to submit to Al Hakem, the western khalif, and having ravaged the territory belonging to them in a dreadful manner, returned to that prince's residence, loaded with spoil. The calamities attending the distracted state of the Arabs at this juncture obliged many of the Christians, according to Theophanes, to abandon Palestine and Syria, and to take refuge in the island of Cyprus. Ibrahim Ebn Mûsa Ebn Jaafar caused himself to be proclaimed khalif in Yaman, as did Mohammed Ebn Jaafar at Mecca, the present year. But as neither of these usurpers was long supported in his attempt, the commotions in those parts were appeased without any great effusion of Moslem blood ^d.

Great commotions at Baghdâd.

In the 201st year of the Hejra, being the 816th of the Christian æra, Al Mamûn declared Ali Ebn Mûsa Ebn Jaafar Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ali Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb his successor, gave him his daughter Omm Habiba in marriage, and ordered him to repair immediately to his court at Merû in Khorasân. He also surnamed him Al Radi min Al Mohammed; alluding to his being one of Ali's descendents, and of the family of Mohammed. He moreover commanded his troops to change their black cloaths, such as the members of the house of Al Abbâs constantly wore, for others of a green colour, the principal characteristic of the prophet's family. He likewise wrote to the governors of provinces, to inform them, that he had found none either of the race of Al Abbâs or Ali more pious, excellent, or learned, than Ali Ebn Mûsa; and therefore had nominated that young prince to succeed him in the khalifat. He sent an express to Al Hasan Ebn Sahal, the governor of Irâk, in particular, with orders for him to repair forthwith to Baghdâd, to oblige the inhabitants of that capital to dress themselves in green, and to exact of them a recognition of Ali Ebn Mûsa's right to the succession. This step, however, greatly alarmed the mem-

^d Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 132, 133. Khondemir, Eutyeh. ubi supra, p. 418, 419. Theophan. ubi supra, p. 21—23. Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra. Ism. Abulfed. Al Jannab.

bers of the house of Al Abbâs, who were found the preceding year to amount to above thirty thousand souls, and threw the whole city into confusion; many of the Moslems absolutely refusing to comply with the khalif's orders. Nay, the principal officers of the families of Al Abbâs and Hâshem assembled on this occasion, resolved formally to depose Al Mamûn, and to proclaim his uncle Ibrahim Ebn Al Mohdi emperor of the faithful in his room. It is intimated by some of the eastern writers, that Al Fadl Ebn Sahal, the first officer of the empire, made profession of the sect of Ali, entertained the highest veneration for the family of that imâm, and inspired his master with the same sentiments; which produced that impolitic conduct. It must here be observed, that the Shiites, or followers of Ali, look upon this Ali Ebn Mûsa as one of the twelve great imâms, whom they regard as the twelve great pillars of Islamism. However, the measures pursued at this juncture by the khalif might have proved his total ruin.

In the following year the forces cantoned about Baghdâd, excited to this revolt by the friends of the houses of Al Abbâs and Hâshem, withdrew their allegiance from Al Mamûn, and proclaimed his uncle Ibrahim khalif. However, the troops commanded by Al Hafan Ebn Sahal, the governor of Irâk, persisted in their fidelity to the former of those princes, and even attacked Ibrahim's forces several times; though there was no decisive action on either side. After his inauguration, Ibrahim made a speech to the people, wherein, like others in the same situation, he promised them all the happiness and advantages that they could desire. Upon which Cûfa, with its dependencies, submitted to him. Ibrahim's exaltation, and the courage of his faithful subjects in Irâk, hastened Al Mamûn's journey to Baghdâd. Upon his arrival at Sarkhas, or Sarakhas, a town of Khorasân, he gave private orders to an assassin to murder, in a bath, Al Fadl Ebn Sahal, his visir, who had been the chief cause of all the disturbances in the empire; and afterwards put the assassin to death, for the perpetration of a crime which he pretended to abhor. This Al Fadl is said to have been the first Arab who inserted his surname in the letters that he wrote. The people of Corduba in Spain rebelled this year against Al Hakem, the khalif there; but were reduced to his obedience by Abd'alkarim, his general, who entered their city by force at the New Gate, cut off all the ringleaders, and hanged above three hundred of the rebels. Al Hakem, however, according to his usual clemency, pardoned

*Ibrahim
Ebn Al
Mohdi
proclaimed
khalif
there.*

pardoned the wives and children of those who had been concerned in the revolt. This rebellion is attributed by Roderic to the opulence, luxury, and pride of the Moslems settled in that part of Spain.

*The troops
at Bagh-
dâd depose
Ibrahim
Ebn Al
Mohdi.*

In the following year, Ali Ebn Mûfa Al Radi, called by the Persians Riza the imâm, having taken a surfeit, by eating too many grapes, or, as others assert, having been poisoned, died at Tûs in Khorasân, the last day of the month Safar; and was buried, by Al Mamûn's order, near the sepulchre of his father Harûn Al Rashîd. This Ali Ebn Mûfa has been represented by the Arab writers as a most abstemious and religious youth. His death greatly affected the khalif, who therefore continued the remainder of the year at Tûs. In the mean time several commotions happened at Baghdâd. The troops deposed Ibrahim Ebn Al Mohdi, surnamed by them Al Mobarak; who, in order to escape their fury and violence, was obliged to hide himself about the middle of the month Dhu'l-hajja, and to remain concealed till Al Mamûn's arrival at Baghdâd. That usurper, whom some likewise call Ebn Shaklah, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, sat upon the Moslem throne at Baghdâd almost two lunar years^e.

*The famous
Al Shâfeï
dies in the
year of the
Hejra 204.*

Next year, being the 204th of the Hejra, the khalif Al Mamûn entered Baghdâd, at the head of his forces that had attended him from Khorasân, and were all, in compliance with his former order, dressed in green. However, about a week after his arrival at Baghdâd, he thought fit to revoke the order he had made three years before, and to command both the people and the army always to appear in black, as heretofore; which order produced the desired effect, and entirely conciliated the affections of all his subjects. This year was likewise remarkable for the death of the famous Abu Abd'allah Mohammed Ebn Edrîs, surnamed Al Shâfeï, the author of the third orthodox sect of the Sonnites. He was born either at Gaza or Ascalon in Palestine, in the year of the Hejra 150, the same day, as some assert, that Abu Hanîfa died, and was carried to Mecca at two years of age, and there educated. He is held in the highest esteem amongst the Sonnites, for his extensive learning, and was much admired by Ebn Hau-bal, his contemporary, who used to say, that he was as the sun to the world, and as health to the body. Ebn Han-

^e Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 133, 134. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi supra. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 418, 419. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 185. Aut. Lobb Al Tawarikh, Khondemir, Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra.

bal, however, had so ill an opinion of Al Shâfeî at first, that he forbid his scholars to go near him; but some time after, one of them, meeting his master walking on foot after Al Shâfeî, who rode on a mule, asked him how it happened that he forbid them to follow him, and did it himself? To which expostulation Ebn Hanbal replied, "Hold thy peace; if thou but attend his mule, thou wilt profit thereby." Al Shâfeî is said to have been the first who discoursed of jurisprudence, and methodized that science; one wittily saying, that the relators of the traditions of Mohammed were asleep, till Al Shâfeî came and waked them. He was a great enemy to the scholastic divines. He used to divide the night into three parts, one for study, another for prayer, and the third for sleep. It is also related of him, that he never so much as once swore by God, either to confirm a truth, or to affirm a falsehood; and that being once asked his opinion, he remained silent for some time, and when the reason of his silence was demanded, he answered, "I am considering first whether it be better to speak or hold my tongue." The following saying is recorded of him, "Whoever pretends to love the world and its Creator at the same time, is a liar^f."

In the 206th of the Hejra, Mohammed Abunafr Ebn Affari, lieutenant of Egypt, died at Mefr, or Al Fostât, and was succeeded by his brother Abd'allah Ebn Affari, whose pretensions to the government were supported by his troops. The same year Al Hakem Ebn Heshâm Ebn Abd'alrahmân, of the house of Om'miyah, king of Spain, or rather the western khalif, likewise departed this life at Corduba, or Cordova, in the twenty-seventh year of his reign. He left behind him nineteen sons and twenty-one daughters, and was succeeded by his eldest son Abd'alrahmân, then about forty-one years of age. During some of the last years of Al Hakem's reign, the Christians, animated by the dissensions that prevailed in the Moslem part of Spain, took Barcelona and other places, and committed dreadful ravages in their dominions. However, having quelled those dissensions, Al Hakem was making preparations for war, in order to recover the places that had been lost, when he was surprised by death. But an accurate and particular account of the Moslem transactions in Spain, during this period, has not been handed down to us by any of either the eastern or western historians.

Next year that renowned general Thâher Ebn Hosein died at Mëru in Khorasân, after he had been two years

*Al Hakem
and Mo-
ammed
Abunafr
Ebn Affari
die.*

^f D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Schafei, p. 176.

*As does
likewise
Thâher
Ebn Ho-
sein.*

governor of that extensive province. He was liberal, prudent, magnanimous, and brave, and had all the great qualities requisite to form a complete general. He is said, by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, to have given an Arab poet three hundred thousand dinârs for a few verses he brought him, intended as a panegyric upon some of his heroic actions; and to have told him, that he would have made him still a larger present, had his verses been more numerous. This Thâher Ebn Hosein, according to some of the oriental authors, was the founder of the dynasty of the Thâherians; for a particular account of which, we must refer our curious readers to the Persian historians. It appears from Cedrenus, that the Moslems of Spain had landed a body of troops in Crete, defeated the imperial forces sent against them, and made themselves masters of at least a considerable part of that island, before the present year ⁸.

*Abd'allah
rebels
against Ab-
d'alrah-
mân in
Spain.*

In the year of the Hejra 209, nothing remarkable happened in the eastern territories of the Moslems; at least no material event has been recorded there at this time by any of the most celebrated Arab historians. However, it appears probable from Roderic of Toledo, that Abd'allah, Al Hakem's uncle, who had resided many years at Valencia, about this very period rebelled against Abd'alrahmân, that prince's son, who was then settled upon the Moslem throne in Spain. But Abd'alrahmân marched against him, dispersed the troops he had assembled, and compelled him to make a precipitate retreat; a few days after which defeat Abd'allah expired. The rebellion being thus extinguished, Abd'alrahmân ordered Abd'allah's wives and children to be brought before him, and very liberally supplied them with every thing they wanted. He likewise ordained, that, for the future, children should always inherit their parents estates and effects; and that these should never devolve to brothers and sisters, or other near relations, and much less to persons of another family, when issue was left by the deceased, as had sometimes formerly happened amongst the Moslems in Spain.

*Ibrahim
Ebn Al
Mohdi
pardoned
by the
khalif.*

In the course of the following year, Ibrahim Ebn Al Mohdi was taken in woman's cloaths by night, together with two of his wives, after he had lain concealed near seven years. The centry they attempted to pass,

⁸ Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, cap. xxiv. p. 21. & seq. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 135. Aut. Lobb Al Tawarikh, Khondemir, D'Herbelot. Bibl. Orient. p. 545, 1017, 1018, & alib. Georg. Cedren. ubi supra, p. 508—511.

who

who was an Ethiopian, asked them who they were, and what they did there at so unseasonable an hour? The answer returned by Ibrahim Ebn Al Mohdi not being satisfactory, the centry carried them all three before the officer then upon duty; who ordering Ibrahim's face to be uncovered, his beard immediately appeared. This discovery induced the officer to send him under an escort to the khalif's palace, where he continued till the next morning under arrest; and being then brought before Al Mamûn, that prince not only pardoned him, but admitted him likewise to his entertainments, and made him a present of ten thousand dinârs §.

About this time, Abd'alkarim retook Barcelona from the Christians in Spain, and reduced the other places the Moslems had lost, during their late dissensions. The khalif likewise forbade all his subjects to make honourable mention of Moâwiyah, the first khalif of the house of Ommiyah, and to prefer him to any of the prophet's companions.

The Moslems victorious in Spain.

In the 212th year of the Hejra, Abd'allah Ebn Thâher Ebn Husein removed Ayâd Ebn Ibrahim from the high office of visir, and substituted in his place Isa Ebn Yezid. The khalif likewise commanded his subjects to admit Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb to have been the most excellent of all men, except Mohammed. Nay, it seems probable from Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, that the khalif Al Mamûn, at this time, issued out a public edict, declaring the Koran to be created, which was confirmed by his successors Al Môtasem and Al Wâthek, who scourged, imprisoned, and put to death, those of a contrary opinion. But, at length, Al Motawakkel, who succeeded Al Wâthek, terminated these persecutions, by revoking the former edicts, releasing those who were imprisoned on that account, and leaving every man at liberty as to his belief in this point. We must not forget to observe, that the African Moslems made a descent in Sicily about the middle of the month of July, of the present year ^a

The Arabs make a descent in Sicily.

In the 214th year of the Hejra, the western Moslems in Africa carried on great military preparations, in order to make another descent in Sicily. Indeed, according to

The western Moslems project another invasion of Sicily

§ Greg. Ab'ul-Faraj. ubi sup. Abu Jaafar Al Tabari Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 135, 136. ^a Chronic. Sicul. ab anno Christi 827, ad annum Christi 963. ex Codice Arabico Cantabrigienf. edit, à Joanne Baptista Carusio, in Hist. Saracenico-Sicul. var Monument. &c. p. 5.

some authors, about this time, they took and destroyed the city of Selinus, in that island. They were now grown in a manner independent of the khalif. Ibrahim Ebn Ag-lab, who had been sent governor into the western parts of Africa by the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, in the year of the Hejra 184, assumed almost an absolute power in that country, and conquered a large extent of territory for himself and his descendents; over which they presided as sovereign princes about one hundred and twelve years.

*The khalif
invades the
territories
of the Greek
emperor;*

Next year, being the 215th of the Hejra, Al Mamûn assembled a powerful army, in order to undertake an expedition against the imperial territories. Having finished his military preparations, he set out from Baghdâd, at the head of his numerous forces, on the 27th day of Al Moharram, and made himself master of a fortress called Karra by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, which he ordered to be dismantled. He also possessed himself of several other places of strength, and then marched to Damascus.

*and makes
another ir-
ruption into
them the
following
year.*

In the following year, Al Mamûn received advice, that the Greek emperor had put about sixteen hundred of the citizens of Tarsus and Al Masîsiyah, in Cilicia, to the sword. To revenge this outrage, he took post with a formidable army before a considerable Christian town, which immediately surrendered to him. From thence he detached his brother Al Môtasem with a body of troops, to penetrate farther into the imperial territories; who made himself master of no less than thirty of the enemy's castles. He also sent Yahya Ebn Acl'em with another detachment to Tawaba; who carried the place by storm, laid a great part of it in ashes, and then returned to the main army, which soon after marched to Damascus. In the month of Dhu'l-hajja, the khalif put himself at the head of the troops to be employed upon the Egyptian expedition.

*Al Mamûn
reduces the
city of
Taima.*

On Friday, the seventh day of the month Al Moharram, in the year of the Hejra 217, commencing Feb. 7, 832, Al Mamûn entered Egypt, and soon after besieged the city of Taima, probably the present Tamiea, with all his forces. Having obliged it to surrender, he carried off all the inhabitants; and, towards the close of the month Safar, departed from Egypt, taking the route of Damascus, where he arrived in due time, without having sustained any considerable loss. Soon after his arrival, he received a letter from a member of the house of Ommiyah, in Syria, with advice, that Merwân, surnamed Al Himâr, had concealed a treasure under some pillars at Hebron: upon which, several labourers were sent, by the khalif's order,

order, to discover them; who, amongst other things, dug up a great number of chests filled with ten thousand waist-coats, the extremities of whose sleeves were greased in a most filthy manner. For, Merwân having been extremely fond of sheeps kidneys, and a most voracious glutton, he used to tear that part out of the carcases of the animal, when roasted whole, with his own hand; by which means he so smeared the extremities of his sleeves, that he could never afterwards wear the garment. However, he always deposited the robe thus soiled in a chest, with others in the same condition, prepared for that purpose, and put on a clean one in the room of it; at least this was the account now given to the khalif Al Mamûn by the celebrated doctor Al Asmai, which was hinted at in a former sheet of this history. The khalif, if we credit Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, was so pleased with this piece of intelligence, that he made a present of all those garments to the person he was obliged to for it; who sold them as curiosities, for a sum amounting to ten thousand dinârs¹.

Two rebellions in Egypt.

Al Mamûn undertook the Egyptian expedition in order to suppress the rebellion of the Al Bimaidæ, or the *Descendants of Forty* (as the name imports in Coptic), Christians of good note, who made a considerable figure when the Moslems first conquered Egypt. These Al Bimaidæ, who were in all likelihood seated at Taima, refused to pay the tribute usually exacted by the Moslems of those who profess the Christian religion; upon which refusal Al Mamûn and his brother Al Môtasem marched against them with an army into Egypt, in the year of the Hejra 217, entirely defeated them, put many of them to the sword, dispersed the rest, and carried off their women and children to Baghdâd. Al Mamûn himself, being highly pleased with the success that attended his army on this expedition, made a triumphant entry into Mesr and Al Fostat on the fourteenth day of the month Safar, and departed from Egypt in the Former Rabi, the same year, according to Ebn Batrik, or Eutychius; but these particulars are passed over in silence by other writers. The khalif likewise, during his residence in Egypt, constructed a tower, or castle, on mount Al Mokattam, which he called Kobbat Al Hawa, *the Tower of Desire*; and permitted two of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber, who were Christians, to build a church, denominated first from them the Church of the two Gentlemen of the Bed-chamber, and afterwards the church of

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 137. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. p. 244. 245. Pococke's Description of the East, vol. i. p. 56. Lond. 1743. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 428—431.

the Romans, upon a spot of ground at a small distance from it. He also erected a *mikeas*, *mikiâs*, or measuring pillar, in order to determine the gradual increase of the Nile, at Shurât, a place belonging to the village of Banbanudah, in the country of Al Sa'id, Thebais, or the Upper Egypt; and repaired another of those pillars at Akhimim, in the same region, which was much decayed. Some years before the late rebellion of the Al Bimaidæ, Al Sari, or Affari, Ebn Al Hakem, and his son Mohammed Ebn Al Sari, or Affari, Ebn Al Hakem, had withdrawn their allegiance from the khalif, and usurped the government of Egypt; but all those commotions were appeased by Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, or Obeid'allah Ebn Thâher, as he is named by Eutychius, sent into Egypt by Al Mamûn for that purpose, who seized upon all the treasures amassed by those usurpers, and ordered them to be conveyed to Baghdâd. This Abd'allah likewise obtained permission from the khalif to annex the palace of Dâr Al Raml, or Dâr'l Raml, to the great mosque at Mefr. With regard to mount Al Mokattam, we must observe, that it consists of a ridge of mountains extending to the eastern part of Al Sa'id, or Thebais; for a farther account of which, as well as of mount Al Teilamon, appertaining to the western part of that tract, our curious readers may have recourse to Yâkut Ebn Abd'allah Al Hamathi, Ismael Abulfeda, and the rest of the oriental geographers^{*}.

The khalif makes an irruption into the imperial territories.

The same year the khalif made another irruption into the imperial territories, invested Lûlûa, and pushed the siege of that fortress with the utmost vigour for a hundred days successively; but being obliged to return home, he left Ajîf, or Ojiaifâ, his general, with the greatest part of the troops employed in this expedition, to continue the siege. That commander was so little upon his guard, that he was surprised by a party of the garrison, who sallied out of the town, took him prisoner, and after detaining him eight days, sent him back to the Moslem camp. In the mean while, Theophilus, the Greek emperor, advanced with a powerful army to force the Arab general to raise the siege; of whose motions the khalif being apprised, he speedily advanced with a numerous body of troops to the relief of his forces before Lûlûa. But Theophilus receiving advice, that the whole Arab army com-

^{*} Eutych. ubi sup. p. 420, 421, 428—432. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin. ubi sup. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 100, 101, &c. Yakut Ebn Abd'allah Al Hamathi, Abulfed. &c. See also Shaw's *Physic. and Miscellan. Observations in Egypt*, p. 433—436, &c.

manded

manded by the khalif himself, was marching to attack him, immediately retreated, not judging it prudent at that time to hazard a battle with so potent an enemy. This retreat so intimidated the besieged, that they opened their gates to Ajif, without giving him any farther trouble, and were taken under the khalif's protection. We must not forget to observe, that the African Moslems landed a body of troops in Sicily, the preceding year, who made themselves masters of the city of Messina. They put Theodotus, the commandant, to the sword; and plundered Lipari, called Lipara by the ancients, the chief of the Æolian or Vulcanian islands, on the coast of Sicily, about the same time. These advantages so animated them, that they advanced to Panormus, or Palermo, laid siege to that city, and, without much difficulty, possessed themselves of it, in the course of the present year. It appears from Abulfeda, that the Greek emperor made some overtures for an accommodation to the khalif, after the reduction of Lûlûa; and the terms of peace offered at this time by the Christian monarch were rejected by that prince.

The object of Al Mamûn's last expedition into Egypt, according to some of the eastern historians, was the reduction of the rebel Aydûs, who had revolted against the khalif, and began to grow formidable there; which design being accomplished, he penetrated into the territories of the Greek emperor, advanced to Tarsus, in Cilicia, and took fourteen or fifteen towns from the Christians in that tract. Having finished this expedition, he moved at the head of his forces towards Baghdâd; and, in his march, encamped upon the banks of the Badandûn, or rather, as some of the Oriental writers inform us, near the source of that river. Here going into the water to bathe, and admiring the clearness and freshness of the stream, he could not forbear saying to his courtiers, "Nothing would give a better relish to the water of this river than some of the fresh dates of Azad." Which words were scarce out of his mouth, when it was told him, that some mules were arrived with a considerable quantity of those dates in the camp. Of these he ate so immoderately, and afterwards drank such vast draughts of the water of the Badandûn, that a violent fever ensued, which put a period to his days on the nineteenth, or, according to Abulfeda, the eighteenth, of the month Rajeb, in the year of the Hejra 218. We are told by Abu'l-Faraj, that, a little before his death, he deprived his brother Al Kasem Al Mûtamen of the right to the succession that had been

Al Mamûn dies.

conferred upon him by his father Harûn Al Rashîd, and declared his other brother Abu Ishak Al Môtasem his only lawful heir; though this event is said to have happened before Al Mamûn's last expedition into Cilicia, by other historians. As soon as this affair was settled, he apprised the provinces of it by letter, signed by himself and his successor Abu Ishak Al Môtasem Harûn Al Rashîd, which he dispatched to the respective governors with all possible expedition. When he was at the point of death, his physician Ebn Mâfawaih approached him, and another person, who desired him to make a confession of his faith, or to communicate his religious sentiments to the people about him: but his speech failing him, he could only say, "O thou, who never diest, have mercy upon me now dying!" After which ejaculation, he expired, and was carried to Tarsus, where his son Al Abbâs and his brother Al Môtasem buried him in the house of Khâkân, one of Harûn Al Rashîd's favourite eunuchs. Some writers relate, that the astrologers foretold his death should happen at a place called Rakka, or Arrakka; and that as soon as he was informed by the people about him, that the town, or village, upon the Badandûn, where he lay sick, was called by that name, he expected, agreeable to their prediction, to meet with his approaching fate. The same year in which he died, he ordered Ishak Ebn Ibrahim, the governor of Baghdâd, to oblige the judges and masters of traditions to assert the creation of the Koran; and to punish, with the utmost rigour and severity, all who should presume to maintain a contrary opinion. Amongst other delinquents, who incurred the khalif's displeasure on this occasion, a celebrated Arab historian has mentioned Ahmed Ebn Hanbal, a famous Sonnite doctor, and Mohammed Ebn Nûh, surnamed Al Mafrûb, who were loaded with irons, and sent to the khalif's camp; but Al Mamûn was surprised by death, upon the banks of the Badandûn, before his arrival; his successor Al Môtasem, however, commanded Ahmed Ebn Hanbal to be scourged in a cruel manner. We must here observe, that the khalif's son Al Abbâs, by his father's order, repaired the city of Tawaba, a little before the last irruption into Cilicia, and enlarged it with so many additional buildings, that it was a mile square, had three streets and four gates, and was considered afterwards for some time as one of the principal cities in those parts.

Al Mamûn was forty-eight, or, as others assert, above forty-nine, years of age at time of his decease. He reigned
twenty

twenty years five months and thirteen days; or above twenty-two years, if we suppose his reign to have commenced at the beginning of the siege of Baghdâd. With regard to his person, he was of a middle stature, of a fair complexion, though tinged with yellow, and had a long beard of a greyish colour. As for his disposition, the eastern writers have painted him as endued with every royal virtue; as full of sweetness, liberal, of great clemency, a consummate general, and thoroughly versed in all the arts of government. He is also said to have applied himself particularly to the speculative sciences, and to have made a very considerable progress in them; which induced him, at a vast expence, to encourage learned men to resort from all parts of the world to Baghdâd. He likewise spent immense sums in purchasing curious books, written in Hebrew, Syriac, and Greek, in order to have them translated into Arabic. One of those authors finishes the portrait of this prince with saying, that he was, without dispute, the greatest and most renowned prince of the house of Al Abbâs, a race more fruitful in heroes than any that ever swayed the sceptre amongst the Moslems. Through the whole course of his reign, he favoured indifferently all learned men, of whatsoever religion they were; who, on their part, in return, contributed to the utmost of their power to raise the glory of this monarch to the highest pitch, by the presents which they made him of their works, collected from all the most rare and curious productions of the learned men of the East, whether Indians, Jews, Magians, or Oriental Christians of every sect. He seems to have been most famed for his skill in astronomy, and the accurate observations which he made. He used to say, "If men knew what an excess of clemency there is in me, I should be perpetually visited by the most notorious offenders." Abulfeda relates, that this khalif lavished his favours upon the descendants of Ali, and restored to them the territory of Fadak, or Fidak, which formerly belonged to their common mother Fâtéma, of which, by the tyranny of his predecessors, they had been long and unjustly deprived¹.

Description of his person and character.

Before we conclude our account of this khalif, we must observe, that the master appointed him by his father Harûn Al Rashîd was the famous Abu'l Hassan Ali Ebn

Some account of Kaffai, Al Mamûn's master.

¹ Greg. Abu'l-Feraj. ubi sup. Abul Jaafar Altabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 138, 139. Eutyck. ubi sup. Geor. Jac. Kehr, ubi sup. p. 17. Khondemir. Ism. A. ulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 218. Vide eam D'Herb. Bibl. Orient. p. 546.

Hamzah Bahaman Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Firûz, a Persian by nation, but extremely well versed in all kinds of Arab literature. This doctor was a slave of the Afadites, and surnamed Kaffâi or Koffâ, from the decisions he had made against luxury, and in favour of sumptuary laws. He was so excellent a grammarian, that he baffled in a dispute Sibûieh, the Persian, who was before esteemed the best grammarian of his age. The khalif Harûn one day meeting Koffâ, asked him in a very civil manner how he did? He answered, "If I had never received any other fruit from my studies than the favour you do me to think of me, that would be sufficient to make me happy." Another day, Koffâ coming to the door of Al Mamûn's apartment, in order to instruct him as usual, that prince, who was then at table with his friends, sent him a distich upon the leaf of a myrrh-tree, importing, that there was a time for study, and a time for diversion, and that he was then entertaining his friends; which Koffâ answered by a tetrastich on the back of the same leaf, couched in the following terms: "If you could once perceive the excellency of knowledge, you would undoubtedly prefer the pleasure arising from thence to that which you at present taste; and if you knew who was now at your door, you would immediately get up, come to him, and prostrate yourself on the ground, to thank and praise God for the favour he vouchsafes you." The young prince had no sooner read this than he left his companions, and waited upon his master with the utmost deference and respect. This doctor was the author of a book, entitled, *Nafais Alarais wa-Kefas Al Anbia, The History of the Patriarchs and Prophets from the Creation of the World*; a translation of which into Persic is to be found in the French king's library. Koffâ died in Khorasân, or, according to Abu'l-feda, at Ray, whither he attended the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd, in the year of the Hejra 189.

*Al Mamûn
blamed by
the Sonnites
for falling
into the er-
rors of the
Motazal-
ites.*

Al Mamûn, notwithstanding his amiable qualities and rare intellectual endowments, had the weakness to fall into the errors of the Motazalites, and was blamed by the more severe doctors of the law for not being sufficiently orthodox in the religion of the Mohammedans. The same doctors by no means approved of his introduction, or rather improvement, of philosophy and the other speculative sciences amongst the Moslems. For the Arabs had not yet accustomed themselves to read many books besides those relating to their religion. They did not begin even seriously to cultivate astronomy before the reign of this

this khalif, who was himself a great proficient in that science.

Some of the Christian writers inform us, that Mark, the Jacobite patriarch, died at Alexandria, in the khalifat of Al Mamûn, and was succeeded in the patriarchal see of that city by James, who presided over those of the Jacobite persuasion ten years and eight months. In this patriarch's time, the monasteries, that had been taken from the Christians, were restored, and re-occupied by the monks, who had been formerly banished from them. In this khalif's time, Dionysius, the patriarch of Antioch, took a journey into Egypt, in order to have a conference with Abd'allah, or Obeid'allah, Ebn Thâher Ebn Al Hosein, and reside for some time in the Jacobite patriarch's house. In Al Mamûn's khalifat, a grievous famine raged at Jerusalem, which seems to have been occasioned by vast swarms of locusts, that devoured all the fruits of the earth, and even every vegetable, in the neighbouring territory. The extreme scarcity of provisions, or rather the total want of them, at this juncture, drove almost all the Moslems from the holy city; a circumstance which gave Thomas, the patriarch, an opportunity of repairing the roof of the church of the Resurrection. After the return of Abd'allah Ebn Thâher to Jerusalem, in his way to Baghdâd, the Christians were accused of having enlarged, and made an addition to that roof; upon which, Abd'allah sent for the patriarch, ordered him and many others to prison, and threatened to have them all publicly scourged, if, upon enquiry, he found the Moslems capable of supporting their accusation. However, by the intervention of an ancient Mohammedan, on whom he bestowed the sum of a thousand dinârs, and engaged to supply him and his posterity, as long as any of them should remain, with the same monthly allowance of provisions that the priests and deacons themselves were furnished with, out of the revenues of the said church, for his assistance in this affair, Thomas pacified Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, escaped the ignominious punishment with which he had been threatened, and obtained the absolute approbation of all the principal Moslems then residing in Jerusalem of what had been done. As Al Mamûn was convinced, that the improvement of the mind ought to be the principal object of a wise man's attention, and was much preferable to the pursuit of those pleasures in which the vulgar, as well as others placed in more exalted stations, do for the most part take their chief delight, he not only treated with the greatest marks of distinction those

those learned men whom he invited to Baghdâd, but likewise spent as much time in their company as the affairs of state would permit, encouraged his subjects by his example to read the books they both translated and wrote, and even constantly attended their disputations. The principal astronomers that flourished in his days were Habash Al Merwazi, an inhabitant of Baghdâd, who wrote three books of astronomical tables, or calculations, entitled *Al Send Hend*, *Al Momtahn*, and *Al Shâh*; Ahmed Ebn Kothair Al Fargâni, or, as others call him, Mohammed Ebn Ketir Al Forgâni, known likewise amongst the Europeans by the name of Alfraganus, whose book, entitled, *Elements of Astronomy*, with Golius's version and notes upon it, is held in great esteem amongst the learned; Abd'allah Ebn Sahel Ebn Nûbakht, a person famous for his skill in astronomy, and much admired by the khalif; Mohammed Ebn Mûsa Al Khowarazmi, whose astronomical tables, entitled, *Al Send Hend*, were reckoned remarkably exact; Mashallah, the Jew, for his uncommon skill in abstruse literature, regarded as the phoenix of his age, who flourished in the khalifat of Al Mamûr, and died after Al Mamûn's accession to the throne; and Yahya Ebn Abu'l Mamûr, of whose skill in astrological matters we have an instance handed down to us by Abu'l-Faraj. The most celebrated physicians in Al Mamûn's days, some of whom he employed in translating into Arabic a considerable number of those medical treatises purchased of the subjects of the Greek emperor by the khalif, were Yahya Ebn Batrik, Al Mamûn's freed-man, who had a happy talent at translation, by hitting upon the true sense and meaning of his author, though he did not write elegant Arabic, and was better versed in philosophy than physic; Sahel Ebn Sâbûr, surnamed Al Kawfaj, who lived at Ahwâz, and consequently wrote in the dialect of Khûz or Khûzestân; Yahya Ebn Mâsûa, who likewise made a very considerable figure in his profession; Jîurgis, or George Ebn Bakhtishua, of whom we have spoken before; Isa Ebn Al Hakem, who also enjoyed a very reputable character; and Zakariâ Al Tifûri, who practised with great success. Besides these, Al Mamûn had another physician, called Gabriel by one of the Arab writers, who attended him every morning before any of the others, and had for some time assigned him a monthly pension of a thousand dirhems; but falling afterwards into disgrace, he was forbidden to appear in the khalif's presence, and his pension was reduced to a hundred and fifty dirhems.

We

We must here beg leave to remark, that the Arabs discovered a passion for the study of medicine in the earlier times of Islamism; that art being of such great utility to all ranks and degrees of men, even when they applied themselves almost solely to the study of their own language, and of the Mohammedan civil law, founded upon the precepts and determinations of the Koran. This was undoubtedly the state of learning amongst the Arabs, whilst the khalifs of the house of Ommiyah sat upon the Moslem throne: but, after the elevation of the family of Al Abbâs to the khalifat, the cultivation of the sciences began soon to be in esteem. Abu Jaafar Al Mansûr, the second khalif of that race, did not only attain to a good share of knowledge in the Mohammedan civil law, but likewise made some progress in the study of philosophy and astronomy; which attained a much higher degree of perfection in the reign of his great-grandson Abd'allah Al Mamûn: for that prince not only hired learned men, whom he had assembled from all parts of his extensive dominions for that purpose, to translate the books he had purchased of the Christians at an immense expence, but likewise promoted by all possible means the study of those branches of literature they were written upon, and even pursued with an almost unparalleled ardour that study himself: but for a more explicit and particular account of this khalif's thirst after knowledge, as well as of his wonderful propension to favour and animate learned men, we must refer our curious readers to the authors cited here^m.

Al Môtasem, or Abu Ishak Mohammed Ebn Harûn Al Rashîd, surnamed likewise Bi'llah by some of the Oriental historians, was saluted khalif the same day his brother Al Mamûn died, that is, the eighteenth or nineteenth of the month Rajeb, in the year of the Hejra 218. His mother Mâredah, or Mârudah, was one of the concubines of the khalif Harûn Al Rashîd. Some of the Moslem commanders at Tarsus were inclined to favour the interest of Al Abbâs, son to the deceased khalif; but that young prince having himself taken the oath of allegiance to Al Môtasem, all the officers of the army, as well as those belonging to the court, soon followed his example. Al Môtasem ascended

Al Môtasem is proclaimed khalif.

^m Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 139, 140. Eutyeh. ubi sup. p. 420—437. Al Kadi Saed Ebn Ahmed Al Andalos. apud Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. ut & ipse Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ibid. Ism. Abulfed. ubi sup. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 1. & alib. Khondemir, Ebn Shohnah. Vide etiam D'Herbel, ubi sup.

the throne by virtue of Al Mamûn's express nomination of him to the khalifat, which was made to the prejudice of his own son Al Abbâs, and the exclusion of his other brother Al Mûtamen; though the latter had been called to the succession after him by their father Harûn Al Rashid. The first step the new khalif took, was to issue orders for the demolition of the additional part of Tawâba, that had been built by Al Mamun's son, Al Abbâs, in the late reign, which were immediately executed, all the arms and warlike stores to be found in the town were carried from thence, and the inhabitants, who had been transplanted thither from other cities, commanded to return to their former habitations. In the beginning of the month of Ramadân, Al Môtasem arrived at Baghdâd, where he was soon after inaugurated. About the same time the khalif received advice of the great progress made by the rebels in Persian Irâk, headed by one Bâbec, an enemy both to the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the Moslems. This Bâbec was surnamed Al Horremi, or Al Khorremi, and Khorremdin, either because he was a native of a certain district near Ardebil in Adherbijân, called Khorrem, or because he instituted a merry religion, which is the signification of the word in Persian. He first appeared in the year of the Hejra 201, when he began to take upon himself the title of a prophet. We do not find what particular doctrine he taught, when he made open profession of his impiety; but it is said his system of religion differed from all the others then known in Asia. He gained a great number of devotees in Adherbijân and the Persian Irâk, and grew powerful enough to wage war with the khalif Al Mamun, whose troops he often defeated, putting to the sword several of his generals, and particularly Ebn Hamid, with his own hand; by which victories he became so formidable, that Al Môtasem was obliged to employ the whole forces of the empire against him. The general sent to reduce Bâbec was Haidar Ebn Kaus, surnamed Affhîn, a Turk by birth, who had been brought a slave to the khalif's court, and having been employed in disciplining the Turkish militia there, had acquired the reputation of a great captain. As the rebels had made themselves masters of Al Jebâl and Hamadân, and were very formidable, Affhîn was resolved to bring them to action as soon as a proper opportunity offered; which having found, he defeated them with prodigious slaughter, putting no less than sixty thousand of them to the sword, and driving the rest into the imperial territories. He first marched at
the

the head of his army towards the province of Adherbijân, and employed much time in rebuilding all the castles between the cities of Arzanjân and Ardebil, that had been demolished by Bâbec's troops. This step he judged previously requisite, in order to secure all the passages and defiles, and thereby put a stop to the incursions of the rebels.

In the following year Mohammed Ebn Al Kâsem, one of Ali's descendents, appeared in arms against the khalif, and seized upon a considerable part of the province of Khorasân. He was, however, at length defeated by the khalif's forces, taken prisoner, and brought to Al Môtasem at Baghdâd. Being sent to prison, he was for some time strictly confined; but at length, by what means we have not been informed, he effected his escape, and was never afterwards seen. As for Affhim, he made himself master of Isfahân, or Ispahân, and Hamadân, the two principal cities of Al Jebâl, or the Persian Irâk, and several of Bâbec's castles, notwithstanding the great annoyance given him by the rebels, though he could not reduce the whole country to the obedience of the khalif in the course of this campaignⁿ.

Mohammed Ebn Al Kâsem rebels against the khalif.

About this time a very severe persecution was carried on by the khalif against all who denied the creation of the Koran. Ahmed Ebn Hanbal, the founder of the fourth sect of the Sonnites, of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter, refusing to acknowledge the Koran to be created, was scourged in so cruel a manner that he fainted away, having been almost flayed alive, by order of the khalif Al Môtasem, and afterwards imprisoned. The same punishment would have been inflicted upon Abu Harûn Ebn Al Bacâ, had he not escaped it by an ingenious evasion, which was of signal service to him: he allowed the Koran to have been placed, given, or instituted by God, and that every such thing was created; though he would not in direct terms admit the conclusion naturally deducible from those premises. In short, he conceived the Koran to be endued with one of the essential properties of a created being, though he endeavoured to evade standing to the immediate consequence of such a concession^o.

Al Môtasem persecutes those who deny the creation of the Koran.

Next year, being the 220th of the Hejra, Affhim, having fortified the passes in the mountains, and posted proper detachments of troops to defend them, descended into

A great overthrow given Bâbec by Affhim.

ⁿ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 141. Khondemir, Ebn Shohnah, Eutyeh. ubi supra, p. 438, 439. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. ^o Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 252, 253. Ebn Khalecan.

the plain, and encamped near a village called Arfu, or, as some call it, Ashâk, where he offered the enemy battle. Bâbec, notwithstanding the great losses he had sustained, accepted the challenge; but, after a warm engagement, was entirely defeated, and compelled to fly, with the shattered remains of his troops, first to Mogân, and afterwards to Casbabâd, the place of his nativity, where he had at that time erected his principal fort. His army must have been extremely numerous before the beginning of the action, if, as it is asserted by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, he lost in it above a hundred thousand men. Be that as it may, Bâbec, finding no other way to escape, was obliged to retire into the Gordyean mountains, where he fortified several posts; from whence he greatly annoyed the khalif's forces that pursued him thither, frequently intercepting their provisions, and cutting off their detachments. In short, Al Môtasem's general found it impossible to dislodge him from those posts during the course of the present year^p. However, Affhîn took several of his strong-holds, and forced some of his fortified towns.

Bâbec reduced, and put to death.

In the 222d year of the Hejra he prosecuted the war with great vigour, and shut up Bâbec in Casbabâd, Badu, or Al Badh, as it is sometimes called by the Arab historians, which place he closely besieged. Hither that rebel found himself obliged to retire, after Affhîn had reduced all his castles successively with invincible patience, and forced all his entrenchments in the mountainous district of the Curds, as his last resource. The fortress of Casbabâd being a place of considerable strength, he defended it with great bravery for several months; but at length finding he should be obliged to surrender the town, he made his escape into a neighbouring wood, from whence he soon after submitted to Affhîn, upon that general's promising to procure him the khalif's protection; but Affhîn had no sooner got him into his power, than he ordered an executioner, who attended him for that purpose, first to cut off his hands and feet, and afterwards his head. This is the account handed down to us by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari. Other writers, however, relate, that just before the surrender of Casbabâd to the khalif's forces, Bâbec found means to escape in disguise, after he had with great bravery sustained several assaults, with his son Abd'allah, and his general Moâwiyah, into Armenia, where he was betrayed in the

^p Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi supra. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 158.

following

following manner. Sahel Ebn Sanbat, an Armenian officer, happening to know him, enticed him, by offers of service into his power, and treated him as a powerful prince till he sat down to eat, when Sahel seated himself by him. Bâbec being surprised, asked him how he dared to take that liberty unasked? "It is true, great king (replied Sahel) I have committed a fault; for who am I that I should sit at your majesty's table?" and immediately sending for a smith, he made use of this bitter sarcasm, "Stretch forth your legs, great king, that this man may put fetters on them." After having treated him with this indignity, Sahel sent him to Affhîn, though he had offered a large sum for his liberty, having first retaliated upon him, by causing his mother, sister, and wife to be ravished before his face, for so Bâbec used to treat his prisoners. Affhîn, having the arch-rebel in his power, conducted him to Al Môtasem, by whose order he was put to an ignominious death. The khalif was then at Sar Man Ray, Sarra Manray, or Samarra (for it went by all those names), a city of Irâk, on the eastern bank of the Tigris, a little above half a degree to the west of Baghdâd, where he first ordered Bâbec's hands and feet to be cut off, and then his head, after his belly had been ripped open in the presence of a great number of spectators. The body was fixed upon a gibbet, erected for that purpose, in the town, and the head sent into Khorasân. This man had maintained his ground against the power of the khalifs above twenty years, and had cruelly massacred above two hundred and fifty thousand people; it being his custom never to spare man, woman, or child, either of the Moham-medans or their allies. Amongst the prisoners taken at Casbabâd, was Nûd, who had been one of the ten men employed by Bâbec in his executions; and who owned, that, in obedience to his master's commands, he had destroyed above twenty thousand Moslems with his own hands. Casbabâd was taken in the month of Ramadân this year; and some time after Ajîf Ebn Anbasa reduced the Zatalhdians, who inhabited Al Batayeh, or the fenny tract between Wâset and Basra, to the obedience of the khalif, and conducted many of them prisoners to Baghdâd. The Khorremites, or sectaries of Bâbec, who remained after his death, seem to have been entirely dispersed, there being little or no mention made of them by the Oriental historians⁹.

⁹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 141, 142. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 253, 254. Khondemir, Ebn Shohnah, Eutych. ubi sup. p. 438, 439. D'Herbel, ubi supra.

*The khalif
makes an
irruption
into the
Greek em-
pire.*

Next year, being the 223d of the Hejra, commencing December 3, 837, the emperor Theophilus invaded the Moslem territories with an army of a hundred thousand men. He penetrated as far as Zabatra, or Zabtara, took and demolished that city, put all the men to the sword, and carried the women and children into captivity; from thence he advanced to Malatia in Cappadocia, seized upon that place, killed great numbers of men, and took about a thousand of the Moslem women prisoners. He also made himself master of several other towns, the inhabitants of which he treated with excessive cruelty, putting out the eyes, and cutting off the noses and ears of the men, and carrying away the women captives, according to some of the Arab historians: The khalif, receiving advice of these hostilities, marched against the Greeks with a more formidable army than any of those with which his predecessors had previously made war upon that nation. This army he divided into several bodies, which entered the imperial territories by different routes, and reduced several fortresses belonging to the Christians, before any enemy appeared to oppose them. Ancyra, in particular, we are told, he took and laid in ashes, though Ayub the patriarch of Antioch, who attended the khalif in this expedition, could have prevailed upon him to have saved it, had the inhabitants, as he desired, opened their gates to that prince when he first presented himself before the town. Some of the Greek writers, on the other hand, pretend, that the Moslems were the aggressors in this war, and made an irruption into the imperial provinces several years before, treating the emperor's subjects with their usual barbarity, without having received either from that prince himself, or any of the people belonging to him, the least provocation. Be that as it may, as Theophilus in ravaging Syria had, according to one of them, notwithstanding the earnest entreaties of the khalif, destroyed Zabatra, or Sozopetra, the place of his nativity, he ordered every one of his soldiers to engrave upon his shield the word Amorium, the birth-place of Theophilus, ranked amongst the cities of Phrygia by Ptolemy and Strabo, which he was resolved, at all events, to destroy. These circumstances, however, have been wholly omitted by the Moslem authors. The khalif marched to Tarsus in Cilicia, and from thence advanced into Phrygia; of which motion the emperor being apprized, he proceeded at the head of his forces to Dorylaeum, distant about three days journey from Amorium. There, in a council of war, several of his officers advised him to decline an engagement with the Arabs, whose army

was

was far more numerous than that of the Greeks, and to transport the inhabitants of Amorium to some other place; but the emperor imagining such a proceeding would reflect no small disgrace upon him, resolved to venture all in the defence of his native city. He accordingly sent thither a strong detachment, under the command of Ætius, general of the East, Theodorus Craterus, Theophilus Bubutzicus, and other experienced generals. In the mean time the khalif, having made the proper dispositions for investing the city, detached a body of ten thousand Turks, with a strong party of Armenians, to try the strength of the emperor's forces. The two armies faced each other at Dazymenum, and soon came to a general action, wherein the Arabs were at first put to the rout; but the Greeks, in pursuing them, were so galled by the arrows of the Turks, that they not only discontinued the pursuit, but betook themselves to a disorderly flight. A body of Persians, however, in the emperor's service, though abandoned by the rest of the army, stood their ground, and surrounding the emperor, who was present in the engagement, made head against the enemy, and at length, by favour of the night, retired in tolerable good order. According to Abulfeda, in this expedition the right wing of the Moslem army was commanded by Affhîn Ebn Kaus, the left by Affhnas, and the main body by the khalif himself. Al Môtasem, informed of the success of his troops, marched directly to Amorium, and being there joined by his victorious forces, laid close siege to that place, which, after a long and obstinate resistance, was betrayed to him by one of the inhabitants, who had abjured the Christian religion. The khalif, enraged at the great loss he had sustained during the siege, which, if we credit Abulfeda, continued about fifty-five days, put most of the men to the sword, carried the women and children into captivity, and levelled the city with the ground. Some of the eastern historians relate, that the Greeks lost in that action above thirty thousand men. The khalif's forces being distressed for want of water in their return, the Christian prisoners rose upon some of them and murdered them; an action which so exasperated the khalif, that he put six thousand of the Greeks, who had been principally concerned in exciting that commotion to death. Of the inhabitants of Amorium thirty thousand were slain, and as many taken prisoners, according to Abu'l-Faraj. Al Môtasem having discovered in his march that some of his officers had engaged to support Al

Abbâs Ebn Al Mamûn's pretensions to the khalifat, he forbade his subjects to supply that prince with liquids of any kind; so that, according to Abulfeda, he died of thirst at Manbij, and was buried in that city. According to the authors followed by M. D'Herbelot, the khalif did not discover the conspiracy that had been formed against him before his arrival at Sarra Manray, then the seat of the khalifat, after his return from the Grecian expedition. The conspirators, if we believe those authors, proposed to assassinate his two best friends, Affhîn and Asbah, and afterwards to elevate his nephew Al Abbâs to the Moslem throne: but their design being detected, they were punished with death; and Al Abbâs himself was shut up in a close place, where he had provisions sent him, but was allowed nothing to drink. In this condition he languished for some time, and at last miserably perished with thirst. Eutychius, however seems to intimate, that Al Abbâs's death happened whilst the khalif was on his march from Zabatra, and consequently before he arrived at Sarra Manray^r.

*A rebellion
in Tabre-
stân.*

The following year Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, the khalif Al Môtasem's governor of Khorasân, marched against Bârabâ Ebn Kâran, who had set up for himself in Tabrestân, with a powerful army, defeated him in several engagements, and at length took him prisoner. This action put an end to the rebellion in those parts, and restored the country, that had been the scene of these commotions, to its former tranquillity. As for Bârabâ Ebn Khâran, Abd'allah sent him to Al Môtasem, who ordered him to be scourged to death; and his body was affixed to a gibbet, at a small distance from that erected by Bâbec.

*Al Môta-
sem disco-
vers a con-
spiracy that
had been
formed a-
gainst him.*

Affhîn, the captain-general of the khalif's forces, endeavouring to excite Mâziâr, the governor of Tabrestân, to revolt; of which attempt the khalif being apprised, as well as of his impiety, he having been actually discovered to be an idolater, and to have a prepuce, he ordered him to be thrown into prison, and afterwards executed.

His body was fixed upon a gibbet, erected near those that exhibited the bodies of Bârabâ Ebn Kâran and Bâbec. Some of the khalif's officers searched Affhîn's house, and found in it a great number of idols, which they immedi-

^r Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 142. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 254. Georg. Cedren. Historiar. Compend. p. 528—532. Joan. Curopal. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 438—441. Khondemir, Ebn Shohnah, Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 223.

ately

ately destroyed. They likewise reduced to ashes several impious books, discovered there, and written to instruct others in his execrable opinions ^s.

In the 227th year of the Hejra, commencing October 21, 841, the khalif Al Mótasem died at Samarra, either in the forty-eighth or forty-ninth year of his age. The disorder that carried him off is said to have been a fever; after the first attack of which, he was blooded by his principal physician's order, but without effect. He expired on Thursday, the 18th of the Former Rabî, and left eight sons and as many daughters. He reigned eight years eight months and eight days. He was also the eighth khalif of the house of Al Abbâs, was elevated to the Moslem throne in the 218th year of the Hejra, was born in the month of Shaa-bân, being the eighth month of the year, fought eight battles, possessed eight thousand slaves, and had eight millions of dinârs, and eighty thousand dirhems, in his treasury at the time of his death. These circumstances induced the Arabs to surname him Al Mothamen, i. e. *the Octonary*, or *the Eighth*, according to some of the best Oriental writers. As the people of Baghdâd disturbed his repose by their frequent revolts and commotions, he took the resolution to abandon that city, and to build another capital. The spot he chose for this purpose was called Katûl, near the city of Sarra Manray, in the Arabian Irâk; here he erected his new city, which was first called Samarra, and afterwards Sarra Manray. According to Mirkhond, this khalif had thirty thousand pided horses in his stables at Samarra, about whose necks he ordered sacks full of earth to be hung, which they carried to a place in the city he had marked out for that purpose. The earth carried thither in this manner formed a pretty high terras, on which he built a large saloon, from whence he could easily discover every thing that passed in the city. This terras gave name to the magnificent palace of Samarra, which was ever after called by the Arabs Tel Almekhâli, i. e. *the Hill of Sacks*; Almekhâli, in their language, denoting a sort of sacks hung about the horses necks, in which they carry their straw and oats, according to the common custom of the East.

With regard to Al Mótasem's person, he is said to have had a handsome face, red hair, a long beard, a broad breast, and to have been of a fair complexion. He was of a middle stature, and so extremely robust, that he once carried a burden of a thousand pounds weight, if we may credit

*Description
of his per-
son, and
character.*

^s Khondemir, Ebn Shohnah, Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 254, 255. Abulfed. ad an. Hej. 226.

some of the Arab writers. As to his disposition, he was brave to a great degree, and punctual in the discharge of religious duties; though he has been represented by some of the Oriental historians as entirely attached to the opinions of the Mótazalites. These heretics maintained, that the Koran was created, and scrupled not to accuse those of infidelity, as assertors of two eternal beings, who held the contrary doctrine. However, they were opposed in this notion by the Sonnites, or orthodox Mohammedans, who believed the Koran to be uncreated and eternal, subsisting in the very essence of God; or, as others have expressed it, the word of God, and consequently uncreated, as well as the divine Being from whom it originally proceeded. This khalif kept a greater number of forces on foot, particularly horse, than any of his predecessors. He also greatly increased the number of boys at court, for whom he provided about fifty thousand satchels, or little bags, in which they sometimes carried their provisions. The Moslem historians celebrate this khalif for his magnanimity, and mention one of his actions that appears in a very singular light. Being once, say they, separated from his companions in the country, he met with an old man standing by his ass, which had fallen down upon the ground, in a very dirty place, with a load of thorns upon his back. This sight so affected the khalif, that he immediately alighted from his horse, in order to assist the old man, and raise up his beast; which having done, though he spoiled his cloaths by this generous action, he rejoined his retinue, and afterwards made him a present of four thousand dinârs. He was the first of the khalifs who added the name of God to his own: For, he ordered himself to be surnamed Bi'llah, *in God*, or *by the grace of God*; in which designation he was followed by several of his successors, who to their names added the words Bi'llah, *in God*, Beemri'llah, *by the order of God*, Ala'llah, *on God*, and *in God*, and Ledini'llah, *for the faith of God*, or *for the worship of God*. When the Greeks took and sacked the city of Zabatra, an Arab woman of the house of Al Abbâs is said to have been taken prisoner by a horseman; and the very moment she was seized, to have cried out, "Succour me, O Al Mótasem!" Upon which, the horseman said to her, by way of ridicule, "See, here comes Al Mótasem on his pied horse, to your assistance." This adventure being some time after related to the khalif, who was then at a great distance from Zabatra, he instantly swore, that he would not think of any other enterprise till he had released this woman. Accordingly he
marched

marched at the head of his forces, in the midst of winter, to that city, and attacked the Greeks with such vigour, that he entirely defeated them. This victory opening him the way to the place where the woman, who cried out to him for relief, was detained, he delivered her out of the hands of her enemies.

In the fourth year of the khalifat of Al Mótasem, Sophronius was placed in the patriarchal see of Alexandria, where he continued about thirteen years. He was a person of uncommon prudence and sagacity, and a great philosopher. In the seventh year of this prince's reign, one John was also constituted patriarch of Jerusalem; but, being extremely ill used by the Christians, he soon found himself obliged to retire from that city. When Salmawiyah, one of the most celebrated physicians of the Moslem court, lay upon his death-bed, the khalif visited him in tears, and asked him who should take care of his health after his decease; Salmawiyah replied, "That busy-body Yahya Ebn Mâfwiya; but take none of his compound medicines." Soon after this advice, Salmawiyah died; and the khalif was so affected with the irreparable loss he sustained by that tragical event, that he immediately broke out into the following sorrowful exclamation, "I shall soon follow him; for the preservation of my life and health has been entirely owing to his skill." He likewise abstained from all kinds of food the whole day of Salmawiyah's decease, ordered a bier to be brought into the palace, and the funeral service to be performed, in his presence, with candles and perfumes, after the Christian manner. He had, indeed, great reason to be under the extreme concern he expressed on this melancholy occasion; for Salmawiyah bled him twice a year, and, after each venesection, ordered him some cooling physic; by which means he enjoyed a good state of health as long as that physician lived. Yahya, on the contrary, prescribed him a cathartic before he underwent that operation; which, not agreeing with his constitution, gradually altered the habit of his body, and at last terminated in his death¹. He is said to have survived Salmawiyah only twenty months.

Some farther particulars relating to him.

Al Wathek Bi'llah was proclaimed khalif the same day his father Al Mótasem died, that is, on the 18th of the former Rabî, at Sarra Manray, and inaugurated afterwards

Al Wâthek Bi'llah ascends the Moslem throne after Al Mótasem,

¹ Eutyech. ubi supra, p. 440—443. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 144, 145. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 162—164. Honain, apud Greg. Abu'l-Far. ubi supra, p. 255, 256. ut & ipse Greg. Abu'l Far. ibid. Ism. Abulfed. ubi supra.

at Baghdâd. His mother's name was Karâtis, or Farâtis, and his own at large Harûn Al Wâthek Bi'llah Abu Jaafar Ebn Al Môtasem Ebn Harûn Al Rashîd. About this time Theophilus, the Greek emperor, died, and was succeeded by his son Michael; who being then only six years old, his mother Theodora was invested with the administration. Abd'alrahmân still governed the Moslems in Spain, and seems to have gained several advantages over the Christians in that country. The new khalif adhered to the errors of the Môtazalites, and carried on a most violent persecution against the Sonnites, particularly those who denied the creation of the Koran. His mother is said to have been a Greek by nation. In consequence of his attachment to the Môtazalites, he entertained the most favourable sentiments of all the members of the house of Ali. We are told by Abulfeda, that Raja Ebn Ayûb, with a body of troops assigned him for that purpose by Al Wâthek, suppressed a rebellion of the Kaisians at Damascus, and beheaded fifteen hundred of the rebels in the course of this year.

The Moslems invade Sicily.

In the following, the khalif dismissed his judges and secretaries of state, and extorted from them, either for real or pretended crimes, very considerable sums of money. According to Al Noweiri, he undertook at this juncture an expedition against the island of Sicily, where he laid siege to Messina, and in a short time made himself master of that city; which conquest was followed by that of the whole island. However, this invasion has been entirely passed over in silence by the *Chronicon Siculum*, already cited, which we esteem as a piece of exceeding good authority; though it seems to have been mentioned by Abu'l-Faraj. Abulfeda observes, that Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Aglah was then the emir, or governor, of the island, and resided at Palermo. He likewise informs us, that this Aglabite commander reduced many cities there, and carried off a very considerable number of prisoners, together with a large quantity of spoil, in the 228th year of the Hejra. It is probable, therefore, that Al Noweiri, or rather M. D'Herbelot, has mistaken the khalif Al Wâthek for the emir Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Aglab; especially as we find not the least intimation of Al Wâthek's having undertaken such a Sicilian expedition in the *Tarikh* of Abu Jaafar Al Tabari. Be that, however, as it may, we must infer from Abulfeda, that this Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Al Aglab first took upon himself the government of Sicily, and assumed the title of
emir

emir of that island, in the present year. It also appears from the *Chronicon Siculum*, that this prince's new subjects were greatly infested by vast swarms of locusts about the same time.

The Normans sent a fleet, consisting of fifty-four large ships, and as many galleys, with a body of land-forces on board, according to Roderic, at this time, to Lisbon, in order to drive Abd'alrahman Ebn Al Hakem, the western khalif, out of Spain.

The Normans invaded Spain;

Next year they advanced with a formidable fleet, and a numerous body of troops on board, from Lisbon to Seville, and laid siege to that city. From thence they proceeded to Cadiz, and attempted to make themselves masters of that place. But being repulsed in all their attacks both upon that fortress and Seville, and receiving advice that Abd'alrahmân was marching against them at the head of a powerful army, attended by a strong squadron of ships, they retired to Lisbon with uncommon precipitation; and were finally driven from thence by that prince's forces, without any considerable loss.

and are driven from thence by Abd'alrahmân's forces.

In the following year, being the 231st of the Hejra, beginning September 8, 845, a cartel for the exchange and redemption of prisoners was settled, according to Abu'l-Faraj, between the Moslems and the Christians, upon the banks of the river Al Lames, the *Lamus* of Ptolemy, about a day's journey from Tarsus, in Cilicia. The person sent by Al Wâthek to conduct this affair, on the part of the Moslems, was one Khâkân, an eunuch, who received orders from his master not to redeem any of the Mohammedan captives that refused to assert the creation of the Koran, and would not deny all vision of God in paradise by the corporeal eye. The Arab prisoners redeemed on this occasion amounted to four thousand four hundred and sixty men, besides eight hundred women and children, and about one hundred belonging to the khalif's allies, who all entered the Moslem camp on the tenth day of the month Al Moharram. Moharek, an Arab musician, Abu Yakûb Yusef Ebn Yahya Al Bowaiti, a disciple of the famous Al Shâfeî, who was imprisoned for denying the creation of the Koran, and Ebn Al Arabi, a celebrated philologer of Cûfa, who left many learned productions behind him, died this year. A body of Al Wâthek's troops, in the winter, made an irruption into the Christian provinces; but were

A cartel settled between the Christians and the Moslems.

• Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 146. Al No-weiri, Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra. Abulfed. ad an. Hej. 230.

soon obliged to retire by the severity of the season, and the enemy's detachments sent against them. Of the Arabs two hundred perished with cold, as many were taken prisoners, and a great number drowned in the Badandûn ; so that the khalif sustained a very considerable loss in this unfortunate expedition.

*Al Wâthek
dies.*

Next year the Moslems defeated a large body of the Sicilian forces near Enna, called at present by the natives Castro Giovanni, and put nine thousand of men to the sword. After which exploit, they seized upon that fortress, as well as the adjacent territory dependent upon it. They also fortified the citadels of Modekah, the Motuca or Motyca of Ptolemy, and the Modica of the moderns, which they had reduced the preceding year. The khalif Al Wâthek died on the twenty-third, or the twenty-fourth day of the month Dhu'l-hajja, and his brother Al Motawakkel said the funeral service over him. With respect to the cause of his death, authors are not agreed. We are told by Abulfeda and Abu'l-Faraj, that, being troubled with the dropsy, he continued for some time in a stove, and found himself thereby greatly relieved ; a circumstance which induced him to stay in it, heated more than usual, the next day longer than before. This experiment affected him in such a manner, that he expired upon the spot ; though his attendants were not sensible of his death, till they discovered him lifeless in his litter. On the other hand, we are informed by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, that, being extremely addicted to venery, he ordered his physician to prepare him some provocatives, and those of the most powerful kind. The doctor, unwilling to comply with his commands, represented that they would prove of fatal consequence to him. However, the khalif persisting in his resolution, the physician assured him, that if he would only take three drachms of lion's flesh properly prepared in red vinegar, it would produce the desired effect. This provocative, therefore, he made use of in his drink, and it soon put a period to his days. A little before his death, falling prostrate on the ground, he burst out into the following ejaculation, " O heavenly king, whose reign is eternal, have mercy upon a poor prince, whose reign is fleeting and transitory !" He filled the Moslem throne five years nine months and six days, or, as others assert, five years seven months and thirteen days. Some authors relate that, whilst the people were assembled after his death to elect his successor Al Motawakkel, a lizard, or rather newt, came out of the garden adjoining to
the

the palace, plucked out his eyes, and greedily devoured them; and that this circumstance was not perceived before his body was washed, in order to be interred. With regard to his person, he was of a fair complexion, a middle stature, and had a very broad breast. His beard was also extremely thick and bushy, and he had a white speck in his right eye. As to his disposition, he was a prince of strict honour, valiant, an admirer of the Arab poetry, and a munificent rewarder of those who excelled in that branch of literature. In most points of conduct he imitated his uncle Al Mamûn, particularly in his attachment to the sect of the Môtazalites. He confirmed the edict made by Al Mamûn relating to the creation of the Koran, and persecuted with uncommon barbarity all who presumed to maintain the contrary opinion. This greatly alienated his subjects from him; and Ahmed Ebn Nasser Ebn Mâlec, surnamed Al Khorai, one of the most celebrated of those doctors who bore the title of Al Hafedh, that is to say, *the Preserver of the Prophetic Traditions*, entered into a conspiracy against him. This doctor found means to engage many of the principal lords of Baghdâd, and several other doctors, in an attempt to dethrone Al Wâthek, and to place himself upon the Moslem throne. But the conspiracy being discovered by the governor of Baghdâd, he seized Ahmed in his own house the day before it was to be carried into execution, and sent him in irons to Samarra, or Sarra Manray, then the residence of the khalif. Upon his arrival, he was immediately brought into Al Wâthek's presence, who, without mentioning the conspiracy, pressed him to assert the creation of the Koran; which he refusing to do, and absolutely persisting in the opinion of the orthodox Moslems, who unanimously admit the eternity of that book, the khalif was so enraged, that he instantly drew his scymitar, and cut off the traitor's head with his own hand.

It has been already observed, that Al Wâthek imitated in all things his uncle Al Mamûn. He was therefore extremely delighted with the study of the sciences, and greatly carested all men of letters. He was also liberal and charitable to a great degree, having taken much care that no poor people should be found in any part of his vast dominions; insomuch that not a single beggar was to be met with, through the whole course of his reign, either at Mecca or Medina. He was particularly fond of astrology, and having in his last illness conferred with some of his wise men, who were the most celebrated for their skill in that

He imitated in all things his uncle Al Mamûn.

that art, upon consulting his horoscope, they assured him, that, from the present moment, his reign should be continued fifty years; though he is said not to have lived above ten days after the prediction.

His death predicted by a remarkable dream.

An Oriental writer likewise relates, that Ahmed Ebn Nazir having been thrown into prison, because he refused to acknowledge the creation of the Koran, and the impossibility of seeing God hereafter in paradise with corporeal eyes, received from the agreeable company he found in the place of his confinement no small degree of consolation: for, Mohammed Ebn Hammâd Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Ziyât, the khalif's visir, who persecuted the Sonnites in a cruel manner, filled all the prisons of Samarra with orthodox Moslems. Amongst these there was one Ahmed Ebn Ifraïl, a famous astrologer; to whom, as well as to many others of his fellow-prisoners, Ahmed Ebn Nazir related, that a phantom had appeared to him in a dream the preceding night, and assured him that Al Wâthek should die within the month. The astrologer then being desired to calculate that prince's nativity, in order to discover what truth there was in this nocturnal prediction, refused to be concerned in so dangerous an affair. However, the last day of the month being come, he said to Ahmed Ebn Nazir, "What do you say now of your dream, since the term pointed out by your phantom is almost expired?" To which Ahmed replied, "Many things may still happen before the conclusion of the approaching night." Accordingly, about the second watch of the same night, a considerable number of people arrived at the prison-door, with advice of the khalif's decease ^w.

Dies of a dropsy, according to some of the eastern writers.

Other authors inform us, that Al Wâthek, by eating and drinking to great excess, and that frequently when he had no appetite at all, together with his immoderate use of women, brought on a dropsy; of which he was cured by a celebrated physician of Nisabûr, who advised him to live more temperately for the future, as a relapse would prove fatal to him: but, notwithstanding this salutary advice, the khalif soon began to pursue his former irregular course of life, and was consequently in a short time afflicted with the same disorder, of which, in conformity to the doctor's prediction, he died within the space of a very few months ^x.

Had a very terrible eye.

One of the same authors remarks, that the khalif Al Wâthek had so terrible an eye, that having a little before

^w Jamalo'ddin Mohammed Al Awki, ubi sup. ^x Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'al Jaar Al Kazwini, Mirkhond, Jalali, Khondemir, &c.

his death cast an angry glance upon one of his domestics, who had been guilty of some fault, the man was instantly confounded, and fell backwards upon another person that stood at a small distance from him.

Some of the Arab historians have observed, that Al Wâthek was a tolerable good poet, as well as a patron and benefactor to those who excelled in poetical compositions; that he sung well, and had an excellent voice. He made, in the second year of his reign, Sergius, who had been a great enemy to those of his own communion, and was for that reason very disagreeable to them, patriarch of Jerusalem, where he resided in that capacity sixteen years. He likewise filled the patriarchal see of Antioch, which became vacant in the sixth year of his khalifat, with Nicholas, who presided over the Christians twenty-three years in that city. We must not forget to remark, that the above mentioned Al Hasan Ebn Sahel Ebn Nubakht was the most eminent astronomer, as well as astrologer, of the age in which he lived, and wrote a treatise upon the Anwâ, or mansions of the moon. Some writers say this khalif was thirty-two, others thirty-four, and, lastly, others thirty-six years of age at the time of his decease ^y.

Other particulars relating to him.

Al Wâthek's death was no sooner known than his brother Al Motawakkel Ala'llah was saluted khalif by the people of Samarra, and afterwards acknowledged as such by all the provinces of the empire. His mother Shajâ, Al Môtasem's concubine, was of Khowârazmian extraction. Ahmed Ebn Abu Dawd, Al Wâthek's principal judge, Mohammed Ebn Hammâd Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Ziyât, his visir, and Wasîf, the Turk, together with several other leading men, at first had an intention to proclaim Mohammed, surnamed Al Mohtadi, Al Wâthek's son, khalif; but Wasîf afterwards objecting to this measure, on account of his tender years, they dropped their design, and agreed to invest Jaafar Abu'l Fadl Al Motawakkel Al'allah Ebn Al Môtasem, the late khalif's brother, then about twenty-six years of age, with the imperial dignity.

He is succeeded by his brother Al Motawakkel.

As Al Mohtadi, Al Wâthek's son, was incapable of officiating publicly in the mosque, on account of his tender age, Wasîf, upon mature deliberation, thought he should be guilty of a great sin if he concurred with the other principal officers of the empire in advancing that

Wasîf determines the choice of the grandees in favour of Al Motawakkel.

^y Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 147. Eutych. ubi sup. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup.

young

young prince to the dignity of imâm; and therefore determined their choice of a sovereign pontiff, who was to be emperor of the faithful, in favour of Al Motawakkel. This Wasîf commanded the body of Turkish troops, or rather the Turkish irregulars, first levied by the khalif Al Môtasem; a command which gave great weight to his representations, and enabled him the more easily to carry his point, notwithstanding the vast influence of Mohammed Ebn Hammâd Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Ziyât, the late khalif's visir.

Mohammed Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Ziyât put to death by the khalif's order.

Mohammed Ebn Hammâd Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Ziyât, the late visir, having treated Al Motawakkel ill, in his brother's life-time, that prince resented the injuries he had then suffered, soon after he ascended the Moslem throne. He accordingly sent him to prison, and ordered a person to keep him awake for several days and nights successively. Mohammed being afterwards suffered to take some repose, slept a whole day and a night; and, when he awoke, was thrown into an iron furnace, lined with spikes, or large nails, heated red-hot, where he was miserably burnt to death. Some authors, however, relate, that he received fifty stripes upon his belly, and as many upon his back, and soon after expired. This counsellor, or visir, was endued with great eloquence, and was extremely well versed in the Arab grammar and poetry: but he was haughty, weak, vain-glorious, iniquitous in his conduct, and entirely void of compassion. He was likewise a stranger to decency, excessively fond of power, and avaricious to the greatest degree. He never did any person a good office, frequently saying that pity was a natural weakness, and liberality folly. It appears from some of the Arab writers, that he composed verses during his confinement, though none of these have been preserved. The Moslems reduced Leontini, the Lentini of the moderns, called by the Arabs Lentinah, and made a farther progress in the conquest of Sicily, during the course of this year ^z.

The western Moslems take Ragusa.

In the following year, the Aglabite Arabs, settled in Sicily, made themselves masters of the city of Ragusa with very inconsiderable loss. The khalif Al Motawakkel, after the death of Mohammed Ebn Hammâd Ebn Abd'almâlec Al

^z Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 148. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 233. Chronic. Sicul. Arab. Cantabrigiens. Mel. lib. ii. cap. 7. Plin. lib. iii. cap. 8. Ptol. ubi sup. Fil. Parut. ubi sup.

Ziyât,

Ziyât, began to think of allaying the heats raised amongst the Moslems by his predecessors Al Môtasem and Al Wâthek, who persecuted with great cruelty those that refused to embrace the tenets of the Môtazalites. A famine this year made terrible havock amongst the Arabs in Sicily.

In the year of the Hejra 235, several remarkable occurrences happened amongst the eastern Moslems. The khalif Al Motawakkel settled the succession first upon his eldest son Al Montaser, after him upon his second son Al Mo'taz, and, finally, upon his third son Al Mowaiad. He also gave each of them two banners, or standards, black and white; the former of which distinguished them as heirs apparent to the crown, and the latter as their father's vicerents, who had the government of the empire divided amongst them. To Al Montaser the khalif assigned Africa, from Arîsh in Egypt to the most western limits of that vast tract, as likewise the provinces of Kinnifrîn, Al Shâm or Syria, Mesopotamia, Diyar Becr, Diyar Rabîa, Mawfel or Mosul, Habab, Al Ayât, Al Khâbûr, Karkîsia, Tecrît, the region bordering upon the Tigris, Mecca and Medina, Al Yaman, Hadramaut, Yamâma, Bahrein, Al Sind or Sindia, Ahwâz, Sarra Manray, Cûfa, Maseidân, Al Hajrân, Sharuzûr, Kom, Kâfân, and Al Jebâl, with its dependencies. On Al Mo'taz he bestowed the government of Khorasân, Tabrestân, Ray, Persia, Armenia, and Adherbijân. And lastly, on Al Mowaiad he conferred the provinces of Dimishk or Damascus, Hems, Al Ordan, and Palestine. This division has been celebrated by the Arab poet Ibrahim Ebn Al Abbâs, some of whose verses have been preserved by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari. Al Motawakkel likewise about this time commanded all the Christians and Jews in his dominions to wear leathern girdles, called by the Arabs zonar, and a sort of badge on their cloaths, in order to distinguish them from the Moslems. He likewise forbade them to make use of iron stirrups, and commanded them, according to Eutychius, to paint the figures of devils, or else of hogs and apes, on the doors of their houses; a disgrace which, as the same writer asserts, was occasioned by the imprudent conduct of Bakhtishua, the khalif's physician, a Christian, who had incurred his master's displeasure. About this time, Mahmûd Ebn Faraj, a famous impostor, pretended to be Moses resuscitated, and performed his part so well that several people believed him, and attended him when he was brought before the khalif Al Motawakkel. That prince, having been a witness

Al Motawakkel settles the succession upon his sons, and is angry with the Christians.

witness of his extravagant discourses, condemned him to receive ten buffets from every one of his followers, and then to be put to death; which sentence was accordingly executed; and his disciples were imprisoned till they recovered from their infatuation.

*The khalif
discountenances the
posterity of
Ali.*

In the course of the next year, this khalif, who had openly declared himself an enemy to the house of Ali, forbade his subjects, under the severest penalties, to go on pilgrimage to the tomb of that imâm. He afterwards ordered the sepulchre of Hosein, Ali's son, called in Arabic Mashhad Hosein, in the plains of Kerbela, where that imâm was killed, to be entirely razed; and, in order the more effectually to efface all traces of it, he was resolved not to content himself with ploughing, or breaking up, the ground on which it stood, but likewise to draw a canal of water over it. However, if we credit the Shiites, he could not carry his design into execution; the water not approaching the tomb, but keeping an awful distance. Hence that water was denominated Hair, which signifies *astonished* and *respectful*; a name which has since been applied to the sepulchre itself, on account of this miracle. Notwithstanding which circumstance, some pretend that the place of Hosein's interment was always unknown^a.

*This khalif's death
predicted
in a dream,
according
to the
Shiites.*

We are told by an eastern author, in conformity to the Shiite traditions, that the night after Al Motawakkel had issued this impious order, he saw Ali in a dream, who reproached him with the outrages offered to his family, and gave him seven blows with the famous sword Dhu'l-Fakar, used by the prophet himself in all his engagements, after the battle of Bedr. This visitation, according to one of his wise men, well versed in the interpretation of dreams, portended some signal disaster to him, that should happen by way of punishment for the hatred he bore Ali and his descendants. And accordingly the khalif was assassinated two days after, by some Turks, at the instigation of his eldest son Al Montafer; who, after the perpetration of this horrid parricide, commanded some of his servants to collect the pieces into which his father's body had been cut. These amounting to seven, that prince from thence inferred, that the murder had been clearly foretold by the preceding dream, which was most evidently verified by that tragical event. But here it may not be improper to

^a Khondemir, MS. Hunt. num. 495. in Bibl. Bodl. Oxon.
observed,

observe, that this Shiite fiction must necessarily be exploded by all persons of the least penetration ; since Al Motawakkel's edicts, here mentioned, preceded the assassination of that prince at least eleven years.

In the year of the Hejra 237, beginning July 5, 851, the khalif sent Yusef Ebn Mohammed to preside over Armenia and Adherbijan ; who, upon his arrival at Ekhlât, or Akhlât, caused Bokrât Ebn Ashut, an Armenian nobleman, to be secured, and sent in chains to Al Motawakkel. This outrage so incensed the nobility of Armenia, that, in conjunction with Mûsa, who had married Bokrât's daughter, they assembled a body of troops, in order to take vengeance of Yusef Ebn Mohammed for the insult he had offered to one of their number. Coming up with him at the castle of Mush, they attacked him with such bravery, that, after an obstinate engagement, they entirely defeated him, and put both him and the forces he commanded to the sword. The khalif no sooner received advice of this unexpected rebellion, than he sent Bogâ, the Turk, with an army to suppress it ; which he did effectually, and fully revenged Yusef's death, slaying upwards of thirty thousand of the rebels, and taking a vast number of them prisoners. He afterwards advanced to Teflis, a city of Georgia, which had assisted the rebels, laid siege to it, and in a short time reduced it to ashes, together with fifty thousand of its inhabitants, who all perished in the flames. Either this or the preceding year, Abd'alrahmân paved the streets of Corduba in Spain with stone, and built an aqueduct, with leaden pipes, which copiously supplied that city with water from the neighbouring mountains. In the present year also, and the month of Rajeb, according to Abulfeda, Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Al Aglab died in Sicily, after he had reigned about nine years. He was succeeded by Al Abbâs Ebn Al Abbâs Ebn Al Fadl Ebn Yakûb Ebn Nazara, who subdued many places in Sicily, and defeated the Christians near Enna, which, on account of its surprising strength, they had made the capital of their part of the island, instead of Syracuse. This signal victory, which was gained on Thursday, the fifteenth day of the month of Shawâl, the present year, gave Al Abbâs the possession of Enna, where he erected a mosque for the use of the Moslems.

In the following year, the Greeks fitted out a fleet of three hundred ships ; a hundred of which, under the command of an admiral, set sail for Dimyât, or Damiata
in

*A rebellion
in Arme-
nia.*

*The
Greeks
ravaged
some parts
of Egypt.*

in Egypt. Upon their arrival, they landed a body of troops, seized upon the town, at that time destitute of a garrison for its defence, plundered and burnt it, and carried off, with the view of securing it from all future insults, six hundred Moslem women into captivity. From Damietta they advanced to Mefr, which they pillaged and laid in ashes, and then retired to their own ports. The khalif Al Motawakkel ordered Damietta, to be fortified with a strong double wall; which rendered it one of the most impregnable fortresses in Egypt. This year died, at Corduba, Abdalrahmân Ebn Al Hakem Ebn Heshâm, of the house of Ommiyah, after he had reigned thirty-one years and five months in Spain. He left forty-five sons and forty-two daughters, and was succeeded by his son Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Hakem. About the same time also departed this life Ranimir, the son of Veremund, king of Galicia, whose son Ordonius, according to Roderic of Toledo, succeeded him in his kingdom, frustrated all the attempts of the Arabs upon his dominions, and reigned thirty-five years ^b.

*Nothing
remarkable
happens in
the year of
the Hejra
239.*

The year of the Hejra 239, produced no action of importance in the Moslem empire; at least none that has been recorded by any historian. Mahmud Ebn Gailam, of Meru in Khorasân, one of Al Bokhârî's doctors, died this year. We are told by an author of reputation, that Al Motawakkel published an edict forbidding the Christians and Jews to ride on horseback in any part of his dominions, and permitting them in their journeys to make use only of asses and mules. Which law is considered by the Turks as in force at this very day.

*A rebellion
in Spain.*

About the same time, the khalif appointed his second son Al Mo'taz to superintend all the mints erected in his dominions, and ordered his name to be stamped on all the dirhems coined in the empire. This year likewise, if we credit Roderic of Toledo, the people of that city rebelled against Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Hakem, and were supported in their defection by Ordonius, who sent one of his relations with a body of troops to their assistance. However, Mohammed advanced with his army into the neighbourhood of Toledo, and found means to decoy the rebels into an ambuscade, which he had posted in a proper place at a small distance from the town. The consequence of which was, that he easily defeated them,

^b Ifm. Abulfed. ad an Hej. 238. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 149. Joan. Vaf. Hispan. Chronic.

put seven thousand of the Moslems, and eight thousand of the Christians to the sword, and took a great number of both prisoners; many of whose heads he struck off, and sent some of them to the maritime towns, and others to Africa, as evident tokens of the glorious victory he had obtained ^c.

In the following year, a body of the imperial troops advanced to Aincaria, entered that place, made the Moslem garrison prisoners of war, and carried off all the women and children into captivity: several warm actions happened in those parts between the Christians and the Arabs. About the same time, Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Hakem placed numerous garrisons in Curita, Talavera, and Calatrava, and made incursions into some of the neighbouring provinces. This year, the famous Ahmed Ebn Hanbal, the founder of the fourth sect of the Sunnites, died at Bagdhâd, and was followed to his grave by eight hundred thousand men and sixty thousand women. It is related, as something very extraordinary, that, on the day of his death, no less than twenty thousand Christians, Jews, and Magians, embraced the Mohammedan faith.

The emperor's forces take Aincaria from the Arabs.

In the year of the Hejra 242, beginning May 10, 856, the Greeks penetrated as far as Somisât, or Samosata; but were soon forced by the Moslems to retire from thence to Amid, or Amida, on the borders of Armenia. They also abandoned Mesopotamia, which they had entered, and returned into their own dominions; though they carried off with them about ten thousand prisoners, and plundered a great number of villages in their retreat. This seems to be the expedition mentioned by some of the Greek writers, when they inform us, that the Moslem garrison of Samosata sallied out upon the Christian forces, then before the town, surprised them in their camp, whilst they were at divine service, and forced them to abandon the siege, the third day after it commenced. We are told, by some of the Arab authors, that several violent shocks of an earthquake happened this year in Komâs, or Komes, a province of Tabrestân, in the month of Shaabân, attended with unusual noises; that many towns and villages were demolished; and forty-five thousand and ninety-six men buried in the ruins of the houses that were destroyed. Syria, Persia, Khorasân, and Al Yaman, were all visit-

They are surprised and defeated by the khalif's troops.

^c Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad. an. Hej. 240. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 149, 150. Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup.

ed with the same calamity, according to these writers; who farther observe, that mount Al Akra', or *the Bald Mountain*, in the neighbourhood of Laodicea, or, as it is called by the Arabs, Al Ladikia, at the same time fell into the sea; by which surprising accident most of the inhabitants of that city were destroyed. Mohammed Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Ibrahim Ebn Al Aglab, the khalif of Kairwân, died about this time, and was succeeded by his son, Abu Ibrahim Ahmed Ebn Mohammed. Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Hakem sent an army, under the command of Al Mondâr, one of his relations, to ravage the territory of Toledo. The Moslem general executed his orders with uncommon rigour and severity, either carrying off or destroying all the corn, fruits, and grapes, of that district. Notwithstanding these depredations, the citizens of Toledo sent some of their forces, after Al Mondâr's departure, to possess themselves of Talavera. But the commandant of that fortress having been apprized of their design, met them at the head of his troops, attacked and entirely defeated them; taking a great number of prisoners, and slaying seven hundred upon the spot, all whose heads he sent as an acceptable present to his master Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Hakem, who then resided at Corduba, the capital of the Moslem dominions in Spain^d.

*The khalif
resides a-
bout two
months at
Damascus.*

In the year of the Hejra 243, the khalif Al Motawakkel set out for Damascus, with an intention to make that city the seat of the khalifat. He also ordered several buildings to be erected there in the following month, designing to transfer all his treasures from Sarra Manray to that place. Soon after his arrival at Damascus, the Turkish soldiery mutinied for their pay; which having received, they returned to their duty. Nevertheless, he conceived an aversion to his new capital, and retired to Sarra Manray, after he had resided at Damascus only two months and a few days. He entered that metropolis on Monday the twenty-second of the Latter Jomâda, to the great joy of all the inhabitants. In the course of the present year, Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Hakem also undertook another expedition against the city of Toledo, besieged the place in form, and destroyed the famous bridge over the Tajo.

^d Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. Georg. Cedren. Hist. Comp. p. 545, 546. Joan. Zonar. Annal. lib. xvi. p. 158. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 261. Ism. Abulfed. in Geogr. & Chron. Roder. Toletan. ubi sup.

Next year, the khalif commanded Abu Yusef Yakub Ebn Ishak, surnamed Ebn Al Sekkit, a famous philologer, extremely well versed in all kinds of polite literature, to be put to death, for his attachment to the house of Ali. About the same time that prince deprived Bakhtishua, his physician, of all the riches he had acquired in his service, and banished him into Bahrein. The Greek writers relate, that thirty thousand Arabs about this time marched into the imperial territories, surprised a body of forty-five thousand Thracians and Macedonians, headed by the emperor himself, and put them to a shameful flight. The emperor narrowly escaped being taken prisoner in the action; having been delivered out of the enemy's hands by Manuel, one of his officers, when he was in the most imminent danger.

The Greeks surprised and defeated by the Arabs.

At this period many cities in the western provinces suffered severely from earthquakes; by which great numbers of their houses were overturned. Violent shocks were likewise felt at Baghdâd, where the khalif's palace was in danger of being overthrown, Al Madâyen, Bâlis, Al Rakka, Harrân, Râsô'lain or Râsâ'lain, Hems, Damascus, Al Roha or Edeffa, Tarsus, Masîsa, Adana, and the maritime parts of Syria. At Antioch, one thousand five hundred houses, and above ninety towers belonging to the wall that surrounded the city, are said to have been destroyed; which calamity, together with the frightful and unaccountable noises heard amongst the ruins, so terrified the inhabitants, that they fled for safety into the adjacent fields. Great numbers of people were destroyed by these concussions. The springs at Mecca failed this year to such a degree, that the celebrated well, or fountain in that city, was almost dried up, and the water sold for one hundred dirhems a bottle. A river also, about a parasang distant from Mount Al Akra', disappeared the same year in which that mountain was absorbed, and was never afterwards seen. About the same time, the khalif being informed, that the Niloscope, or Nilometer, erected on the point of the island of Al Fostât by Solimân Ebn Abd'almâlec Ebn Merwân, was fallen to decay, he sent a geometrician, recommended to him by his astrologer, Mohammed Ebn Mûsa, from Irâk to Egypt, in order to erect a new pillar. He likewise appointed Yezid Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Bâdân Ebn Farah to assist Mohammed in this work, and ordered the expence of the whole to be defrayed by Solimân Ebn Wahab; which being done, the machine erected on this occasion was called the new Nilometer, and the other that had

Terrible earthquakes in several parts of the Moslem empire.

fallen to ruin was never afterwards used. The people of Toledo at this time, not being able to make head against Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Hakem, judged it politic to submit to that prince, and were taken under his protection. Soon after this event, the Normans, with a fleet of sixty ships, ravaged the coasts of Spain, laid several places waste with fire and sword, and carried off an immense quantity of spoil. From thence they passed over into Africa, where they committed likewise dreadful depredations; and returned into the maritime parts of Spain, where they took up their winter-quarters: but not finding themselves in a condition to settle upon any part of the tract they had taken possession of, they thought proper to retire the following spring. The writer of the Cambridge Chronicon relates, that the Moslems in Sicily repossessed themselves of Enna, which had surrendered to the Christians, about this period.

The Arabs gain several considerable advantages over the Greeks.

In the year of the Hejra 246, commencing March 28, 860, Omar Ebn Obeid Al Akta', by the khalif's order, made an irruption into the imperial territories, and carried off from thence about seventy thousand prisoners. Al Fadl Ebn Farân, another of the Arab commanders, with a fleet of twenty large ships, insulted the enemy's coasts, and seized upon the citadel of Antioch. Ali Ebn Yahya likewise, in order to make a diversion, penetrated into another of the imperial provinces, and took five thousand prisoners, besides ten thousand head of cattle; after which hostilities a cartel was settled between the contending parties, whereby two thousand three hundred and sixty-seven captives recovered their liberty. The Greek writers observe, that the Arabs at this time entered the imperial provinces with an army of forty thousand men, and committed dreadful ravages; but were surprised according to these writers, by Petronas, the emperor's uncle, with the Christian forces, in the district of Lalacæon, not far from Ephesus, who put the khalif and his whole army to the sword, took his son prisoner, and returned in triumph to Constantinople. As this relation, however, contradicts the Moslem history in almost every particular, and as the authors here cited are not greatly to be depended upon in what they have related concerning the Moslem affairs, our impartial and intelligent readers will undoubtedly refuse their assent to the short account we have extracted from them of this expedition: for that Al Motawakkel fell in battle this year, is an opinion entirely repugnant to the whole tenor of Oriental history, which in a point

point of this nature most certainly merits greater attention than that of the Greeks. About the same time, a shower fell in the territory called Balah, of a very red colour. Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân marched with an army against the people of Navarre, ravaged the country about Pamplona, and made himself master of three fortresses near that place. In one of these he took prisoner a person of distinction, named Fortunius, whom he conducted to Corduba, kept him there twenty years, and at length sent him home loaded with presents worthy of the prince from whom they came. This Fortunius, as our historian informs us, attained the age of one hundred and twenty-six years. We are told, that a body of Arabs, named Fendârites, or Effendites, arrived in Sicily the present year *.

Next year, the khalif Al Motawakkel was assassinated in the following manner. Fatah Ebn Khâkâ and Abd'allah Ebn Yahya, finding him indisposed with an asthmatic disorder, endeavoured to dissuade him from officiating in the mosque at Sarra Manray, as he intended, the ensuing Friday; advising him to send his second son Al Mo'taz to perform the public service in his stead. The khalif complied so far with their advice as to decline going to the mosque himself, but at the same time appointed his eldest son Al Montaser to officiate for him. This appointment by no means pleasing his two favourites, who were suspicious of Al Montaser's ill designs, they persuaded him to go to the mosque himself the succeeding Friday, and shew himself to the people, in order to prevent all commotions that might be excited by his illness, which at that time was publicly known. He, therefore, mounted his horse, and went directly to the mosque, where he said the prayers, and preached to the people, as usual; then he returned to his palace of Jaafariâ, where he then resided. Upon his arrival, he ordered Al Montaser to appear before him, reproached him and his mother with the secret cabals in which they had been engaged, and threatened to make them both feel the effects of his resentment; and commanded the judges and counsellors who attended him likewise to reprove them. This rebuke so incensed Al Montaser, that he resolved upon his father's destruction, and engaged certain Turks, who were dissatisfied with the khalif's conduct, and some of his domestics, to assist him in the parricide;

Al Motawakkel assassinated.

* Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 151. Georg. Cedren. & Joan. Zonar. ubi supra. Ism. Abulfed. ad An. Hej. 246. Chron. Sic. Cant. & Joan. Bapt. Carus. ubi supra.

for the perpetration of which the following opportunity offered. Al Motawakkel having drank to excess with some of his courtiers, and particularly Fatah Ebn Khâkân, on Wednesday, the fourth day of the month Shawâl, Bagâ, Bager, or Bogâ the younger, his butler, at night entered the room, and commanded the company to go home; an injunction with which all of them complied, except Fatah Ebn Khâkân, and four others, who could not be prevailed upon to retire. In the mean time Al Montafer came to one of the palace-gates, which had been left open for him, and kept the porter, a Turk, whose name was Razâka, employed, by walking and talking with him, whilst the conspirators, appointed to assassinate the khalif, made the best of their way to the place where he was, with their scymitars drawn. As soon as they approached him, one of them, named Yaaz, immediately fell upon him, and cut off the hinder part of his shoulders; notwithstanding which violent assault, Al Motawakkel attempted to defend himself against the assassin, saying at the same time to him, "Be quiet, God cut off thy hand!" The other conspirators rushed in at once upon him. Fatah Ebn Khâkân said to them, "Wo be to you, this is the emperor of the faithful!" Bager, or Bogâ, replied, "Hold thy peace, thou enemy!" Fatah then threw himself upon his master, in order to screen him from the intended violence; but being dragged off by the assassins, he ran about the room like a madman, with his scymitar drawn in his hand, crying out with great vehemence, "Death! Death!" This behaviour so enraged them, that they instantly dispatched him, and then massacred Al Motawakkel without the least resistance. This deed being perpetrated, they waited upon Al Montafer, and saluted him khalif. Several causes have been assigned for this unnatural parricide by the Moslem writers: one pretends, that Al Montafer alleged, as a reason to excuse the perpetration of so horrid a fact, the hatred his father bore Ali and all his descendants. He also, says the same author, at last was afraid of his own life: for, Al Motawakkel once holding between his hands a scymitar that cost him ten thousand dinârs, said to Fatah Ebn Khâkân, "I should be glad to find a valiant man amongst my Turkish slaves, into whose hands I may put this scymitar, for the defence and preservation of my person." Fatah immediately answered him, "Here is Bager, the bravest of your Turks, who is worthy of receiving so valuable a present from your own hands." This Bager came by accident into the khalif's apartment the moment the conference

rence between him and Fatah began, when he received this sword, together with very large appointments, from Al Motawakkel. We are told, however, that he never drew it before the time he entered his master's chamber, and slew him with it. Other authors relate, that the khalif frequently entertained himself with some mischievous kinds of diversions, that were extremely disagreeable to the people about him; and that this disgust in all probability hastened his death. Sometimes he would order a lion to be let loose in the middle of the room where he was regaling his friends, which never failed of throwing them into a terrible consternation. At other times he would command his servants to put serpents privately under the table, and break pots full of scorpions in the middle of the hall where he had prepared a banquet for his favourites, without suffering any of them to rise from the table, or change his place; and when any of his friends were bit on such occasions by those venomous animals, he immediately expelled the poison by a theriacal medicine which he had prepared for that purpose. Whilst he was in the midst of one of these debauches, the Turkish slaves that had conspired against him entered the hall, with their scymitars drawn, and Bager at the head of them, according to some of the Persian historians; upon which, one of those at table, who first perceived them, but did not suspect any wicked design, said, in a facetious manner, "This is neither the day of lions, nor of serpents, nor of scorpions, but that of scymitars, or swords." Al Motawakkel no sooner heard him talk of scymitars, or swords, than he said, "What's that you would say?" Which words were scarce out of his mouth, when the conspirators fell upon him, and cut him to pieces. Fatah, continue these authors, endeavouring to defend him, and crying out "O Al Motawakkel, I will not survive you!" was likewise killed with the khalif, as has been already observed. That prince's buffoon, who had hid himself at the sight of the scymitars, hearing Fatah's last words, and observing what happened to him, said with a loud voice, "O Al Motawakkel, I should be very glad to live after you!" which expression he thought might induce them to let him make his escape. One writer of authority informs us, that Al Montaser was persuaded by the wise men about him to commit this parricide, because his father had been guilty of some enormities that merited such an end. Another assures us, that his cruelty to those persons of distinction, who were so unhappy as to

incur his displeasure, greatly contributed to it. These he enclosed in an iron stove, lined with pointed nails, which he caused to be heated more or less in proportion to the heinousness of the crime he intended to punish; and when any of them, upon finding himself in exquisite torture, said to him, "Have pity upon me," he replied, "Pity is nothing but a meanness of soul." It is affirmed by some authors, that Mohammed Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Ziyât, his visir, remained in such torture forty days before he expired. Another asserts, that Al Montaser's principal motive to desire his father's death, and to engage the Turks to dispatch him, was the opprobrious treatment he met with from him: for the khalif called his eldest son, by way of mockery and reproach, Montazher, or Montadher, instead of Montaser; by which nickname the former insinuated, that the latter lived in continual hopes of his death. Sometimes likewise Al Motawakkel would force the young prince to drink to excess, and then beat him with great violence: indeed, for what had scarce the appearance of a crime, he would make him undergo the most rigorous punishment. Lastly, we are given to understand by some of the Oriental historians, that Al Motawakkel's assassination was owing to the resentment of Wasif, the Turk, whom he had appointed captain of his guards, and consequently made him master of his person, and yet was so imprudent as to give him just cause of resentment; for he deprived him of some lands he possessed in the Persian Irâk, in order to bestow them upon Fatah Ebn Khâkân, his favourite and visir: but whatever was the true cause of this prince's violent death, it has been observed by the Moslem writers, not only that the conspiracy formed against him was discovered a little before Al Montaser caused it to be carried into execution, by one of his trusty slaves, but likewise that his tragical exit was clearly predicted to him about the same time by a most strange and wonderful dream.

*A farther
account of
this khalif's
famous
sword.*

It has been remarked upon the subject of the sword, or scymitar, the gift of Al Motawakkel to Bagher, by Al Bakhteri, that this khalif having heard much of the excellency of a sword in the city of Basra, wrote to the governor to purchase it for him, cost what it would; but the governor, upon enquiry, finding it had been sold, and sent into the province of Bahrein, informed the khalif that it was not in his power to procure it for him. Al Motawakkel, therefore, dispatched a courier thither to buy it at any price that should be demanded for it. His order

was executed, and, as soon as the sword came into his hands, he gave it to Bagher, with the following compliment: "Take this sword, I set no greater value upon it than I do upon you."

Another Oriental author has observed, that this khalif was slain by his son Al Montaser's order, upon the very spot where Khostrû Parviz, king of Persia, of the Sassanian race, had been assassinated by the command of his son Shiruyeh. His principal physician, Bakhtishua, having amassed great treasures, the khalif once invited himself to an entertainment at his house; where being regaled with the utmost magnificence, he conceived an aversion to him, especially as the immense wealth he had acquired by his master's favour and munificence had rendered him insolent and haughty. This induced that prince to send Al Hosein Ebn Al Mokhalled to seal up the rooms where his treasures and effects were deposited, and soon after to deprive him of them. Bakhtishua's disgrace happened in the year of the Hejra 244, and his death in the year 256. Besides Bakhtishua, another physician of considerable skill, named Abu Zeid Abd'alrahmân Honain Ebn Ishak Al Ebadi, a Christian likewise, flourished in the khalifat of Al Motawakkel. This physician was an Ebadian, that is one of those Christian Arabs known by the title of Servants of God, who were collected from different tribes, and settled in the Arabian, Babylonian, or Chaldæan Irâk, not far from the cities of Hira and Cûfa. Honain, whose father Ishak was an apothecary in the city of Hira, having in his youth an uncommon thirst after knowledge, went to the school of Yahya Ebn Mâfwiya, a celebrated physician of Baghdâd, for instruction, where he continued for some time; but meeting with contemptuous treatment from Yahya on a certain occasion, he retired into the territories of the Greek emperor, where he remained two years, and during that term not only learned the Greek language, but likewise made a fine collection of books, in order to forward his philosophical studies. After the expiration of that term he took a journey into Persia, from whence he went to Basra, a city of the Persian Irâk, where he attained great skill in Arabic, under the direction of Al

What physicians flourished in his time.

^f Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 151, 152. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 261, 262. Aut. Tarikh. Al Abbâs, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, Jamal'oddin, Mohammed Al Awki, Mirkhond, Bakhteri, Eutych. ubi sup. p. 454, 455.

Khalil Ebn Ahmed, and then returned to Baghdaḍ. Here he soon grew so celebrated, that Gabriel Ebn Bakhtishua, universally esteemed for his knowledge, declared to Yusef, another physician, that he would surpass in every branch of learning Sergius of Rafo'lain, or Rās alain, the prodigy of the age, who translated many of the Greek authors into Syriac. His fame soon reaching the ears of Al Motawakkel, that prince sent for him, and was so pleased with his conversation, that he was determined to settle a pension upon him. However, as he had resided two years in the Greek emperor's dominions, suspecting that he might be carrying on some sinister designs for that monarch, he was afraid at first to trust him, and therefore, in order to try him, after he had ordered him to be clothed in a sumptuous robe, and assigned him a yearly appointment of fifty thousand dinārs, he commanded him to prepare a subtle poison, with which he might destroy one of his enemies in so private a manner that no one could suspect him to be the author of his death. This task Honain refused to undertake, telling the khalif, that he could only prepare medicines which would be beneficial to mankind; however, he assured that prince, in order to gain time, that he would study the nature of poisons, if he could once understand that such a study would prove agreeable to him. The khalif not being able, either by promises or menaces, to prevail upon him to do what he desired, sent him immediately to prison, where he kept him confined a whole year; at the end of which period he ordered him to be brought before him, and threatened him with immediate death, if he persisted in his refusal to obey his commands: but he still remained inflexible; a circumstance which so pleased Al Motawakkel, that he bid him be of good courage, and told him, that he should now repose the greatest confidence in him. Afterwards, demanding what could inspire him with such an amazing resolution, when death, as it were, stared him in the face? "Two things (replied Honain), my religion and my profession. The former commands me to do good to my enemies, and much more not to hurt my friends. The latter was instituted solely for the benefit and advantage of mankind, and at my entrance upon it, I took a solemn oath never to be concerned in any mischievous or lethiferous preparations." This answer charmed the khalif, who made him a present of a rich vest, together with a very considerable sum of money; so that he seemed to be,
for

for some time, one of the happiest of mortals, as he enjoyed so large a share of Al Motawakkel's favour. However, Al Tifuri, a Christian, envying his prosperity, found means to accuse him of prophaneness and infidelity to the khalif, and to excite the superior clergy to a prosecution, which terminated in excommunication. This so affected Honain, that he died suddenly the following night; having, as was generally believed, put a period to his days by poison. He left behind him two sons, Dawd and Ishak; the latter applied himself to the study of philosophy, and translated some of the best Greek writers, and the former practised physic, after his father's death, amongst the lower sort of people. He had likewise a nephew, named Hobaiish Ebn Al Afam, who had an excellent talent at translations, inasmuch that his Arabic version of several Greek and Syriac authors has been justly admired by many learned men of the East, and by some of them even ascribed to Honain himself. This celebrated physician, according to Ebn Shohnah, translated into Arabic Euclid and Ptolemy's Almagest, which were afterwards revised and corrected by Thâbet Ebn Korra the Sabian. His scholars are also said to have translated into the same language the greatest part of the works of Galen and Hippocrates, and to have published this version under their master's name. Some writers likewise ascribe to him and his son the Arabic translation of Aristotle's Analytics, and his treatise of Interpretation, intitled by the Arabs Anoluthica and Bari Arminias; which words are manifest corruptions of the Greek. In the French king's library, No. 866, several of Honain's pieces, namely, the Kefaiat Al Naik, the Hawashi Messail Al Hakim Honain, &c. are still preserved.

The reign of this khalif is called by the Oriental historians the Reign of Prodigies, on account of the earthquakes in various parts of the world during that period, and the strange effects they produced, some of which have been already described: besides which, many others, and particularly one of Kairwân, the Cyrenaica of the ancients, where the earth opened and swallowed up a vast number of people, as also another in Yaman, during which a large ploughed field was carried from the top of a hill to a place at a considerable distance from it, without losing an inch of ground, have been mentioned by Ebn Juzi. We are likewise informed by Ebn Abu'l Weza, that a strange bird, larger than a raven, perched upon a tree in the same country, and, in the hearing of many people, distinctly pronounced the following words,

Many prodigies in this prince's reign.

words, "Serve and fear God, God, God," which it repeated at least forty times, and then flew away; but soon after returned, and pronounced the same words forty times more. The truth and reality of which facts were attested by five hundred persons who heard them, and were brought before Al Motawakkel for that purpose. Ebn Al Jala also writes, that in Kuzestân a bird placed itself upon the bier of a man, whom some of his neighbours were carrying to his grave, and cried out in the language of that province, "Almighty God have mercy upon this person, and all that assist in his interment." The water of the Tigris likewise, at Baghdâd, once in this prince's reign, continued for three days together as yellow as melted gold, and then assumed the colour of blood, which remained a much longer time. At Somida, a small town in Egypt, it hailed stones of a monstrous size, every one of which weighed ten Arab pounds. Nor was the nature of these stones less wonderful than their dimensions; for an Arab having taken one of them in order to make a fire with it in his tent, so violent a flame immediately issued out of it, that the whole tent, and every thing combustible in it, were consumed in an instant. Some of these stones are said to have been preserved at Kairo, or Al Kahirah, and Betlis in Georgia, a long time after. A Persian author relates, that two men in Egypt having been struck down to the ground by lightning about the same time, they both continued black from head to foot all the remaining part of their lives, without having received any other damage².

*He issued
two edicts
against the
Christians.*

This khalif issued two severe edicts against the Christians settled in the Moslem empire, one of which has been considered as the effect of his resentment against Bakhtishua, his physician, who professed the Christian religion; though he seems to have prosecuted the followers and descendents of Ali with a much greater degree of violence. In his reign, Theophilus, the Greek emperor, ordered all the images of saints in the churches to be destroyed; an order which induced Sophronius, the patriarch of Alexandria, and Abu Korra, an Arab, to write in defence of image-worship; though others, with an invincible strength of reasoning, maintained the contrary opinion. The former of these learned men sent a letter to the em-

² Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. &c. ubi sup. Eben Juzi, Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 162—164. Ebn Abu'l Weza, Ebn Al Jala, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'al Jaafar Al Kazwini,

peror,

peror, containing the reasons that obliged him to condemn his conduct in that particular; which, according to some, had such an effect upon the prince, that he immediately revoked his former edict. Sophronius died of a dropsy, in the 233d year of the Hejra, and was succeeded by Michael, a native of Alexandria, who sat in that patriarchal see, according to Eutychius, about twenty-four years. The same author relates, that the emperor had a dislike given him to images by the pious fraud of a priest, who by means of a leaden tube, made the people believe, that the breasts of an image of the virgin Mary dropped milk; which pretended miracle procured from the populace an uncommon degree of reverence for that image, and no small accession of wealth to the priest himself: but the imposture being detected, the emperor was so incensed, that he commanded him to be beheaded, and forbad his subjects to worship either the images or pictures of saints; which, for some time, he considered as gross idolatry. This event seems to have preceded a few years the khalif's first edict against the Christians; and not long after the emperor had abolished the worship of images, he relapsed into that species of idolatry. This relapse probably excited the khalif to discover an aversion to the Christians in the year of the Hejra 235. For the disgrace of Bakhtishua happened in the year of the Hejra 244; and therefore could not occasion the publication of the aforesaid edict, notwithstanding what may be insinuated to the contrary by Eutychius, who, perhaps, industriously concealed the true cause of that affair ^h.

Al Motawakkel in his person, was tall, of a thin habit of body, and had a swarthy complexion. He had, however, a handsome face, in which a reddish and yellowish hue appeared, a middling beard, and eyes of a large size. As to his disposition, he was, if we may believe Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, extremely affable, munificent, and of great condescension. He was also a great encourager of learned men, inasmuch that prodigious numbers of them resorted to his court.

*Description
of Al Motawakkel's
person, and
character.*

The khalif Al Motawakkel reigned fourteen years and seven months, according to Abu'l-Faraj; or fourteen years nine months and nine days, if we believe Eutychius; or,

*Some farther
particulars
relating to
him.*

^h D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Motawakkel, p. 640. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 262, 263. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 448-453. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 152, 153.

lastly,

lastly, fourteen years ten months and three days, if we chuse to admit what has been advanced by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari. By the authority of the first and last of these authors, he was forty years of age at the time of his death; but Eutychius makes him to have been forty-four years old when that tragical event happened. In the tenth year of his khalifat, he made Sâlmûn Ebn Zarkûn patriarch of Jerusalem, who sat in that see about five years. The first of his visirs was Mohammed Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Ziyât; after whose death, Mohammed Ebn Al Fadl Al Jorjani was called to that high post; and, lastly, Al Jorjâni was succeeded by Abd'allah Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâkân, who, as some writers relate, was the khalif's principal secretary of state. The first employed by this prince in the capacity of judge was Yahya Ebn A'iem, whom he disgraced, and deprived of all the money he had acquired, which amounted to the sum of one hundred thousand dinârs. After Yahya's disgrace, he advanced to that honourable employment Jaafar Ebn Mohammed Al Barhami, and then Jaafar Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Jaafar Al Hâshema. He removed from the exalted post that had been conferred upon him Ahmed Ebn Dawd, who had been so instrumental in his elevation to the khalifat. The first captain of his guards was Ishak Ebn Ibrahim, and the second Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, who was sent for out of Khorasân. His first chamberlain was Wasîf, the Turk, his second Sa'ih Ebn Sâled, and his third Bagâ, or Bogâ, the Turk. The first day of his reign was Thursday, and the last Wednesday. The inscription of his seal was, "In God is my trust." It has been already observed, that Fatah Ebn Khakân, his principal favourite, was assassinated with him¹.

S E C T. IV.

From the Elevation of Al Montaser to the Khalifat, to the Death of Al Mo'taded.

Al Montaser saluted khalif.

THE same night on which Al Motawakkel was massacred, the assassins saluted his son Mohammed Abu Jaafar Al Montaser, or, as he is commonly called, Al Montaser Bi'llah, khalif. Next morning the new emperor

¹ Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 261. Eutych. ubi sup. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 151. Ism. Abu'fed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 247. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 641, 642.

of the faithful assembled all the great officers of the court, and the principal inhabitants of the city of Al Jaafariâ, built by the late khalif, and ordered Ahmed Ebn Al Khasib to read a declaration he had caused to be drawn up, importing that he had no hand in his father's death, but that this ought to be imputed to his favourite Fatah Ebn Khakân, whom he ordered to be cut to pieces for being guilty of such an atrocious a crime. After which recital, he was inaugurated, and all the persons of distinction present took the oath of allegiance to him. His mother Habasha, one of Al Motawakkel's concubines, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, was of Greek extraction. Soon after his inauguration, he demolished the palace Al Jaafariâ, erected by his father, and retired into Samarra, or Sarra Manray, where he resided during the remainder of his short reign. Some of the Moslem writers pretend, that Al Montaser, not long after his accession, looking upon a piece of tapestry curiously wrought, discovered thereon a person on horseback with a diadem about his head, and round it a Persian inscription, which he commanded a Persian then belonging to his court to explain. The Persian, continue these authors, would willingly have evaded obeying the khalif's command; but finding this impracticable, he told Al Montaser, that the horseman he saw was Shirûyeh, the son of Khostrû Parvîz, who slew his father; and that the inscription was to the following effect, "I am Shirûyeh, the son of Khostrû Parvîz, who slew my father, and reigned only six months." Al Montaser no sooner heard these words than he changed countenance; considering the whole affair as ominous, and amounting to a prediction that his reign should not exceed that term. Which prediction, if we believe the Arab historians, met with a full and absolute completion. We must not forget to remark, that Al Mondar, the son of Mohammed, khalif of Spain, invaded the province of Alava, where he routed the Christian forces, and brought a great number of heads with him to Corduba; and that Al Abbâs, the second Agabite emir of Sicily, who was succeeded by his son Abd'allah Ebn Al Abbâs, elected by the people emir, till the khalif of Kairwân's pleasure was known, died in the year of the Hejra 247^k.

^k Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 151, 153, 154. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi. sup. p. 267. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 456, 457. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Montasser, p. 622. Roderic. Tole-tan. Hist. Arab. cap. xxvii. p. 24.

*He excludes
his brothers
from the
succession.*

Next year being the 248th of the Moslem æra, Bogâ Al Kabîr, Bogâ Al Saghîr, Bagher, or Bager, Wasif, and the other officers of the Turkish guards, concerned in the assassination of Al Motawakkel, held a council amongst themselves, and, in order to avoid being brought to condign punishment for the perpetration of so horrid a crime, resolved to oblige the new khalif to exclude his brothers Al Mo'taz, or rather Al Motazz, and Al Mowaiad from the succession; being convinced that either of those princes would revenge his father's death, if ever he should ascend the Moslem throne. But the khalif's brothers, having been informed of the violence with which they were threatened, went to Al Montaser, and resigned with a good grace their right to the crown after his decease. This is the account given us by some of the Persian historians; though the Arab writers represent this resignation, or abdication, as the effects of compulsion. Be that as it may, the khalif immediately communicated this event to Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher Ebn Hosein, the commandant of Baghdâd; intimating at the same time, that the two princes themselves desired to be permitted always to live a private life, as their abilities were by no means equal to the government of so large and extensive an empire. Nevertheless, he considered the Turkish officers, who had imbrued their hands in his father's blood, as the principal authors of this measure; and even told his brothers themselves, in the very presence of those officers, that they had impelled him to that unnatural measure. Some historians relate, that the rich tapestry, which threw Al Montaser into such a consternation, was found in his father's wardrobe, and had formerly belonged to the ancient kings of Persia¹.

Al Montaser dies.

Al Montaser, not long after his elevation to the khalifat, saw his father Al Motawakkel in a dream, who reproached him with his parricide, and told him, that he should not long enjoy the fruits of his wickedness, in the following terms: "Mohammed, thou hast killed me; thou hast oppressed me; thou hast deprived me of the khalifat, which thou shalt in a short time leave, and then enter into eternal fire." The dream so intimidated the khalif, that he immediately awaked in the utmost terror, burst out into tears, and made the palace resound with his lamentations.

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 154, 155. D'Herb. Bibl. Orient. ubi sup. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. et Eutyck. ubi sup. Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, Khondemir.

This

This clamour soon alarmed Abd'allah Ebn Amru, to whom he related his frightful dream; who told him that these nocturnal horrors were only the effects of his waking thoughts, and bad him slight them as much as possible. He advised him to take a chearful glass, and to drive away all pensive thoughts by a succession of his favourite diversions; which he accordingly for some time attempted to do. But notwithstanding all these efforts, he gradually fell into a deep melancholy, which at last put a period to his days; though he died of a squinancy on Sunday the fifth of the Latter Rabi, according to Abu'l-Faraj, after he had been ill only three days. Some authors pretend that he was carried off by poison; and others, by an ulcer in his head, caused by dropping some oil into one of his ears. Another writer assures us that he died of a fever; of which when his physician said he could easily cure him, he replied, "I greatly fear this will be the last sickness I shall ever have, as I saw a person in a dream last night, who declared to me that I should die in the twenty-fifth year of my age." The death of this khalif happened at Sarra Manray, where, from the sixth day of his short reign, he chose to reside¹.

Mirkhond remarks, that this khalif was extremely liberal to his friends; of which disposition he gives us the following singular instance. One of his officers being returned from Egypt, where he had acquitted himself honourably in an office he was intrusted with, and entertaining his master with an account of the various adventures he had experienced in that country, amongst other things told him, that he had brought from thence with him a wounded heart, because he could not purchase, for want of money, a female slave of exquisite beauty and a most charming voice. The khalif heard him without making any reply; but being determined to gratify him, he gave orders privately to the governor of Egypt to buy that slave, and send her to Samarra as soon as possible. Upon her arrival, she was immediately conducted to the palace; whither the khalif invited the officer a few days after, in order to rally him upon his amour. He no sooner appeared in his master's presence, than he heard the voice of his beloved slave in the next room; which threw him instantly into a violent agitation. The khalif asked him the reason of his confusion, and whether he knew the voice he

A remarkable story of him.

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 154, 155. D'Herb. Bibl. Orient. ubi supra. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj et Eutych. ubi supra. Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'al Jaafar Al Kazwini, Khondemir.

heard? Upon which, he frankly owned, that he took it to be the voice of the beautiful slave he had formerly mentioned. Al Montafer then demanded, whether he still preserved his affection for her? He answered, that as he could not entertain the least hopes of ever possessing her, he ought to lay aside his passion for her, especially as she was become his master's property. The khalif then very generously replied, "I can assure you with an oath, that I have purchased this beautiful slave in Egypt for no other person than yourself, and that I have only cast one glance at her since her arrival in the palace." Which words were no sooner uttered than he commanded her to be put into the officer's hands, adorned with all those jewels he had given her, in order to make the present more valuable ^m.

*A pleasant
occurrence
in his
reign.*

It was in this khalif's reign that an Arab, who dwelt on a hill in the neighbourhood of Mecca, held unlawful assemblies at his house, in order to debauch the youth of both sexes, whom he suffered to mix together promiscuously, in direct opposition to the Mohammedan laws. This man was brought before the judge of Mecca, who, after he had reproached him with his unparalleled impudence in daring to be guilty of such lewdness so near the holy place, began immediately to draw up his process; not doubting in the least of the truth of a fact which was become so notorious to all the people of the territory of Mecca. But as none of his accomplices would appear against him, the judge found himself greatly embarrassed for want of evidence. However, he at last devised an expedient, which he thought would infallibly convict him; and that was to try whether any of those public beasts made use of by the people who set out every day from one particular place to that part of the mountain where this Arab lived, would of themselves find the way to his house. The experiment was made on some asses, the beasts principally used in this country, which went directly to the spot inhabited by the Arab, though this was of itself extremely difficult to be discovered. The judge having now, as he imagined, full proof of his guilt, sent for the executioner to chastise him, who immediately appeared with the whips, or scourges, in his hand. The Arab, who did not want wit, bethought himself of a pleasant trick, in order to avoid the chastisement with which he was threatened. Turning to the judge, he said, "When you have flayed me alive with your whips, you will have punished only one guilty person; but, by such an action,

^m Mirkhond.

you

you will reflect an eternal ignominy upon the whole Arab nation; for it will be ever said of them hereafter, that, when the evidence of men could not be produced, they admitted that of asses." The company were so pleased with the humour of the man, that it was the opinion of every one present, that he ought to be pardoned; so that he was instantly dismissed, without having any punishment at all inflicted upon him^a.

With regard to his person, Al Montaser was of a middle stature, and had very large black eyes. He had also an aquiline nose, a majestic mien, a large beard, was extremely fat, and of a fair complexion. He is reported to have been naturally brave, prudent, and just, but too great a lover of money. Some of the Arab writers observe, that he had a taste for poetry, and made tolerable good verses, a specimen of which has been preserved by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari. He reigned only six months, and had scarce completed the twenty-fifth year of his age, though Eutychius supposes him to have been three years older, at the time of his death. Not only the lower sort of people, but even the grandees themselves, publicly reported, from his first advancement to the Moslem throne, that he would not reign longer than six months, the time that Shirûyeh, the son of Khofrû Parvîz, survived his father; a circumstance which renders it probable that he was poisoned, as we find asserted by some of the Arab historians. He favoured the house of Ali, and permitted the Shiites to visit Al Hosein's tomb. His vizir was Ahmed Ebn Al Khasîb, the captain of his guards Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, his judge Jaafar Al Abbâsi, and his first chamberlain Abu Nâser, the Turk. The first day of his reign was either Wednesday or Thursday, and the last Saturday. The inscription of his seal was, "The person who endeavours to avoid fear necessarily takes it to him." He died, and was interred at Sarra Manray, where a beautiful sepulchre was erected to his memory by his mother^o.

*Description
of his per-
son and
character.*

The day after Al Montaser's death the two Bogâs, father and son, Atâmesh, and the other principal Turkish officers, who had been concerned in the murder of Al Motawakkel, assembled in that part of the metropolis denominated Al Haruniâ, and, after coming to a resolution never to vest with the imperial dignity any of that prince's sons, lest they should be called to an account for their

*He is suc-
ceeded by
Al Mof-
ta'in.*

^a D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. ubi supra, p. 622, 623. ^o Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 135. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. Eutych. et Abulfed. ubi supra. D'Herbel. ubi supra.

former villainy, unanimously elevated to the khalifat Ahmed Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Mohammed Ebn Al Mo'tasem, who was surnamed Al Mosta'in, or Al Mosta'in Bi'llah. This step was taken to the prejudice of Al Mo'tazz, second son to the khalif Al Motawakkel, to whom the right of succession most evidently belonged. But the Turkish faction having acquired a great degree of power, by the credit which Boga Al Kabir, Boga Al Saghir, Wasif, Bagher, or Bager, and their other chiefs, had obtained in all the provinces, they carried all before them; insomuch that Al Mo'tazz's party was entirely borne down, and Al Mosta'in, whose mother Mahârif, or, as others call her, Makhârek, had served his father in the capacity of concubine, soon found himself in peaceable possession of the empire, and was universally acknowledged the sole, true, and lawful khalif.

An ineffectual attempt made by Al Mo'tazz's friends.

The election of the new khalif happened on Monday the sixth day of the Latter Rabî, in the year of the Hejra 248, he being then, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, about twenty-eight years of age, and receiving at the same time from the electors the surname of Al Mosta'in Bi'llah. As soon as the election was over he appointed Atâmeh his vizir or wazir, and Ahmed Ebn Al Khasib his secretary of state. The day following he shewed himself to the people in his imperial robes; but the khalif no sooner appeared than there suddenly assembled a body of fifty horse and a thousand foot, with their scymitars drawn, crying out, "Long live Al Mo'tazz!" upon which a very severe conflict ensued: but all Mo'tazz's friends being at last defeated, and for the most part cut to pieces, Al Mosta'in was fixed upon the Moslem throne. That prince no sooner found himself without a competitor than he sent to prison Al Mo'tazz and Al Mowaiad, the khalif Al Motawakkel's sons. About this time Yakub Ebn Al Leit, or Al Lit, marched from Sejestân towards Herât with a considerable body of troops, and the people of Hems drove the khalif's governor out of the town. We must not forget to observe, that the citizens of Merida, the ancient Emerita, rebelled this year against Mohammed, the khalif of Spain, who advanced against them with a powerful army, obliged them to surrender at discretion, destroyed their bridge, dismantled their city, forced them to send a number of hostages to Corduba, and, in order the more effectually to keep them to their duty, left amongst them a detachment of his troops^p.

^p Khondemir, Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, & Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra.

In the course of the following year, being the 249th of the Hejra, the Greeks overthrew the Arabs at Marj Al Askaf, and put Omar Ebn Abd'allah Al Aktah, their general, together with a great number of his men, to the sword; a victory which enabled them to make incursions into the Moslem territories, as far as the borders of Mesopotamia. The Turkish troops also in the khalif's service mutinied, and cut to pieces Atâmesh, Al Mosta'in's visir, and Seja' Ebn Al Hâtem, another person of distinction, belonging to the court. They also plundered Atâmesh's house, and carried off with them an immense treasure. To these outrages they were excited by Wasif and Bogâ, their leaders, who were dissatisfied with Atâmesh's conduct; he having, at least as they pretended, excited the khalif against them, and excluded them from a share in the administration. These enormities occasioned a rebellion at Baghdâd, where the populace assembled in great numbers, burnt one of the bridges over the Tigris, and demolished the other, opened all the prisons in that city, pillaged the houses of the wealthiest inhabitants, and distributed the money that fell into their hands on this occasion amongst the forces posted for the defence of the frontiers, at a considerable distance from the town. The troops likewise in garrison at Baghdâd, enraged at the Turkish insolence, about the same time committed great disorders.

The Turkish troops in the khalif's service mutiny.

In the 250th year of the Hejra Yahya Ebn Omar Ebn Yahya, of the house of Ali, assembled a body of troops at Cûfa, and declared his intention to dethrone Al Mosta'in. Upon advice of this revolt the khalif sent Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâ'her Ebn Al Hosein with an army against Yahya, who coming up with him near Cûfa, attacked him with such bravery, that he put his forces to flight. Yahya himself was killed in the action, and his head sent by Mohammed to Al Mosta'in, who caused it to be exposed to the view of the people in one of the most public places of Sarra Manray. This defeat, and the death of Yahya, extinguished the rebellion in the Arabian Irâk. The troubles, however, still continued at Baghdâd.

A rebellion breaks out at Cûfa.

Some of the authors followed by M. D'Herbelot relate, that Hasân Ebn Yezid, another chief of the house of Ali, rebelled against the khalif, and seized upon the province of Tabrestân. This usurper, according to those writers, remained master of that province nineteen years, and left it to his brother Mohammed Kasem, or Kassem, who succeeded him, and kept possession of it eighteen years, without any molestation from the khalifs. About this time

Another rebellion in Tabrestân.

the people of Hems killed Al Fadl Ebn Karân, the khalif's governor of that city; but they were defeated by Mûsa Ebn Boga Al Kabir, his successor, who put a great number of them to the sword, and laid their city in ashes. The Moslems reduced the city of Neetum, the Noto of the moderns, called by the Arabs Natis, in Sicily^q.

*Al Mosta'in
flies to
Baghdâd.*

In the year of the Hejra 251, the first day of which was coincident with February 2, 865, the Turks, who had made themselves masters of all the forces of the empire, and entirely influenced the khalif's counsels, were divided into two powerful factions. Bagher, or Bager, one of their leaders, having had some dispute with Wasîf, another of them, applied to the khalif for justice, who was so far from complying with his request, that he openly favoured his antagonist. This partiality so exasperated Bagher, that he assembled his friends with a resolution to assassinate Wasîf and depose Al Mosta'in, in order to elevate another khalif who should be more favourable to his views; but this conspiracy being discovered, the khalif caused Bagher to be arrested in the imperial palace, of which step the Turks being apprized, immediately took up arms, under the pretext of delivering their general out of his enemies hands. This mutiny obliged Al Mosta'in to hold an extraordinary council, at which Wasîf and Bogâ, two of the other Turkish commanders, assisted; who being interested in Bagher's destruction, advised the khalif to put him to death. This advice was instantly listened to, Al Mosta'in thinking by that execution to appease the seditious spirit of the Turkish soldiery; but it produced a quite contrary effect: for the Turks being rendered more furious by the death of their chief, pillaged the city of Sarra Manray, and threatened to set fire to the palace, if Wasîf and Bogâ, who had been the authors of their general's death, were not immediately delivered into their hands. Those officers seeing themselves reduced to such an extremity, could find no other expedient at that critical juncture to avoid the fury of their own troops, than to carry off their master with them to Baghdâd; a design which they accordingly put in execution. The mutineers being informed of what had happened, repented of the violence they had committed, and sent deputies after Al Mosta'in to intreat him to return to his capital; but Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, the commandant of Baghdâd,

^q D'Herbel. ubi supra. Abulfed. ubi supra. Chron. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiens. apud Joan. Baptist. Carus. ubi supra, p. 6. Phil. Cluver. Sicil. Antiq. lib. ii. p. 357.

being

being extremely pleased that he had got the khalif in his hands, and hating the Turks, as did also both the garrison and people of Baghdâd, obliged them to return to Sarra Manray, without having seen the khalif. This insult so irritated the Turks, that they had again recourse to arms, by their own authority deposed Al Mosta'in, and placed Al Mo'tazz, Al Montaser's brother, whom they released from prison for that purpose, upon the Moslem throne. This year the Christians worsted the Moslems in an action by sea off Syracuse, and took four of their ships.

The khalif Al Mo'tazz, after he had settled himself upon the Moslem throne, sent his brother Ahmed Ebn Motawakkel with an army to besiege Baghdâd. Ahmed began his march from Samarra, or Sarra Manray, on the 23d of the month Al Moharram, and, upon his arrival at Baghdâd, invested the place in form. His army, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, was not extremely numerous, the principal part of it consisting of no more than five thousand Turkish and Faraonian, or Egyptian horse, and two thousand Magrebian, or western Arabs; though if we credit Abulfeda, it amounted to fifty thousand men. Al Mosta'in for some time defended himself with great bravery, made several successful sallies on the besiegers, and destroyed a considerable number of their troops; and he would, in all probability, have forced Ahmed to abandon the siege, had he not been betrayed by those in whom he was obliged to confide; for Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, the commandant of Baghdâd, in order to provide for his own security, proposed an accommodation to Ahmed, which was at last concluded upon the following terms: that Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher should remain in peaceable possession of his government; and that Al Mosta'in, on condition his life was granted, should abdicate the khalifat. Some of the Arab historians relate, that Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher being informed that Al Mosta'in had engaged Boga and Wasif to assassinate him, came to an immediate resolution to desert the party of that prince. Be that, however, as it may, as soon as Al Mo'tazz had signed and ratified the aforesaid treaty, Al Mosta'in formally renounced all pretensions to the khalifat, and contented himself with living a private life in the magnificent palace of Hasân Ebn Sohal at Baghdâd, which was assigned him for his residence. He was afterwards removed to Al Hasân Ebn Waheb's palace at Basra, and closely confined. From thence he was sent to Wâset, and committed to the custody of Ahmed Ebn To-

*Al Mo-
sta'in's ab-
dication
and death.*

lun; who, as some assert, murdered him by the khalif's command, in the month Shawâl of the same year. Others affirm that Sa'id, Al Mo'tazz's principal chamberlain, dispatched him at Kadefia, cut off his head, and immediately sent it as an agreeable present to his master. And lastly, others believe that he was cut off by Sa'id, Al Mo'tazz's visir, soon after his abdication, in the imperial city of Sarra Manray. Those who make Ahmed Ebn Tolun his executioner, relate, that his head was transmitted to the khalif at Sarra Manray; and that when the messenger appeared with it in that prince's presence, he was playing at chess, and would not even look at it till he had finished his game; after which he for some time beheld it with great pleasure, and then ordered it to be buried. Al Mosta'in reigned three years, nine months, and a few days, if we believe the Arab historians; though his reign has likewise been extended by Khondemir to the length of almost four years. With regard to his person, Al Mosta'in was fat, of a comely aspect, and had a black beard. As to his disposition, he was mild, indolent, extremely timid, and entirely governed by the people about him. His first visir was Atâmesh, and his secretary of state Ahmed Ebn Al Khasib. His favourites Wasîf and Bogâ, who at last deserted him, had an uncommon ascendant over him. His general Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher abandoned his interests in the manner already related. In the last year of his reign Sanitius is said to have been advanced to the patriarchate of Alexandria, and to have presided over that church eleven years. In the first year of his khalifat, Theodorus, called by the Arabs Al Moklâti, was also constituted patriarch of Jerusalem, and filled that see nineteen years^r.

*A rebellion
in Tabrestân.*

It was at this junction that Al Hasfan Ebn Zeid Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ismael, of the posterity of Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, rebelled against the khalif in Tabrestân, and subdued that province. Several bloody engagements happened between him and Solimân Ebn Abd'allah, Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Thâher's lieutenant. But at last Solimân entirely defeated him, put a vast number of his followers to the sword, and obliged him to fly with great precipitation into Deylam.

Another pretender, an Arab of Al Thalabiya, named Al Hasfan Ebn Ahmed Ebn Ismael Ebn Ibrahim, one of

^r Abu Jaafar. Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 157, 158, 159. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. & Eutych. ubi supra. Khondemir, D'Herbel. ubi supra, p. 631, 632.

Ali's descendents, assumed the sovereignty in Deylam, routed the forces sent against him, and possessed himself of their camp. Not content with this success, he penetrated to Medina, drove the governor out of the town, and obliged the inhabitants to open their gates to him. From Medina he marched at the head of his troops to Mecca, and besieged that city two months; but finding himself not able to carry the place, he retired to Jodda, cut off all communication between the Meccans and that port, and so infested the roads, that it was not safe to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca. However, he soon returned, massacred great numbers of the citizens who were assembled on mount Arafat, on the ninth of Dhu'lhajja, in order to perform their devotions; and forced many others, after he had plundered them, to abandon the place before they had gone through the prescribed ceremonies. But death soon put an end to all his towering projects, and dispersed his numerous followers in such a manner, that not the faintest traces of this rebellion ever afterwards appeared.

A rebellion in Deylam and Arabia.

Upon the abdication of Al Mosta'in, Mohammed Abu Abdallah Al Mo'tazz Ebn Al Motawakkel was unanimously acknowledged emperor of the Moslems, on the fourth of Al Moharram, in the year of the Hejra 252; both the Turks and the Arabs, without the least scruple, recognizing his authority. His mother's name was Fatiha. When he was fixed upon the throne, without any danger of a competitor, he called his brother Al Mowaiad again to the succession; though he soon after, upon bare suspicion only, deprived him of his right, and sent him to prison. It is true, Al Mowaiad had a strong party in the empire, which would undoubtedly have declared for him, had he intended to undertake any thing against the khalif. Notwithstanding, he was guilty of no crime; which was the case of Al Mowaffek, another of his brothers, who soon after fell under the same disgrace.

Al Mo'tazz elected khalif.

The news of Al Mowaiad's confinement no sooner transpired, than the whole body of the Turkish troops began to be in motion, and publicly declared that they would release him. This commotion so excited Al Mo'tazz's jealousy, that he ordered him to be privately murdered in prison, in such a manner, that no marks of violence could be discovered upon him; so that when the body was exposed to the view of the judges, doctors of the law, nobility, and Turkish officers, they unanimously agreed that this prince died a natural death^s.

He orders his brother to be privately murdered in prison.

^s Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 269.

*The new
khalif ca-
resses the
Turks out
of jear.*

The khalif, upon his accession, confirmed Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher, in the possession of the territories assigned him, and the government of Baghdâd, in conformity to the promise he had made him before his elevation to the khalifat. He likewise came to a resolution to cut off the chiefs of the Turkish soldiery, whose exorbitant power had proved so fatal to his three immediate predecessors. But he was dissuaded from carrying that design into execution by Mohammed Ebn Abdallah Ebn Thâher, who represented the dangerous consequences of it in so strong a light, that, instead of punishing Wasîf, Bagher, and the other Turkish commanders, as he had intended, he heaped new favours upon them, and gave them several additional employments, which greatly augmented the power they had already acquired. He likewise deprived Yezid Ebn Abd'allah of the government of Egypt, which post he had enjoyed about eleven years, and sent Mazâhem Ebn Khâkâm to preside over that country in his room. About this time the Moslems retook Neetum, or Noto, in Sicily, after it had fallen again into the hands of the Christians.

*The Turks
mutiny
and cut to
pieces their
general.*

In the following year, being the 253d of the Hejra, the Turkish troops in Sarra Manray mutinied for want of their pay; upon which, Wasif, their general, in order to appease the sedition, expostulated with them about their breach of duty in very sharp terms. But this remonstrance was so far from producing the desired effect, that it proved fatal to him. Those insolent troops first grossly abused him, for his laudable attempt to reclaim them to a sense of their duty by words only; and then some of the most guilty of them, suddenly rushing upon him, cut him to pieces.

*Al Mo'-
tazz ba-
nishes his
brother
Ahmed.*

The khalif Al Mo'tazz banished his brother Ahmed Ebn Al Motawakkel, called by some writers Al Mowaffek, and by others Abu Ahmed, to Wâset, or, according to Eutychius, to Basra, because he seemed to lament his brother Al Mowaiad's death. He afterwards, however, permitted him to reside in the eastern part of the territory of Baghdâd. The famous general Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher departed this life at Baghdâd, the fourteenth of Dhu'lkaada; and the following night, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, there happened a remarkable lunar eclipse. The Moslems of Sicily, if we believe the Cambridge Chronicon, reduced a second time the city of Ragusa^t.

^t Khondemir, Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, Al Makin, ubi sup. Eutych. ubi sup. Abulfed. ad. an. Hej. 253. Chron. Sic. Arab. Cantab. et Carus. ubi sup.

The 254th year of the Hejra, beginning January 1st, 868, had like to have proved fatal to the khalif Al Mo'tazz. Bogâ, the Turk, surnamed the Elder, in order to distinguish him from a younger officer of the same name, observing an alteration in the khalif's conduct towards him, according to the writers followed by M. D'Herbelot, left the court abruptly, and retired to Mawfel. But he was no sooner gone, than a party of the khalif's guards pillaged his house. Upon receiving advice of this outrage, Bogâ marched at the head of a body of troops he had raised towards Sarra Manray, under pretence of chastising the seditious foldiers in that capital, but in reality with a resolution to be revenged on the khalif. That prince, who was not ignorant of the Turk's ill designs, commanded Al Walîd, the Magrebian, or western Arab (so the African Moslems were called) to meet him with a powerful army, and give him battle wherever he should find him. The Magrebian executed his master's orders with such success, that, after a sharp engagement, he defeated the rebels, and took Bogâ himself prisoner. The news of this signal victory no sooner reached Al Mo'tazz, than he dispatched an express with orders to Al Walîd to cut off his prisoner's head.

Bogâ rebels against the khalif, and is put to death.

The same year, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari and Abulfeda, Al Mo'tazz put Bogâ the younger also to death at Sarra Manray; an execution which excited great murmurings amongst the Turkish troops, and paved the way to the deposition of that prince. About this time died Abu'l Hafan Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ali Ebn Al Hosein, one of Ali's descendents, the ninth Shiite imâm, and Mazâhem Ebn Khâkân, after he had been two years governor of Egypt. The latter of these was succeeded in his post by his son Ahmed, or Mohammed, as he was by Arjuz Ebn Olugh Ebn Tarkan, the Turk, and Arjuz by Ahmed Ebn Tolun, an officer of Turkish extraction, then about thirty-four years of age, in the month of Ramadân. This Ahmed was born at Baghdâd, and, by the influence of the Turks at the Moslem court, had the government of Egypt conferred upon him; though his father Tolun had been only one of the khalif Al Mamûn's Turkish slaves. He was a firm friend to the Turks on all emergent occasions, considering them as his friends and countrymen; though he is said to have despised the barbarous customs and genius of that nation. He has been represented as a person of uncommon elevation of soul, and of a very amiable character, by Abul-Faraj,

Bogâ the younger also put to death by the khalif.

Next

Al Mo'tazz deposed and starved.

Next year, being the 255th of the Hejra, the Turks perceiving every day that the khalif was resolved to get rid of them as soon as possible, were determined to be beforehand with him. For this purpose, they elected Saleh, the son of Wasîf, whom they had formerly assassinated, their general. After this election, they marched in a body to the house of Ahmed Ebn Ifrâil, who was then Al Mo'tazz's visir, and pillaged it. They went afterwards, with their new general, and Mohammed Ebn Bogâ, whose father had been beheaded by the khalif's order, at their head, directly to the imperial palace; which they immediately invested, and in an insolent manner demanded their pay. The khalif, at that time not being in a condition either to satisfy their demands, or to resist their violence, was dragged out of his palace, and at last constrained to abdicate the khalifat, in the presence of Ebn Abu'l Shawârib, and other proper witnesses, in favour of Mohammed Abu Abd'allah Ebn Al Wâthek, who afterwards assumed the name of Al Mohtadi. This unexpected revolution having occurred, Al Mo'tazz was sent under a guard to Baghdâd, where he died of thirst, according to Khondemir, or rather was starved to death with hunger, if we may credit the Arab historians. He reigned about four years and seven months, if we compute from his public inauguration at Sarra Manray; but a year less, if we make his khalifat to commence immediately after the abdication of Al Mosta'in. His funeral service was performed by his successor Al Mohtadi. As to his person, Al Mo'tazz had an elegant head of hair, and so handsome a face, being of a fair complexion, that he has been represented as the most comely man in his dominions. Nor was he at the time of his death, if we believe Eutychius, above twenty-two years of age. With regard to his disposition, he was so attached to pleasure, that he entirely neglected the government of his extensive empire, and frequently acted beneath the dignity of his sublime station. The patriarch Saritius, or Sanitius converted several unbelievers, who denied the reality of our Saviour's passion, in this prince's reign; which gave great pleasure to the pious patriarch of Antioch, according to some Christian writers. The same Sanitius likewise, in the lieutenancy of Ahmed Ebn Tolûn, was at the expence of making several subterraneous aqueducts, by means of which the city of Alexandria was plentifully supplied with excellent water. If any credit may be given to Eutychius, the khalif Al Mo'tazz appointed Bâkbâk, the Turk, to preside over Egypt; who bestowed his daughter in marriage upon

Ahmed

Ahmed Ebn Tolûn, and constituted him his deputy in that country. Abulfeda relates, that when the Turkish militia found Al Mo'tazz unable to produce the money demanded of him, they offered to accept of only fifty thousand dinârs; but that the khalif having applied to his mother Kabihah, who was immensely rich, in vain for that small sum, they came to a resolution, in conjunction with the Pharaônians, or Egyptians, and the Magrebian, or western Arabs, to depose him, as related above. Abd'allah Ebn Abd'alrahmân Al Darâni, the author of the Mojassseman, or Corporeal Traditions, Abu Omrân Amru Ebn Bahr Al Jaheth, who left many learned works behind him, and Mohammed Ebn Kerâm Al Sejeftâni, whose followers not only admitted a resemblance between God and created beings, but declared God to be corporeal, and from thence received the denomination of Mojassseman, or Corporealists, died in the course of the present year *.

Ebn Shohnah relates, that this khalif's mother's name was Kabihah, and not Fatiha, Fatihah, or Fatihat, as Erpenius reads it in the text of Al Makîn; which imports *homely*, or *ugly*, and was given her by her husband Al Motawakkel, in a jocular manner, she having been one of the most beautiful women of the age. This lady amassed vast treasures during her husband's reign, and buried them in the earth after that prince's death. But the khalif Al Mohtadi, after his accession, obliged her to put them into his hands. This writer farther recites, that those treasures consisted of a million of dinârs, a makûk, or bushel, of emeralds, and another of pearls, together with a kilajah of rubies of the colour of fire. Every kilajah contained three Arabic pounds and three quarters, and every makûk three kilajahs; so that the latter amounted to eleven pounds and a quarter Arabic weight. Whenever Saleb Ebn Wasif mentioned this princess, he said, Kabbah Allah Kabihat, i. e. "God makes ugly, i. e. curses this woman, who bears the name of ugly, notwithstanding she is extremely beautiful." For, though she was mistress of such immense treasures, she suffered her son Al Mo'tazz to be deposed and murdered rather than part with only fifty thousand dinârs, which small sum would have satisfied the Turkish soldiery that mutinied for their pay. After Al Mohtadi ascended the Moslem throne, Kabihah quitted Sarra Manray, and retired to Mecca, where she cursed Saleb

Some farther particulars relating to this khalif, and his mother Fatihah, or Kabihah.

* Khondemir, Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 160, 161. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 462—466. Abulfed. ad ann. 255. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. ubi sup.

Ebn Wasîf in her turn, and vented her complaints against him in the following terms: Hatak setri, that is, "He has torn my veil, (which in modest language imports, He has enjoyed me;) he has killed my son, he has driven me from my native country, and has at last left me, in order to follow a common prostitute *."

We are told by some of the Arab writers, that the Greek emperor Michael was assassinated in the kalifat of Al Mo'tazz, by his general Basilus, in an island of the Propontis, whilst he was performing his devotions; and that, after this prince's death, the assassin mounted the imperial throne. The principal reason assigned by those writers for that execrable action is, that Basilus was forced by the emperor to marry a beautiful woman, in order to conceal an intrigue that prince was carrying on with her, and keep it from the empress's ears; so that not being permitted to cohabit with her, he was resolved to dispatch the person who had made so egregious a dupe of him.

*Remark-
able events
in this
prince's
reign.*

The Arabs settled in Crete, of whom we have already given some account, seem to have made a descent about this time upon Thrace, penetrating far into the country, and committing every-where dreadful ravages. In the 255th year of the Hejra, Ebn Sofîân, the Moslem emir in Sicily, was assassinated by an Arab soldier, who afterwards made his escape to the Christians; and Sofîân's son Mohammed Ebn Khafajah was elected emir by the Sicilian Moslems in his room. This election was confirmed by Mohammed Ebn Ahmed Al Aglabi, the khalif of Kairwân, and the emir so confirmed enjoyed the government of the Moslem conquests in Sicily two whole years. The Rossi, a barbarous Scythian nation, seated in a tract to the north of mount Taurus, and the ancestors of the Russians, after having reduced the city of Constantinople to great distress, returned home, and were converted to the Christian faith, not far from the commencement of Al Mo'tazz's reign *

*Al Moh-
taâdi suc-
ceeds him.*

Upon the deposition of Al Mo'tazz, who was obliged by the Turkish troops to declare himself unequal to the government of the Moslem empire, Mohammed Abu Abd'allah Al Mohtadi Ebn Al Wâthek was saluted khalif at Sarra Manray, and all the people of that metropolis took the oath of allegiance to him. His mother Korb, or

* Ebn Shohnah. Vide etiam Ism. Abulfed. ubi sup. x Eutych. ubi. sup. p. 460—463. Al Makin ubi supra. p. 161, 162. Abulfed. ubi supra. Curopalat. Georg. Cedren. Historiar. Compend. p. 550—552. Joan. Zonar. Annal lib. xvi. p. 162.

Karb, one of Al Wâthek's concubines, is supposed, or rather affirmed, by some of the Arab historians, to have been a Christian. Al Mo'tazz himself was the first, though this should be considered as the effect of compulsion, who acknowledged him khalif, and gave him the surname of Al Mohtadi Bill'ah. This prince has been represented by the Moslem writers as a great lover of justice, which he distributed daily in person to all his subjects. He prohibited the use of wine, as well as gaming of all kinds, so expressly forbidden by the Koran, and banished from the court all singers, soothsayers, jesters, and buffoons. He also sent away the lions and hounds that had been kept by his predecessors in the imperial palace. In order to ingratiate himself with the people, he suppressed part of the tribute that was so burthenome to them; inspected the conduct of the judges, as well as the public accounts; and set apart two days every week, viz. Monday and Thursday, for the hearing and redressing the grievances of his subjects.

After Al Mo'tazz's violent death, his mother Kabihah had her life spared, on condition that she discovered her immense treasures, and deposited them in the hands of the new khalif Al Mohtadi. The money found is said by Abu'l-Faraj to have amounted to one million three hundred thousand dinârs. This year, Yakûb Ebn Al Leit, the Saffarian, made himself master of the provinces of Kermân and Fârs, and seized upon the city of Shîrâz.

*A farther
account of
Kabibah.*

In the beginning of Al Mohtadi's reign, the Zenjians, or Zinjians, a people of Nubia, of Ethiopia, and of the country of the Cafres, called at this day by the moderns Zanguebar, according to M. D'Herbelot, having penetrated into Arabia, advanced from thence into the neighbourhood of Basra and Cûfa. Abulfeda, seems to intimate, that these Zenjians were originally seated in the district called Al Sabak, or the sandy tract in the neighbourhood of Basra; though it must be owned, Abu Jaafar Al Tabari's description of them not a little countenances what has been advanced by M. D'Herbelot, in relation to the country of these barbarians. The chief of this gang of robbers, who, according to some of the Arab historians, were little better than wild beasts, Ali Ebn Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, one of the descendants of Abd'alkais, gave out falsely, that he was of the family of Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb. This fiction made such an impression upon the Shiites in those parts, that they flocked to him in vast numbers;

*The Zen-
jians make
an irrup-
tion into the
Moslem
empire.*

numbers; which enabled him to seize upon the cities of Ramla and Basra, and even to pass the Tigris, at the head of a powerful army, which spread terror wherever it came. This Ali, who was an astrologer and a Shiite, as well as an impostor, began first to be taken notice of in the year of the Hejra 249, and at last became so formidable, that the khalif's forces could not make head against him. He, therefore, reduced most of the fortresses of Irâk, and a considerable part of Arabia; in the possession of which conquests he maintained himself fourteen years, notwithstanding all the efforts of Al Mohtadi and his successors to remove him from thence. After he had dismembered the khalifat in this manner, he assumed the title of Saheb Al Zenj, *the Prince of the Zenjians*, in order to ingratiate himself with those barbarians, of which the greatest part of his army was composed^y.

*The visir
is murder-
ed.*

In the following year, being the 256th of the Hejra, Mûsa Ebn Bogâ, general of the forces of the khalifat, who had been employed in the expedition undertaken against Al Hafan Ebn Yezid, having been apprised of the death of the khalif Al Mo'tazz, who had been cut off soon after his abdication, returned from Tabrestân and Ray with his army into Irâk. Soon after his arrival, being informed that Saleh Ebn Wasîf was the new khalif's visir, he quitted the camp he had formed in the neighbourhood of Baghdâd, and marched directly to Sarra Manray; declaring publicly his intention to take vengeance of those who had been concerned in the late revolt. His declaration was chiefly levelled at Saleh Ebn Wasîf, who had been principally instrumental in the death as well as the deposition of Al Mo'tazz. Saleh, conscious of his guilt, and not having a sufficient number of troops to oppose Mûsa, concealed himself at his approach: but being soon discovered, he was brought before the general, who commanded his head immediately to be struck off; and, the day following, it was carried, by Mûsa's order, through the streets of Sarra Manray; the person carrying it proclaiming aloud, "This is the head of a traitor, who has imbrued his hands in the blood of his sovereign!"

*The khalif
is deposed,
and slain.*

The murder of Saleh greatly incensed the khalif, who thereupon came to a resolution to repress the insolence of the Turkish troops; a resolution which so excited their hatred, that Bânkiâl and Mûsa Ebn Bogâ, their chiefs,

^y Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 162, 163. Ism. Abulfed. ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 618.

conspired

conspired their destruction. This conspiracy, however, was not kept so secret, but that some reports of it transpired; upon which, the khalif ordered Bânkîâl, who was to have acted the principal part in it, to be put under arrest. The Turks assembled in a tumultuous manner about the imperial palace, and demanded the releasement of their chief. The khalif, far from being intimidated by their insolent behaviour, instead of complying with their demand, ordered Bânkîâl's head to be instantly cut off, and thrown amongst them out of the palace: but this instance of severity was so far from appeasing the sedition, that it rendered the Turks more furious and untractable; insomuch that a fierce conflict ensued between them and the Magrebians, who defended the khalif, before the palace, in which about four thousand on both sides were slain. The Turks, however, returning to the charge with a body of ten thousand men, under the conduct of Tagarbâ, Bânkîâl's brother, put the Magrebians, who had been reinforced by a body of Faraônian troops, to flight, and pursued Al Mohtadi himself into the house of Mohammed Ebn Mardâd. Being taken from thence, he was conducted to that of Ahmed Ebn Khâkân; where some of the mutineers began to spit in his face, and to beat him, in order to force him to abdicate the khalifat: but he refusing to resign, they barbarously trampled upon his privities till he expired, on the 16th of the month Rajeb, before he had quite completed the first year of his reign. Some authors relate, that Al Mohtadi received two wounds in the last action between the Turkish, Magrebian, and Faraônian troops; and that he was finally dispatched by one of Bânkîâl's relations, who, after his death, drank a draught of his blood. He was buried at Sarra Manray, and Jaafar Ebn Abd'allah Al Hâshemi, his judge, said the funeral-service at his interment. He was about thirty-eight or thirty-nine years of age, at the time of his death. With regard to his person, Al Mohtadi was of a middle stature, somewhat bald, and of a swarthy complexion. He had, however, a handsome face, a portly gait, and a long black beard. As to his disposition, he was abstemious, devout, a lover of justice, of an amiable temper and exemplary life, and in his manners greatly resembled the khalif Omar Ebn Abd'alaziz ^z.

^z Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 163, 164. Khondemir, Eutyeh. ubi sup. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. D'Herbel. & Ism. Abulfed. ubi sup.

Al Mo'tamed created khalif.

After the barbarous murder of Al Mohtadi, the assassins created Ahmed Abu'l Abbâs Al Mo'tamed Ala'llah Ebn Al Motawakkel, khalif. His mother's name, according to some writers, was Fynân, or, as others affirm, Kynân. He took for his principal counsellor, or visir, Abd'allah Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâkân, who, if we may believe Eutychius, had served his father Al Motawakkel in the same capacity; though his brother Al Mowaffek had so great an ascendant over him, and used the authority he gave him in so absolute a manner, that he seemed to be master of the khalifat. Nay, he had so much influence over his brother's counsels, that he excluded Al Mo'tamed's son from the succession, and caused his own to be elevated to the Moslem throne in his room, as will be seen in the sequel of this history.

The progress of the rebel Al Habîb.

Ali, or Al Habîb, as he is called by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, prince of the Zenjians, who was now become extremely formidable, made incursions almost to the very gates of Baghdâd, doing irreparable damage wherever he moved. The khalif, therefore, sent Jalân, one of his generals, with a considerable army against him: but the Zenjian defeated him with very great slaughter, made himself master of twenty-four of the khalif's largest ships in the bay of Basra, put an incredible number of the inhabitants of Obolla to the sword, and seized upon the town, which he reduced to ashes. From thence he marched to Abâdân, which likewise surrendered to him. Here he found an immense treasure in money, which enabled him to possess himself of the whole province of Ahwâz. In fine, his army being now increased to eighty thousand strong, the greatest part of the citizens of Basra abandoned the place; a circumstance which struck with terror all the inhabitants of the adjacent territories, and even the court of the khalif itself^a.

Al Habîb continues victorious in the year 257.

Next year, being the 257th of the Hejra, beginning November 29, 870, Al Habîb attacked Sa'id Ebn Jaafar Ebn Dînân, at the head of the khalif's forces, and entirely defeated him; killing many of his men upon the spot, and more in the pursuit. He also routed several other armies sent against him by the khalif, reduced Basra, and put twenty thousand of the citizens to the sword, before the conclusion of the campaign. The people of Toledo rebelled about this time against Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, the khalif of Spain, and chose Mohammed Ebn Lûb

^a Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 468, 469. Ism. Abulfed. ad ann. 256. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. Art. Motamed.

for their general; but, upon the approach of the khalif with a numerous army, they thought proper to submit to him, and sent hostages for their future good behaviour to Corduba. We must not forget to remark, that Amajûr drove Isa Ebn Sheikh out of Syria, where he had been a rival against the khalif, the preceding year; and that, about the same time, the famous imâm Abu Abd'allah Mohammed Ebn Ismael, surnamed Al Jofi, as deducing his origin from the tribe of Jofah in Yaman, though generally called Al Bokhâri, died at Kharshak, or Khartank, a small town about two parasangs from Samarkand. In the 257th year of the Hejra, Al Hafan Ebn Zeid, one of Ali's descendents, who had possessed himself of Tabrestân, seized likewise upon Jorjân; and Yakûb Ebn Al Leit, the Saffarian, made himself master of Balkh and Câbûl. Before the close of the same year, died Abu'l Abbâs, a famous grammarian, known by the name of Al Rayash. Mohammed Ebn Khafajah, the emir of Sicily, according to Abulfeda, was murdered by some of his eunuchs, who were afterwards taken and put to death, and succeeded by Ahmed Ebn Yakûb, sent over by Mohammed Ebn Ahmed Al Aglabi, the khalif of Kairwân, for that purpose; and Malta was conquered by the Sicilian Moslems.

During the course of the following year, Al Habîb, the Zenjian prince, still remained victorious over the khalif's troops. Al Mo'tamed, supported by his brother Al Mowaffek, had formed a design to confine within narrower bounds, at least, if not directly to annihilate, the power of the Turkish soldiery, which had proved so fatal to several of his predecessors; they having, for a considerable time, given law to the khalifs, and elevated or deposed them as they pleased: but the Zenjians made so rapid a progress this year in Persia, Arabia, and Irâk, that he was obliged to suspend the execution of that design, and even to send the Turkish troops to join those commanded by his brother Al Mowaffek, in order to oppose them. The first of the khalif's generals subdued by Al Habîb was Mohammed, whose army was worsted in several engagements, and at last entirely cut to pieces by the rebels. This year, Al Mo'tamed called his brother Abu Ahmed Ebn Al Motawakkel to the succession, gave him the surname of Al Mowaffek, together with a most sumptuous vest, and appointed him to preside over Diyâr Rabîa, Mawfel, Al Awâsem, and Egypt. He also caused his own son Jaafar, whom he surnamed Al Mofawed, to be publicly declared the heir apparent to the crown, and assigned him the pre-

*and in the
year 258.*

fecture of the West. After this disposition was made, he sent Al Mowaffek and Mosleh, with a formidable army, to reduce the rebel Al Habîb; who, in pursuance of their orders, came up with him, and attacked him with very great bravery: but Mosleh being killed with an arrow, Al Mo'tamed's troops were at last obliged to leave the field of battle to the Zenjians, and retire, after having sustained a very considerable loss. However, Al Mowaffek soon rallied his forces, that were put into confusion by the death of Mosleh, and drew them up in such order, that the enemy durst not renew the attack. Some time after, there happened a very sharp action between the khalif's forces and the rebels, commanded by Yahya Ebn Mohammed Al Azrâk, who was dangerously wounded and taken prisoner. Several other battles were fought between the contending parties before the conclusion of the campaign, from whence no great advantages accrued to either side: but at length some contagious distempers carrying off considerable numbers of Al Mowaffek's men, he found himself obliged to agree to a kind of truce, or cessation of arms, with the enemy, and retire to Wâset, in order to refresh and repose his troops. As for Yahya Ebn Mohammed, who had fallen into his hands before, he had sent him under an escort to Sarra Manray; where, soon after his arrival, he received two hundred stripes, had his hands and feet chopt off, and was cut to pieces by a detachment of the khalif's guards. The body was afterwards burnt to ashes, and thrown into the Tigris, in the presence of an infinite number of spectators, of all ranks and degrees, who attended the execution ^b.

The war continues between the khalif and Al Habîb.

In the year of the Hejra 259, commencing November seventh 872, the war still continued between the khalif and Al Habîb. Al Mowaffek, upon his arrival at Baghdâd, sent Mohammed, surnamed Al Mowalled, with a powerful army to act against the Zenjians; but he could not hinder them from ravaging the province of Ahwâz, cutting off about fifty thousand of the khalif's subjects, and dismantling the city of the same name. However, Al Mo'tamed commanded Abd'alrahmân Ebn Mosleh to march with a body of troops to Ahwâz, Ishak Ebn Daraj with another to Basra, and Ibrahim Ebn Simâ with a third to Dawrad: but notwithstanding all the khalif's efforts, or rather those of his generals, his forces could gain no considerable ad-

^b Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin. ubi supra, p. 165, 166. Khondemir, Abulfed. ad ann. 258. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 468, 469.

vantage

vantage over Al Habîb, though several battles were fought. About this time Yakûb Ebn Al Leit made himself master of Nifabûr, and threw Mohammed, the Thâherian, who had before enjoyed the sovereignty of the province of Khorasân under this khalif, with all his family and domestics, into prison. About the same time, died Mohammed Ebn Mûsa Ebn Shaker, one of the mathematicians employed by the khalif Al Mamûn to discover the true ambit or circumference of the earth. This year, a body of the Sicilian Moslems seized upon the city of Salerno, but were soon after all cut to pieces upon the spot.

In the following year, being the 260th of the Hejra, the Arabs put to death Manjûr, the governor of Hems, and substituted Beçtimûr in his room. This year the khalif's generals likewise made several attempts to drive the Zenjians out of the Moslem territories; but without effect: for Al Habîb supported himself in his conquests, notwithstanding there happened several vigorous actions between his troops and the khalif's forces, in which many brave men fell on both sides ^c.

In the 261st year of the Hejra, Mohammed Ebn Wâfel, who had killed the khalif's governor of Fârs, and afterwards made himself master of that province, engaged several times the Zenjian forces commanded by Al Habîb, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari; but with what success, we have not been told by that author. The khalif, having been apprised of the state of affairs on that side, annexed the government of Fârs, Ahwâz, Basra, and Bahrein, to the prefecture he had assigned Mûsa Ebn Bogâ, whom he looked upon as one of the best generals he had. Mûsa, soon after his nomination to that sublime post, dispatched Abd'alrahmân Ebn Mosleh as his deputy to Ahwâz, and joined to him, as his colleague and assistant, Tisam the Turk: but Mohammed Ebn Wâfel, then at the head of his troops in Ahwâz, refusing to obey the orders of Abd'alrahmân Ebn Mosleh and Tisam, a fierce conflict ensued, in which the latter were defeated with very great slaughter, and Abd'alrahmân Ebn Mosleh was taken prisoner. After the action, Mohammed Ebn Wâfel advanced to Estakhr, in order to attack Mûsa Ebn Bogâ's forces, encamped at a small distance from that place: but Mûsa, having received intelligence of his design, retired at his approach; and finding that he could not take possession of his new government,

The military operations in 261.

^c Abulfed. ad an. Hej. 260. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra.

nor fix his deputies in the provinces assigned them, without a great effusion of Moslem blood, he recalled them from thence, and made the best of his way to Sarra Manray. After which retreat, Yakûb Ebn Al Leit, who had before dispossessed the family of Thâher of the province of Khorasân, that had for a considerable time enjoyed the sovereignty of it, made an irruption into Ahwâz, defeated Mohammed Ebn Wâfel, and seized upon his palace, in which he found a sum of money amounting to forty millions of dirhems. Some authors say, that Al Mo'tamed declared Jaafar, his son, heir apparent to the crown, and called Al Mowaffek, his brother, to the succession after him, in the present year: but in this point we chuse to follow Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, who is of a contrary opinion. The dynasty of the Sammanians, in Khorasân, according to Ebn Shohnah and Abulfeda, commenced at this period. It appears from Abulfeda, that Mohammed Ebn Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ibrahim Ebn Al Aglab, the khalif of Kairwân, died in the Former Jomâda, after he had reigned twenty years five months and fifteen days. He was succeeded by his brother Ibrahim Ebn Ahmed Ebn Mohammed, who extended the Moslem conquests in Sicily ^d.

*The khalif's
forces de-
feat Yakûb
Ebn Al
Leit;*

Next year, being the 262d of the Hejra, the rebel Yakûb Ebn Al Leit, called Yakûb Ebn Leith by the Persian historians, being grown formidable by the acquisition of Ahwâz, and a considerable part of Fârs, at least of Al Jebâl, or the Persian Irâk, without having openly declared against the khalif, dropped the mask, and advanced at the head of a powerful army into the neighbourhood of Baghdâd. In order, therefore, to put a stop to the progress of so dangerous an enemy, who had already made himself master of Wâset, Al Mo'tamed sent Al Mowaffek with the forces of the empire against him. That general, in pursuance of his orders, advanced first to Baghdâd, whither he was attended by the khalif, and at last came up with Ebn Al Leit at a village named Katûl. Here, after a bloody engagement, he defeated him with incredible slaughter, plundered his camp, and pursued him into Khorasân; where meeting with no opposition, he entered Nisabûr, and released Mohammed the Thâherian, who had been detained in prison by Yakûb Ebn Al Leit three years. As for Ebn Al Leit himself, who

^d Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 166, 169. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 637, 638. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi supra, p. 271. Ebn Shohnah, Ism. Abul'fed. et Joan. Bapt. Carus, ubi supra,

was the first prince, or sultan, of the race or dynasty of the Saffarians, he made his escape with great difficulty after the late defeat; though he and his family maintained themselves several years in the possession of many of the conquests he had made. The war waged by the khalif against Ebn Al Leit proved a seasonable diversion in favour of Al Habîb, who routed all the troops sent by Al Mo'tamed to reduce him to his obedience, and ravaged the district of Wâset.

In the following year, being the 262d of the Hejra, the khalif's forces, under the command of Ahmed Ebn Lebûna, gained two considerable advantages over Al Habîb's troops; but being at length drawn into an ambuscade, they were almost totally destroyed. Ahmed, their general, with great difficulty made his escape.

but are over-thrown by Al Habîb.

In the 264th year of the Hejra, the Arabs made an incursion into the imperial territories, under the conduct of Abd'allah Ebn Rashîd Ebn Kâwûs, with a body of four thousand horse, put a considerable number of the emperor's subjects to the sword, and committed dreadful ravages in the provinces through which they passed: but the Greeks came up with them at a small distance from the Badan-dûn, put the greatest part of them to the sword, and took Abd'allah Ebn Rashîd prisoner, whom they sent under an escort to Constantinople. This year, a detachment of Al Habîb's troops advanced to Wâset, drove the inhabitants out of the town, and then laid it in ashes; carrying off an immense quantity of spoil. One of the Arab writers mentions several severe engagements between the Zenjians and the khalif's forces after that tragical event; but does not inform us that any decisive blow was struck on either side. Mûsa Ebn Bogâ, the best of the Turkish officers in Al Mo'tamed's service, dying about this time, the influence his nation had at the Moslem court was entirely lost; insomuch that the Turkish troops now entirely obeyed the khalif's orders independently on their chiefs.

The Arabs make an incursion into the imperial territories.

Next year, being the 265th of the Hejra, beginning September 3d, 878, Ahmed Ebn Tolûn rebelled against the khalif, and set up for himself in Egypt. Having assembled a considerable force, he marched to Antioch, and besieged Sîmâ, the khalif's governor of Haleb, or Aleppo, and all the provinces known amongst the Arabs by the name of Al Awâsem, in that city. As the besieged found that he was resolved to carry the place by assault, they

Ahmed Ebn Tolûn rebels against the khalif.

* Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi supra. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar.

thought fit, after a short defence, to surrender to him, and to put Sîmâ into his hands. Ahmed no sooner found himself in possession of that officer, than he struck off his head, and advanced to Aleppo, whose gates were opened at his approach. Soon after, he reduced Dimishk, or Damascus, Hems, Hamath, Kinnifrîn, and Al Rakka, situated upon the eastern bank of the Euphrates. This rebellion so exasperated Al Mo'tamed, that he commanded Ahmed to be publicly cursed in all the mosques of Baghdâd and Irâk; and Ahmed, on his part, ordered the same solemn anathema to be thundered out in all the mosques within his jurisdiction against the khalif. The same year, Yakûb Ebn Al Leit, having raised a powerful army, moved a second time towards Baghdâd; but was seized with a violent colic on his march, of which he died, after eleven years reign, if we can suppose it to have commenced when he first entered Persia in a hostile manner, and was succeeded by his brother Amru Ebn Al Leit. A detachment of Al Habîb's troops penetrated into Irâk, and made themselves masters of four of the khalif's ships, laden with corn, in the course of this campaign. They also advanced to Al Nomânia, laid the greatest part of it in ashes, and carried off a great number of the inhabitants prisoners. They likewise possessed themselves of Jarjarâyâ, and destroyed all the adjacent territory with fire and sword. The Moslems of Sicily fixed themselves this year in Syracuse, and seized upon all the dependencies of that place. It is worthy observation, that there were three powers at this time in the Moslem empire independent on the khalif, besides the house of Aglab in Africa, and that of Ommiyah in Spain; namely, one in Syria and Egypt, another in Khorâsan, and another in Arabia and Irâk^f.

The most memorable events that happened in the year of the Hejra 266.

In the 266th year of the Hejra, Al Habîb reduced Râm-hormoz, burnt the stately mosque there to the ground, put a great number of the inhabitants to the sword, carried many of them away with him prisoners, and acquired an amazing quantity of spoil. In Sicily, Krîsâf was killed this year. Al Hâsan Ebn Al Abbâs was also sent from Kairwân to that island in the quality of emir; who, soon after his arrival, ravaged the Christian territories in a dreadful manner. Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân ordered a great number of ships to be constructed at Corduba or Cordova, Seville, and other maritime towns, where materials for ship-building were to be met with. But

^f Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin. ubi supra, p. 169, 170. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 252.

these

these being afterwards almost entirely destroyed by tempests and storms, the sailors on board them for the most part drowned, and Abd'alamîd, his admiral, narrowly escaping with his life, that prince laid aside the design of being a maritime power of consequence.

The 267th year of the Hejra produced several important actions between the Zenjians and the khalif's troops. Al Mowaffek, attended by his son Abu'l Abbâs Al Mo'tadhed Bi'llah, took the field with an army consisting of some infantry and a body of ten thousand horse. On the other side, Al Habîb appeared at the head of an army, amounting to one hundred thousand men, to oppose him. But, notwithstanding the inequality of numbers, the Arabs defeated the Zenjians in several pitched battles, recovered most of the towns they had taken, together with an immense quantity of spoil, and released five thousand Moslem women who had been detained in prison by those Barbarians. After these victories, Al Mowaffek took post before the city of Al Mabi'y'a, which had been built by Al Habîb, and was the place of his residence, burnt all the ships in the harbour, completely pillaged the town, and then entirely dismantled it. Here he likewise found treasures of exceeding great value. After the reduction of Al Mabi'y'a, he pursued the flying enemy, defeated several bodies of the Zenjian troops, put to the sword Ebn Al Sa'râb, Ebn Jâm', and others of their chiefs, and advanced to Al Mokhtara, a city which had been strongly fortified by Al Habîb. As the Zenjian had collected all his forces together, and was posted at no great distance from the town, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, with an army of three hundred thousand men, and the place was almost impregnable, Al Mowaffek clearly perceived that it would sustain a very long siege. He, therefore, erected a fortress opposite to it, in which he constructed a mosque, and coined both dirhems and dinârs. The new city, from its founder, was called by the Arabs Al Mowaffekia, and soon rendered considerable by the settlement of several wealthy merchants. By these means, Al Mowaffek thought to reduce Al Mokhtâra to surrender by famine, and actually brought it to very great distress; which occasioned an incredible desertion amongst Al Habîb's troops. However, Al Mowaffek having, with his battering engines, made a practicable breach in the walls, took the place by storm, after a vigorous resistance on the part of the besieged, in the Latter Jamâda, and gave it up to his soldiers to be plundered till the month of Shaabân. After which reduction,

The military operations of the year 267.

duction, he put to flight Al Habîb's numerous forces, and dispersed them in such a manner, that the Zenjîan found it impossible to rally them during the remainder of the campaign. Two persons were struck dead by lightning near Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân in a mosque at Corduba, and a general earthquake happened in Spain, whose dreadful concussions were felt in every part of that country^g.

Al Mowaffek gains other advantages over Al Habîb;

In the following year, Al Mowaffek penetrated a second time as far as Al Mabi'y'a, demolished again the fortifications of that place, which he carried by assault, though Al Habîb and his troops, who defended the town, disputed every inch of ground. This year, Lûlû began to rebel against his master Ahmed Ebn Tolûn in Egypt.

and takes his capital a third time.

In the 269th year of the Hejra, Al Mowaffek attacked Al Habîb with unparalleled bravery, and would have entirely defeated him, had he not been wounded in the breast by an arrow, an accident which obliged him to retire out of the heat of the action, and to beat a retreat. However, as soon as he was cured of his wound, he advanced a third time to Al Mabi'y'a, made himself master of that metropolis, destroyed the walls that had been raised again by the Zenjîan prince, put many of the inhabitants to the sword, and carried a great number away into captivity. The same year, Lûlû went over to Al Mowaffek, and engaged upon certain conditions to act against his former master Ahmed Ebn Tolûn. Soon after which event, Al Mowaffek caused Ahmed to be publicly cursed in all the mosques of Baghdâd and Irâk^h.

Al Mowaffek gives Al Habîb a total overthrow, takes him prisoner, and cuts off his head.

Next year, being the 270th of the Hejra, beginning July 11, 883, Al Mowaffek penetrated again as far as Al Mabi'y'a, possessed himself of that city, demolished Al Habîb's palace, seized upon his family, and sent them to Sarra Manray; though that rebel and usurper, who had made such havock in the Moslem empire, himself found means to escape. However, Al Mowaffek pursued him into the province of Ahwâz, and entirely defeated the shattered forces which he had rallied. As for Al Habîb himself, he now fell into the hands of the victor, who ordered him to be decapitated, and his head was carried upon the point of a lance through a great part of the region whose repose he had so long disturbed. After which,

^g Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 170, 171. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an Hej. 267. D'Herb. Bibl. Orient. ubi sup. Chron. Cantabrigiens. ubi supra. Roderic. Toletan. ubi sup. ^h Eutyech. ubi sup. p. 468, 469.

he sent it by his son Al Mo'tadhed Bi'llah to Baghdâd, where it was exposed to public view, and then fixed upon one of the gates of the city. As Al Habîb first appeared in arms against the khalif the twenty-sixth of Ramadân, in the year of the Hejra 255, and was put to death the second of Safar 270, he reigned over the Zenjians, who had rendered themselves so formidable to two khalifs, about fourteen years and four months. By the last victory, which was complete, Al Mowaffek acquired the glorious title of Al Nasir Lidni'llah, or Al Nasser Ledini'llah, that is, the protector of Islâm, or Mohammedism; which was given him by the khalif Al Mo'tamed, his brother; and he continued to govern the khalifat under that title to the time of his death¹.

The same year died Ahmed Ebn Tolûn, on the eighteenth of Dhu'lhajja, in Egypt. It has been observed by Al Makin, that, when he was at the point of death, he lifted up his hands to heaven, and said, "O Lord! forgive thy servant, whose load of guilt is too great for him to comprehend, and shew thyself merciful to him at the time of his death." He left behind him thirty-three sons, one of which, named Khamarawiyah, succeeded him in the dynasty he had founded. He is said to have been a strict observer of justice, and of so charitable a disposition, that he gave away every month in alms three hundred thousand dinârs. He distributed likewise every month amongst the ecclesiastics of the best character one thousand dinârs, and spent the same sum in his kitchen every day. Some authors write, that, during the time he presided over Egypt, he sent to Baghdâd, to be distributed amongst men of learning and probity, as likewise the poor and the sick, not less than two millions two hundred thousand dinârs. He left in the treasury at his death ten millions of dinârs; which, considering the money he spent and gave away in his life-time, was a prodigious sum. His servants and slaves amounted to seven thousand, his horses to the same number, his mules and camels to eight thousand, and his war-horses to three hundred. All this was his own private property, and bore no relation to the public. The revenue of Egypt in his time, if we believe Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, did not fall short of three hundred millions of dinârs. Notwithstanding his good qualities, he is reported to have been extremely cruel, and guilty of a great effusion

*Ahmed
Ebn Tolûn
dies.*

¹ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 172, 173. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 441. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 468, 469. Abulfed. ad an. 270. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. ubi supra.

of human blood; having either put to death, or starved in prison, at least eighteen thousand persons. Seventeen sons, and as many daughters, not thirty-three sons, as some writers affirm, survived him, according to Abu'l-Faraj. Al Hafan Ebn Zeid, one of Ali's descendants, who had reigned near twenty years in Tabrestân, and was succeeded by his brother Mohammed Ebn Zeid, Mohammed Ebn Ishak Ebn Jaafar Al Sagâni, and Dawd Ebn Ali Al Esfahâni, a celebrated imâm, who denied any assimilation of God to created beings, died likewise this year.

The khalif's forces defeated by those of Khamarawiyah.

In the 271st year of the Hejra a sharp and bloody engagement happened between the khalif's forces, commanded by Al Mowaffek's son, and those of Khamarawiyah, who had made an irruption into Syria. This battle was fought between Al Ramla and Dimishk, or Damascus. Khamarawiyah was charged so vigorously in the beginning of the action, that his men began to give way; upon which he fled with great precipitation even to the borders of Egypt, believing that every thing was lost; but his troops not having been apprized of their general's flight, afterwards rallied, and gained a complete victory.

Nothing remarkable happened the following year.

The following year, being the 272d of the Hejra, produced no memorable event in the Moslem empire. Khamarawiyah having gained the hearts of his subjects by his mild and gentle administration, though he was now but twenty-two years of age, and kept on foot a large body of troops that he could entirely depend upon, Al Mowaffek found it impossible to make any impression upon Egypt during the present year. Before the conclusion of it a person of distinction was sent from the imperial court to ransom the Syracusans that had been taken prisoners by the African Moslems about six or seven years before^k.

Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân dies in Spain.

During the whole course of the 273d year of the Hejra, the khalif Al Mo'tamed abandoned himself entirely to indolence and pleasure, so that Al Mowaffek alone held the reins of the Moslem empire. However, he could neither regain Khorasân nor Egypt. About this period died Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, the khalif of Spain, at Corduba, in the sixtieth, or, according to Abu'l-feda, who styles him the emir of Andalusia, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign. While he walked in his royal gardens, a little before his death, one of the soldiers of his guards exclaimed, "What fine gardens are

^k Eutyech. ubi supra, p. 476—479. Chron. Sic. Cantabrigiens. ubi supra.

these that we walk in, how beautiful is the present day, and what a delightful age would this be were it possible to avoid being arrested by death!" To which observation the khalif replied, "Thou art mistaken in thy last remark; since, had it not been for death, I should never have swayed the Moslem sceptre of Spain." He left thirty-three sons behind him. Al Mondar, his successor, one of them, was at the baths of Almeria when the khalif expired; but upon receiving advice of his father's decease, he posted with all possible expedition to Corduba, and ascended the throne in the forty-third year of his age.

In the 275th year of the Hejra Khamarawiyah received advice that Mohammed Ebn Diwadâd, called by some authors Abu'l Saj, had taken post at Damascus with a powerful army; upon which he assembled all his forces, and made the proper dispositions in order to attack him. This year Al Mowaffek sent his son to prison, and confined him till he was seized by that sickness which put a period to his days. The machine of government at Sarra Manray was moved in the same manner this year as in the preceding. Al Mondar behaved with great liberality and munificence to his subjects in Spain, and even remitted the taxes or tenths paid by the people of Corduba; notwithstanding which generosity they rebelled against him. This revolt so exasperated him, that he resolved to take vengeance for their ingratitude as well as their disobedience; but he died on his march to their city before he could carry his design into execution. He reigned only two years, and left six sons and seven daughters behind him. However, the army elected Abd'allah, his brother, in prejudice to his eldest son. As soon as the people of Corduba were apprized of this election, they opened their gates to the new khalif, and met with a favourable reception from him. He then buried his brother, the deceased khalif, in a manner suitable to his high rank, and presided above twenty-five years over the Moslems in Spain¹.

The transactions of the following year;

In the following year, being the 276th of the Hejra, Kamarawiyah Ebn Ahmed Ebn Tolûn led his army against Mohammed Ebn Diwadâd, or Abu'l Sâj, and routed him in a great battle at Al Bathniâ, not far from the city of Damascus; after which victory he advanced to Al Rakka upon the Euphrates, and made himself master of that place. Having annexed several large provinces to his former domi-

and those of the year 276.

¹ Eutych, ubi sup. Abulfed. ad an. Hej. 275. Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, cap. xxix. p. 25.

nions, and left some of his friends whom he could confide in to preside over them, he returned into Egypt, the principal part of his empire, which now extended from the Euphrates to the borders of Nubia and Ethiopia. The cities of Lisbon, Seville, &c. in Spain, rebelled this year against Abd'allah Ebn Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, of the house of Ommiyah, at the instigation of Omar Ebn Al Hafan, who headed the troops of those rebellious cities; but Abd'allah having assembled a numerous army, in order to reduce them to his obedience, they laid down their arms; upon which Abd'allah received them into favour, and pardoned Omar Ebn Al Hafan who had first excited them to revolt. The civil dissensions and intestine broils that reigned in Seville, which had occasioned a great effusion of blood, greatly facilitated the submission and reduction of that place. About this time the African Moslems made themselves masters of an imperial fleet, and put five thousand imperialists to the sword, at Melazzo in Sicily; after which action the inhabitants of that town fled to Reggio in Calabria.

*A rebellion
in Spain.*

Next year Omar Ebn Al Hafan rebelled again in Spain, cutting off the heads of several commandants of towns, and committing other outrages in various parts. However, he was at last driven by Abd'allah out of the Moslem territories, and obliged to fly to the Christians for refuge; when, in order to ingratiate himself the more with them, he is said by Roderic to have been baptized, and made profession of the Christian faith. We are told by the Cambridge Chronicon, that the Sicilian Moslems fell upon the Africans, and cut to pieces Al Tâwali, one of their chief commanders^m.

*Al Mowaffek
dies.*

In the following year Al Mowaffek Bi'llah departed this life at Sarra Manray, on Wednesday the 21st of the month Safar, and was succeeded by his son Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Al Mowaffek, surnamed Al Mo'taded Bi'llah, in his post of prime minister or visir. With regard to his character, Al Mowaffek has been greatly celebrated by the Arab historians, who represent him as a person of superior magnanimity, naturally brave, liberal, and thoroughly versed in the art of government. He used to say, "I always behold my friends in the same light as my brothers, and would, if it could be done with sufficient propriety,

^m Khondemir, Roderic. Toletan. & Chronic. Sic. Cantabr. & Joan. Bapt. Carus ubi supra.

confer

confer upon them the same appellation." Al Mo'taded Bi'llah had as great an ascendant over the khalif as his father; so that it is no wonder he should be able so easily to exclude Al Jaafar, Al Mo'tamed's son, from the succession, and, after his nominal master's death, to fix himself upon the Moslem throne^u.

The Karmatians, a sect which bore an inveterate hatred to the Mohammedans, began first to raise disturbances in the empire in the course of this year. Their origin is not so well known; but the common tradition is, that a poor fellow, whom some call Karmata, came from Khûzestan to the villages near Cûfa, and there feigned great sanctity and strictness of life, and that God had enjoined him to pray fifty times a day, pretending also to invite people to the obedience of a certain imâm of the family of Mohammed: this way of life he continued till he had formed a very great party, out of whom he chose twelve, as his apostles, to govern the rest, and propagate his doctrines. He also assumed the title of prince, and obliged every one of his earlier followers to pay him a dinâr; but Al Haidam, the governor of the province, finding men neglected their work, and their husbandry in particular, to say those fifty prayers a-day, seized the fellow, and having put him in prison, swore that he should die; which declaration being overheard by a girl belonging to the governor, she, pitying the man, at night took the key of the dungeon from under her master's head as he slept, and having released the prisoner, returned the key to the place whence she took it. Next morning the governor found the impostor gone, and the accident being publicly known, raised great admiration, his adherents pretending that God had taken him into heaven. Afterwards he appeared in another province, and declared to a great number of people, that it was not in the power of any to do him hurt; notwithstanding which declaration, his courage failing him, he retired into Syria, and was not heard of any more. During his abode in that country, he is said to have been entertained by a man called Karmatîah, from whom his name Karmata was derived. Others, however, relate, that the Karmatians wrote very close, and in exceeding small characters, contrary to the manner of the Arab Moslems, amongst whom the Cûfic character prevailed, who used large letters, and left a considerable space between their lines; and that

The Karmatians first raise disturbances in the Moslem empire.

^u Eutych. ubi supra, p. 478, 479. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 272. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 173, 174.

from

from this custom they derived the name of Karmatians ; Karmath, or Karmat, amongst the Arabs, denoting that manner of writing. Be that, however, as it may, this sect continued and increased after the founder of it disappeared ; pretending that their master had manifested himself to be a true prophet, and had left them a new law, wherein he had changed the ceremonies and form of prayer used by the Moslems, and introduced a new kind of fast ; and that he had also allowed them to drink wine, and dispensed with several things commanded by the Koran. They likewise turned the precepts of that book into allegory, teaching that prayer was the symbol of obedience to their imâm, and fasting that of silence, or concealing their dogmas from strangers. They also believed fornication to be the sin of infidelity, and the guilt thereof to be incurred by those who revealed the mysteries of their religion, or paid not an implicit obedience to their chief. They are said to have produced a book, wherein was written, amongst other things, " In the name of the most merciful God : Al Faraj Ebn Othmân of the town of Naf-râna saith, that Christ appeared to him in a human form, and said, 'Thou art the invitation : thou art the demonstration : thou art the camel : thou art the beast : thou art John the son of Zacharias : thou art the Holy Ghost.'" The sect of the Karmatians, according to some writers, first began to appear in the khalifat of Harûn Al Rashîd, or, as others assert, in that of Al Mamûn ; but their leader having soon disappeared, they kept themselves concealed, neither acknowledging any particular imâm nor any other chief. Ebn Shohnah relates, that they first excited some commotions in the villages and towns near Cûfa in the 275th year of the Hejra, and that they were headed by a man named Kerfa, who often changed his situation and place of abode, and was so effectually concealed by his followers, that he could never be discovered by any of the khalif's officers who were sent in quest of him. Khondemir writes, that in many particulars this sect agreed with that of Ismael Ebn Jaafar Al Sadek, the sixth imâm ; that they did not scruple eating many things forbidden by the Mohammedan law, and that they believed angels to be the friends, directors, and guardians of mankind, and evil demons their most inveterate enemies, that were continually meditating their destruction. The Karmatians pretend, that Christ revealed to Al Faraj Ebn Othmân, that the prayer before sun-rise ought to be performed with two genuflexions, and that before sun-set with

with two more; and that they ought to fast twice a year, viz. on the days Mihjân, or Mihrjân, and Al Nîrûz, that is, the sixteenth day of the Persian month Mihr, and the first day of the year. From the year of the Hejra 278, the Karmatians, under several leaders, gave almost continual disturbance to the khalifs and their subjects for several years, committing great disorders and outrages in Chaldea, Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia, and at length establishing a considerable principality, whose power was in its meridian in the reign of Abu Dhâher, famous for his taking Mecca, and the indignities offered by him to the temple there, but which declined soon after his time, and came to nothing. Mowaffek died of the leprosy, or elephantiasis, according to Abulfeda and Abu'l-Faraj, just before the Karmatians began to disturb the repose of the Moslem empire. He could not forbear saying in his last illness, that of a hundred thousand men whom he commanded, not one was as miserable as himself. After that general's decease, his son Abu'l Abbâs Al Mo'taded succeeded him with the unanimous approbation of all the officers of the army, who likewise acknowledged his right to the crown after Al Mo'tamed, by the express command of the khalif°.

Next year, being the 279th of the Hejra, the khalif Al Mo'tamed died at Baghdâd, the 19th of Rajeb, being then about fifty years of age. The day before, he had drunk to great excess, and at night eaten more supper than usual; which proved fatal to him, as he expired before morning. Some of the authors, however, followed by M. D'Herbelot, relate, that he died of a squinancy, and that he was, at the time of his decease, fifty years and six months old. This khalif was extremely attached to his pleasures; so that he left the management of his affairs entirely to others. He was passionately fond of music, and not unacquainted with letters. He quitted the city of Sarra Manray, and fixed his residence for some time at Baghdâd; though he was buried, according to the best of the Arab writers, at the former of those places. During the course of twenty-three years reign, Al Mowaffek and his son Al Mo'taded entirely deprived him of his authority, leaving him only the bare name of khalif; insomuch that

*The khalif
Al Mo'ta-
med dies.*

° Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 274, 275. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 174, 175, 176. Ebn Shohnah, Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 277. Khondemir, Not. MS. ad Greg. Ab'ul-Faraj. p. 276. apud Joan. Swinton. A. M. Oxoniens. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Carinath, p. 256, 257.

when he once asked of his brother three hundred dinârs, that small sum was refused him. However, the Moslems in general were very well pleased with Al Mowaffek's administration. Al Mo'tamed was rather swarthy, of a good stature, had a comely face, a large head, a long beard, and a forehead a little pitted with the small-pox; both his hair and his beard were greyer than usual in one of his age. He loved gaming and cheerful conversation, as well as eating and drinking to great excess; whence it is no wonder he should have been too indolent to apply himself to the affairs of government. In this khalif's reign flourished Jaafar Ebn Mohammed Abu Maafher Al Balkhi, commonly known by the name of Albumaser, Al Mowaffek's astrologer, who attended him when he besieged a body of the Zenjian troops in Basra. This Abu Moafhar, when he lived at Baghdâd, was an enemy to Abu Yusef Yakûb Ebn Ishak Al Kendi, and endeavoured to prejudice the people of that city against him, because he applied himself to the study of philosophy. But Al Kendi having found a person who prevailed upon him to learn arithmetic and geometry, which he abandoned for the sake of astrology, before he had made a very considerable progress in them, he ceased to persecute, or give any farther molestation to that celebrated scholar. Abu Maafhar, a man of fine parts, and an excellent disposition, arrived at great skill in astrology, though a stranger even to the rudiments of that art when he was forty-seven years of age, and wrote several treatises upon that science, held in great esteem amongst the Arabs. The khalif Al Mosta'in ordered him to be severely whipt, because an unfavourable event that he had foretold actually came to pass. He lived to be above one hundred years of age, and died at Wâset. He was accused of drunkenness, and generally troubled with an epileptic disorder at the full moon. Al Kendi was of noble extraction, and born at Basra. His father Ishak had been governor of Cûfa in the khalifats of Al Mohdi and Harûn Al Rashîd. This Yakûb Al Kendi was so singularly skilled in physic, natural philosophy, arithmetic, dialectic or logic, music, geometry, and astronomy, and wrote so many famous books in most of those sciences, that he infinitely excelled all the Moslems of his age in the knowledge of those branches of literature, and was the only man of them that merited the honourable title of philosopher. Kostâ Ebn Lûkâ Al Baalbeki, a Christian philosopher, and his contemporary, rendered himself exceeding famous by travelling over a considerable
part

part of the imperial territories, and purchasing of the Greeks a multitude of books, which he brought with him first into Syria, and afterwards into Irák, where he was employed in translating some of the most useful from the Greek into Arabic. Several pieces written in a compendious, though most excellent method by this learned author were extant in the days of Abu'l-Faraj. We are also told that Senhârib invited him into Armenia, where he kept him till his death, and afterwards erected over him a mausoleum, or stately monument, in order to demonstrate to future ages the high regard he entertained for him. In fine, he was esteemed as the greatest scholar of the age, and famous for expressing his great flow of sentiments in a concise and pleasing manner.

It appears from an Oriental historian, that, in the reign of this khalif, there were found in a place of Syria called Tel Shâif, that is to say, *the Lover's Hill*, as also Tel Alsekka, *the Hill of Contracts*, seven tombs, every one of which contained a body extremely well preserved, whose shroud seemed quite new, and emitted a very grateful odour. Amongst these seven bodies there was one that had belonged to a young man, whose visage, and particularly the lips, appeared as fresh as those of a living person who had just drunk a draught of water. Near these tombs a stone was discovered which greatly resembled one of those which are used to sharpen or whet any iron instrument upon. This stone exhibited an inscription drawn up in characters that nobody could decipher; though the khalif ordered a great number of men of all nations, sects, and religions, who lived within the limits of the Moslem empire, to be assembled for that purpose ^p.

An inscription in unknown characters discovered.

The same day that Al Mo'tamed died, Abu'l Abbâs Ahmed Al Motaded Bi'llah Ebn Al Mowaffek, in consequence of his having been called to the succession after that prince, was saluted khalif. His mother's name was Darâr, or Derâr: she had been one of his father Al Mowaffek's concubines; but to what country she originally belonged, we have not been told. A profound tranquillity prevailed throughout the empire, immediately after his accession; so that there was great plenty of provisions and necessaries of all kinds in every province. Some writers pretend,

Al Mo'taded proclaimed khalif.

^p Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 175. Entych. ubi sup. p. 478, 479. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 272, 273, 274. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an Hej. 279. Not. MS. ad Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. p. 274. apud Joan. Swintonum, A. M. Oxoniens. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Mo'tamed, p. 638.

that Al Mo'taded, before his elevation to the khalifat, saw a person in a dream plunge his hand into the Tigris, and instantly pull it out again; upon which that river was immediately dried up, as though he held all the water in his hand; which when he opened, it returned to its former course. This person then asked him whether he knew him? and, upon his answering him in the negative, discovered himself to be Ali, desiring him at the same time to be kind to his family, after he should have ascended the Moslem throne. Al Mo'taded, continue those authors, promised he would, and was as good as his word: for the descendents of that celebrated imâm enjoyed a large share of this prince's favours, during the whole course of his reign^r.

*The khalif
demands
Khamarawiyah's
daughter in
marriage.*

The same year, Khamarawiyah Ebn Amed Ebn Tolûn sent Al Hosein Ebn Abd'allah, commonly called Ebn Al Jassas, as his ambassador, with very valuable presents, to the Moslem court, in order to propose a match between his daughter Ketralhada and Al Mo'taded's son Ali; but the khalif, having probably received a flattering account of the young lady's charms, demanded her in marriage for himself. To this match Khamarawiyah not only gave his consent, but testified likewise his approbation of his minister's conduct in transports of joy.

*Al Mo'-
taded
makes pre-
parations
to reduce
Hamdân;*

In the 280th year of the Hejra, died Jaafar, the son of Al Mo'tamed; and Hamdân Ebn Hamdûn Ebn Al Hâreth Al Ta'labi, one of the Arab emirs settled in Diyar Rabia, and the adjacent territories, either directly revolted against the khalif, or, by joining a body of Curds, gave umbrage to him. That prince, therefore, towards the close of the year, raised a considerable army, in order to reduce him.

*and gets
him into
his hands.*

He advanced to Mawfel at the head of his troops, and, in his march, defeated a large body of the enemy, killed a great number of them upon the spot, and drove most of the rest into the Zâb, a river that, at a small distance from Mawfel and Haditza, unites its stream with that of the Tigris. From Mawfel he marched to Mâredîn, or Maradîn, a place of some strength belonging to Hamdân, in which he had posted his son with a garrison to defend it; who surrendered to the khalif at discretion, the day after he presented himself before the town. Al Mo'taded, having possessed himself of this fortress, ordered every thing valuable in it to be carried out, levelled it with the ground, and then returned with his army to Baghdâd. In

^r Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 176, 177.

the mean time, Hamdân retired to Hofenâ, a large city extremely well fortified, and defended by a garrison of ten thousand men, commanded by Shadâd, one of his friends. However, the khalif found means to reduce that fortress also, and to get Hamdân into his hands. Some authors write, that Hamdân had three sons, Al Hofein, Abd'allah, and Dawd; and that the khalif gave Al Hofein the command of a body of his troops. Be that, however, as it may, Abd'allah Abu'l Hija, Hamdân's second son, was one of the khalif Al Mo'tâsi's generals. Some writers make Saifodawla the son of this Abd'allah, and others of Hamdân himself.

Next year, being the 282d of the Hejra, Khamarawiyah's daughter Ketralhada, attended by a splendid equipage, was sent by her father to Baghdâd, in the month of Al Moharram, and received by the khalif himself, at the gates of that city; from whence he conducted her to the imperial palace with great pomp and magnificence. Her father, however, was that same year assassinated by one of his domestics in bed, at Damascus; and the army substituted his son Jaish, or Jeish, in his room. As soon as this prince had mounted the throne of Syria and Egypt, the troops demanded his uncle's head; which he thereupon ordered to be cut off, and thrown among them, without delay. In a short time after his accession, he quitted the city of Damascus, where his father had fixed his residence, left a governor there, and returned with all possible expedition into Egypt^s.

*The khalif
marries
Ketral-
hada,
Khamara-
wiyah's
daughter.*

The 283d year of the Hejra proved fatal to Jaish, or Jeish; who, together with his mother, was massacred by the soldiery, after he had presided about eight months over Syria and Egypt. After his death, the mutineers demolished his palace in Mefr, and placed his brother Harûn Ebn Khamarawiyah, a child of ten years old, upon the throne. The khalif Al Mo'taded, having received advice of Harûn's accession, wrote him a letter, wherein he acquainted him, that he had conferred the prefecture of Egypt upon him, and imposed on him an annual tribute of one million five hundred thousand dinârs; which Harûn promised to pay out of the public revenues of Egypt. The Sclavi, or Slavonians, according to Abu'l-Faraj, either this or the following year, made an irruption into Thrace, put a great number of people to the sword, be-

*The trans-
actions of
the year
283.*

^s Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, Eutych. et Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 282.

sieged Constantinople itself, and ravaged all the country about that capital. The Greek emperor not being able to resist the barbarians with his own troops, continues this author, armed the Moslem slaves or prisoners, on this occasion, in order to make a vigorous sally upon the besiegers, and drive them from before the town. Which service being performed by the bravery of those slaves, he again disarmed them, and dispersed them over the provinces of the empire; fearing lest, if they remained in a body with their arms, after they had so distinguished themselves, they might meditate some enterprize against him. Soon after this event, a cartel was settled between the Christians and the Moslems, who were continually making incursions into each other's territories, for an exchange of prisoners: by which means, two thousand five hundred and four Moslems, men, women, and children, recovered their liberty. The same year, that is, the 283d of the Hejra, a phantom, or apparition, frequently presented itself before the khalif, notwithstanding all the doors of his palace and his apartments were shut, in different manners, postures, and shapes. Sometimes it would appear to him in the habit of a merchant, at others in that of a soldier, and often as a dervise. Its visage also changed its colour often; for sometimes it was white, and incircled with rays of light, at others brown, and at others pale and wan. The fame of this apparition was soon spread over the city of Baghdâd, and people reasoned differently upon it. Some took it to be the devil, whom the Divine Justice sent to this prince to torment him. Others believed it to be one of those wanton spirits called by the Arabs Jin, or Genii, which participate both of the nature of spirits and that of men. Others imagined, that it was an angel sent by God to reform this prince, and dispose him to abandon the vicious habits he had contracted. But the most sensible part of his subjects apprehended, that these tricks were played by some of his domestics, assisted by a person well versed in the occult sciences, in order to carry some design he had formed into execution. Nevertheless, the truth of the fact could never be discovered. At this period, a truce, or cessation of arms, in Sicily was agreed upon between the Christians and the Moslems^t.

^t Eutych. ubi sup. p. 480—483. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 177, 178. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 283. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 277. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. ubi sup. p. 634, 635. Chronic. Sic. Cantabrigens. apud Joan. Bapt. Carus. ubi sup. p. 7.

In the year of the Hejra 284, several wonderful phenomena, were seen in Egypt. On Holy Thursday, or Ascension-day, a high wind arose towards the evening, which blew till midnight; when it suddenly became so dark, the night having been pretty light before, that not the faintest traces of any object could be discerned. This thick darkness was succeeded by a storm, or tempest, much more violent than the former wind, which threw down a vast number of houses, and did incredible damage. During this storm, a large quantity of a sort of red sand fell upon people's heads in their houses, to their great terror and astonishment, and the whole hemisphere seemed to be covered with pillars of fire. Towards the approach of morning, the tempest in some degree abated, and the heavens appeared of an exceeding red colour, which they communicated to the earth, mountains, trees, men, and every other object, for the space of two hours; the wind blowing all the time extremely violent. Then this surprising redness turned into a yellowish colour, which continued till noon, and was succeeded by a thick black cloud, that remained till the middle of the next day; so that, for a day and a half, the face of the heavens was totally obscured, this cloud, and the aforesaid phenomena, all that time absolutely intercepting the solar rays. After the dissipation of the thick black cloud, the boisterous weather immediately ceased.

*Several
wonderful
phenomena
in Egypt.*

In the course of this year, some of the Arab astrologers predicted a general inundation, occasioned by a long course of continual rains, by which Mesopotamia and all the neighbouring countries, except the territory of Baghdâd, should be laid under water. But the reverse of this prediction happened. For, in consequence of a long uninterrupted drought, the waters of the Tigris, and other rivers, were lower than ever had been known in the memory of man; insomuch, that they frequently offered up prayers to heaven for rain, in the public mosques, at Baghdâd. About this time, the khalif, excited by his affection for Ali and his descendants, would have issued an order to curse publicly the name of Moâwiyah I. of the house of Ommiyah, in all the mosques of the empire, for the solemn malediction that prince caused to be published against Ali and his family. But Obeid'allah Ebn Solimân, his vizir, dissuaded him from this step, by representing to him, that it would make him incur the hatred of a very considerable part of his subjects; and, by raising the credit of the race of Ali, then dispersed all over the empire,

*Other occurrences
this year.*

would perhaps enable them to embarrass his affairs. Before the conclusion of this year, the Karmatians, a sect of which we have already given our readers some account, began to be in motion.

The Karmatians commit hostilities in Bahrein.

In January 898, Abu Sa'id appeared for the first time at the head of a body of Karmatian and Arab troops in Bahrein. Having taken several towns in that province, he advanced to Al Katif, and even threatened to pay the Moslems a visit at Basra. This threat induced the khalif to surround that city with a wall, which cost him fourteen thousand dinars.

The khalif reduces Ahmid.

The 286th year of the Hejra produced several military operations. The khalif Al Mo'taded besieged Amid, or Amida, a city of Mesopotamia, seated upon the Tigris, with a powerful army. For some time, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Shaikh, who commanded in the town, defended it with great bravery. But Al Mo'taded having, by the application of his catapults, made a practicable breach in the walls, and being upon the point of carrying the place by storm, the commandant found himself obliged to surrender, on condition his life should be spared. Kinnisrin also and Al Awâsem submitted to the khalif. After which, he took Ebn Shaikh into favour, gave him a sumptuous vest, and carried him to Baghdad^s.

The Karmatians penetrate into Yamâma.

In the same year, Abu Sa'id Al Hamâni, with a body of the Karmatian forces, penetrated into Yamâma, and laid siege to Hajr, the capital of the district of the same name. But as the place was strongly fortified, and rendered almost impregnable by its situation, he found himself obliged to retire, and abandon the siege. However, after this repulse, he invested Al Ahfâ, a town about two miles north-west of Hajr, and ravaged all the adjacent territory; then he returned to the siege of Hajr, and carried it on with more vigour than before. But, notwithstanding all his efforts, he could not make himself master of that fortress, this campaign.

The khalif prepares to march against them.

The khalif, receiving advice that the Karmatians had over-ran a considerable part of Arabia and Irâk, pillaging all the country through which they marched, and putting all the Moslems they could meet with to the sword, assembled a considerable army, to stop their farther progress; which he ordered to advance towards the frontiers of those

^s Abu Ja'far Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. Golii Not. ad Al-fragan. p. 96, 97. See also Mr. Sale's Map of Arabia, prefixed to his Prelim. Discourse. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 480-483. Chronic. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiens. ubi sup.

provinces, though none of the troops of which it was composed could enter upon action this campaign.

The next year, Al Abbâs Ebn Omar, the khalif's general, took the field with a powerful army against the Karmatians, who continued still to make terrible havock in Arabia and Irâk. That general soon brought Abu Sa'id Al Hamâni, who commanded them, to a general action; wherein the khalif's troops were overthrown with great slaughter, and seven hundred of them, amongst whom was Al Abbâs Ebn Omar himself, taken prisoners. The Karmatian general, however, dismissed Al Abbâs Ebn Omar, on condition that he should represent to the khalif the fatal consequences of continuing the war against the Karmatians, who were inured to all kinds of hardships and fatigues, and would therefore always prove superior to the forces of that prince, to whom they were resolved never to give quarter; as likewise to endeavour to prevail upon him, by any motive that he could think of, to desist from that war. This representation he accordingly made, and it had such an effect upon the khalif, that he sent no forces against them the following year. Abu'l Abbâs landed a considerable body of Moslem troops from Africa at Mazara, or Mazaria, in Sicily, the 24th of July, in the present year.

*His forces
are over-
thrown
with very
great
slaughter.*

In the following, the plague made such dreadful havock in Adherbijân, that the living were not sufficient to bury the dead; infomuch that they were obliged to leave them exposed on the highways in great numbers. About the same time, the Greeks made an irruption into Kaifûm, ravaged it, and carried off about fifteen thousand Moslems prisoners. The whole hemisphere was filled with those meteors called falling-stars, the ninth of Dhu'lhajja, from midnight till morning, to the great surprize of the beholders, in Egypt. Abu Sa'id Al Hamâni, the Karmatian general, took Hajr in Yamâma, having starved the garrison to a surrender, either the beginning of this, or towards the conclusion of the preceding year. After he had put all the inhabitants to the sword, and distributed every thing valuable belonging to them amongst his troops, he abandoned the town. Abu'l Abbâs, with the African troops, took Palermo, September 8, 901, and massacred a great number of the citizens at the reduction of that place †.

*The re-
markable
events of
the year
288.*

† Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 278. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 484, 485. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 178—181. Chronic. Sic. Cantabrigiens. ubi sup.

The influence of a Karmatian officer.

Next year, being the 289th of the Hejra, Al Mo'taded, receiving advice that a body of the Karmatian troops had encamped in the neighbourhood of Cûfa, sent a detachment of his forces to reconnoitre them. The officer, who commanded the detachment, was so fortunate as to surprise one of their parties, and to carry off one of their principal chiefs, whom he immediately conducted to the imperial palace at Baghdâd. As soon as the Karmatian was brought before the khalif, that prince asked him whether they believed that the spirit of God resided in their bodies, or not? To which question he made answer, "Suppose the spirit of God should reside in us, what hurt does this to you? or if the spirit of the devil should have taken up his residence in us, of what advantage is this to you? Mind your own business, and concern yourself not with other men's affairs." "What then," said the khalif, "do you think of me and my dignity in particular?" The Karmatian boldly replied, "Your ancestor Al Abbâs was alive at the time of the prophet's death, and yet did he either aspire to the khalifat, or had he it offered him by any of the Companions? Was not Abu Becr unanimously elected his successor? After that prince's decease, Omar was called to the succession, not the least mention having been made in his predecessor's will of Al Abbâs. Omar nominated six persons before he expired, to elect a new khalif, without permitting Al Abbâs to be one of their number. What title, therefore, can you have to the khalifat, when your great ancestor Al Abbâs himself was excluded from that high dignity by the Companions?" Al Mo'taded was so incensed at this insolent discourse, that he instantly ordered the executioner, then present, to disjoint all his bones, to cut off his hands and his feet, and finally to strike off his head.

The Khalif Al Mo'taded dies.

In the course of the same year, the khalif Al Mo'taded died at Baghdâd, the 22d of the Latter Rabi, after he had obliged his subjects to take an oath in favour of his son Al Moctafi, whom he had declared his successor. Some authors relate that his death was occasioned by immoderate coition; and others, that he was poisoned by Ismael Ebn Mâlec. He reigned about nine years and nine months, and died either in the forty-seventh, forty-eighth, or the fiftieth year of his age. His judge Abu Omar said the prayer usual on such occasions, when he was interred. In his person, he was lean, swarthy, of a proper stature, just

^u Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. p. 278, 279. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. ubi sup. p. 635.

beginning to grow grey, had a handsome face, together with a long beard, died black, and was of a strong robust constitution. With regard to his disposition, he is said to have been a person of great sagacity and penetration, to have been thoroughly versed in the art of government, happy and expeditious in hitting upon expedients, at all critical conjunctures, and a prince of great justice and moderation. On some occasions, however, he was rigorous and severe in his punishments, a disposition which made him feared by his domestics, though on others his lenity was unparalleled. He was also naturally brave, an encourager of learned men, and sometimes extremely liberal, though he has been represented by Eutychius and Abu'l-Faraj as a lover of money. His experience and excellent genius for government rendered him every way qualified for the sublime post he so worthily filled. In short, if we believe some of the eastern writers, he excelled all his predecessors of the house of Al Abbâs, except the khalif Al Mansûr, in the justness of his administration. But the true disposition of this prince will more clearly appear from the following instances of his affection for the descendants of Ali, as well as of his justice, severity, and moderation, which have been recorded by the Oriental historians.

The provost of Baghdâd having one day stopped in the hands of a merchant the sum of thirty thousand dinârs, sent by Mohammed Ebn Zeid, prince of Mazanderân, or Tabrestân, of the race of Ali, to the chiefs of the descendants of that imâm, according to annual custom, they immediately carried their complaint to the khalif. That prince very generously gave them the money that had been seized, and, in order to justify this action, which appeared strange to the Sonnites, or orthodox Moslems, who considered the followers of Ali as heretics, he related to them the following dream.

*An instance
of his af-
fection for
the house of
Ali.*

“ I thought that I formerly saw in a dream a man standing at the end of a bridge that I was to pass, who seemed at first to have an intention to oppose my passage; but afterwards he suddenly approached me, and presented a spade that he held in his hand, commanding me at the same time to break the ground on which we stood. I obeyed his order, and after I had given some strokes with the spade, he told me he was Ali, and that as many of my sons should enjoy the khalifat as I had given strokes upon the ground with the spade. Then he enjoined me to

” Mohammed Ebn Abd'awahed, in *Tarikh Al Abbâs*.

be

be kind to his family, and particularly those members of it that lived under my government. In consequence, therefore, of the promise I made him, as well as in point of justice, I ought to restore the thirty thousand dinars to the descendents of that imâm, to whom they properly belong^x."

Two instances of his severity.

The severity of this khalif on some occasions was exceeding great, as will appear from the two following examples. A soldier having once picked some bunches of grapes off a certain Moslem's vine, the man immediately carried his complaint to the khalif, who commanded both the soldier and his captain to appear before him, in order to receive the punishment he should think fit to inflict upon them. Some of the people about him demanding what crime the captain had committed? he answered, "I saw him kill a man unjustly in my uncle's reign, and I then made a vow to punish him for so enormous a crime if ever the khalifat should fall into my hands, and he should be found guilty of any other fault^y."

An eastern writer relates, that a merchant having lent one of the principal lords of the khalif's court a large sum of money, after he had applied for the payment of it several times in vain, and given it up for lost, resolved to trouble himself no farther about it, but to quit the court in order to go a voyage. This design he communicated to a friend, who advised him by all means to have recourse to sheikh Kaiâth for the recovery of his money. The sheikh, upon application for his assistance in this affair, went directly to the lord, and no sooner represented, with a tone of authority, the iniquity of his conduct, than he paid the merchant the sum he was indebted to him. The great reputation, or rather authority, of this sheikh Khaiâth was acquired by a very singular action, an account of which has been preserved by one of the Oriental historians. A Turk attempting to ravish a girl in the city of Baghdâd, she found herself obliged to call out for assistance. At the cries of this girl, sheikh Kaiâth ran to her relief, and begged the Turk, in the most pressing terms, not to offer her any violence; but the brute was so far from paying any regard to his intreaties, that he insulted him, and treated him in a very insolent manner. The sheikh, not being able to think of any other expedient to prevent him from accomplishing his wicked design, mounted the mi-

^x Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, in *Nighiaristan*.
^y D'Herbel. ubi supra, p. 636.

naret or steeple of the great mosque, and from thence called the people together to prayer, though it was then out of the stated times of prayer, in order to excite the Moslems so assembled to succour the poor girl, and deliver her out of the hands of the brutish Turk. The khalif, having been apprized of the action, but being ignorant of the motive to it, commanded the sheikh to be brought before him, and severely reprimanded him for convening the people to prayer at an unlawful hour; but being afterwards informed of the whole affair, he ordered the Turk to be punished according to his demerit, and at the same time; commanded the sheikh, as often as he should see any violence or injustice committed, to publish it in the same manner, that the author of it might meet with the treatment he deserved. It was this action that gave such a great degree of credit to the sheikh Khaiath, and every person in Baghdâd, whether great or small, payed the highest regard to his admonitions, for fear he should assemble the people as before, make public the crimes he was willing to expose, and bring the authors to condign punishment².

This khalif being desirous of borrowing a considerable sum of money of one of his subjects, who had been represented to him as in very affluent circumstances, the man said, as soon as he was brought into his presence, "Take as much of my money as you please." "But (replied the khalif) what security do you require for it?" "God (returned the man) has trusted you with the government of his lands and his servants, of which you have shewn yourself worthy by your excellent administration; and shall I be afraid to trust you with my money?" These words so affected the khalif, that he is said to have shed tears, and to have told the man, that he would not finger a dirhem of his property, but that if hereafter he should become indigent, all the public revenues of the empire should be at his service. This moderation was the more remarkable at that time, as he was in great want of money to pay the forces; a necessity which, in another reign, might have produced very alarming effects. He also eased the people of the burden of some of their taxes, and remitted the tribute paid by the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina. Other instances of his preferring the welfare of his subjects to pecuniary considerations, even when his

Some other remarkable particulars relating to him.

² Mohammed Ebn Abd'awahed, in *Tarikh Al Abbâs.*

finances were at a low ebb, have been recorded by some of the best Oriental writers ^a.

*His lenity
to his ser-
vants.*

With regard to this khalif's lenity and mildness to his servants, on some occasions, a very remarkable story has been preserved by Abu'l-Faraj. Abd'allah Ebn Solimân Ebn Waheb, his visir, being one day with him, a servant, whilst he endeavoured to drive away the flies, struck off the khalif's cap; an accident which greatly confounded the visir; but the khalif, without the least emotion, only said, "This boy is exceeding careless." This moderation so astonished the visir, that he could not forbear falling prostrate on the ground, and saying, "O emperor of the faithful! is it possible there should be so much lenity in so great a prince?" The khalif replied, "What other notice ought to be taken of such an accident as this? I knew that if the poor boy had done this designedly, he must have been out of his senses; and certainly, where no ill is intended, no action ought to be imputed to any one as a crime ^b."

*Other au-
thors re-
present him
as cruel on
some occa-
sions.*

Other authors, however, relate, that at certain intervals he was cruel, and delighted in spilling human blood, in so much that he punished with death the most trifling faults. The same writers also affirm, that whenever any of his domestics incurred his displeasure, he ordered them to be buried alive. From what has been observed of this khalif, it clearly appears, that different authors have represented him in different lights, at least as inconsistent with himself, and acting differently at different times; so that we must consider him on certain occasions as adorned with some of those virtues, the exercise of which appears most amiable in a great prince, and on others as deformed by their opposite vices ^c.

*Several
learned
men encour-
aged in
Al Mo'ta-
dad's reign.*

During the khalifat of Al Mo'taded several learned men were not only countenanced, but caressed, at the Moslem court. Amongst these may be ranked the three sons of Mûsa Ebn Shâker, Mohammed, Ahmed, and Al Hasan, who excelled in various branches of literature. Nûsa Ebn Shâker himself followed the occupation of a robber, or highwayman, in his earlier years; but he afterwards became reformed, and was one of the greatest favourites of the khalif Al Mamûn. After his death that prince com-

^a Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 179. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ^b Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 279. ^c Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, Ism. Abulfed. & Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra.

mitted his three sons, then very young, to the care of Ishak Ebn Ibrahim Al Mofa'bi, who placed them under Yahya Ebn Abi Mansûr, in the university of Baghdâd. However, their circumstances then were very narrow, as the pensions settled by Al Mamûn upon his favourites were but small. Abu Jaafar Mohammed, the eldest, made a very considerable progress in geometry and astronomy; though afterwards, applying himself to military affairs, he had a command given him in the army, which he kept till the Turks, becoming masters of every thing, filled it with officers of their own nation. Ahmed, the second of Mûsa's sons, was inferior, in point of learning, to his brother Mohammed; but he had the best mechanical head of any man of the age. Al Hasan, the youngest son, was extremely fond of geometry, and of such prodigious parts as could be equalled by none of his contemporaries; for whatever knowledge he had attained was by dint of genius, and, as it were by inspiration, not acquired by labour and study. When he had read only the six first books of the Elements of Euclid, with the assistance of those, purely by force of genius, he could demonstrate any proposition contained in the books of that celebrated author he had not studied; as he scrupled not to tell Al Merûzi, when he reproached him with not having gone farther in Euclid, before the khalif Al Mamûn. However, that prince, though giving credit to what he advanced in this particular, blamed him for his want of application. Mohammed Ebn Mûsa instructed in his house or school at Baghdâd, the famous Thâbet Ebn Korra, the Sabian, was born at Harân or Harrân, in Mesopotamia, and introduced him to the khalif Al Motaded, who consulted him as his astrologer, honoured him with a greater degree of familiarity than even his vizir himself, and took an inconceivable liking to him. This Thâbet Ebn Korra Ebn Merwân composed several excellent treatises upon mathematical, physical, and logical subjects. He likewise wrote some books in Syriac upon the Sabian religion, containing an account of their method of wrapping up and burying their dead, of their cleanness and uncleanness, of the animals they consider as proper or improper for sacrifices, of their stated times of public worship, and, in short, of all their rites, precepts, and institutions. Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Merwân Ebn Al Tiyebe Al Sarkhafi likewise flourished in this reign. He was also an eminent Moslem philosopher, and composed several excellent pieces, filled with various kinds of crudi-
tion

tion, that prevailed both amongst the Arabs and the ancients. He had first been preceptor to the khalif Al Mo'taded, and afterwards his most intimate companion and friend, insomuch, that he communicated all his secrets to him, not excepting even those of state, and consulted him upon the most important points ^d.

S E C T. V.

From the Accession of Al Moctafi to the Deposition of Al Motakki.

*Al Moctafi
succeeds Al
Mo'taded
in the
khalifat.*

AL MO'TADED was no sooner dead, than Kasem Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Solimân Ebn Waheb, his visir, who succeeded Yusef Ebn Yakûb, caused Abu Mohammed Al Moctafi Bi'llah, his son, to be proclaimed khalif at Baghdâd. He also wrote to the new khalif, who was then at Al Rakka, upon the Euphrates, desiring him to return as soon as possible to his capital, in order to take upon him the government of the empire. As soon as Al Moctafi received advice of his father's death, he obliged all the forces he commanded at Al Rakka to take the oath of allegiance to him, and posted away with the utmost expedition to Baghdâd, where he arrived the 8th of the Former Jomâda, the present year. Upon his arrival, he was inaugurated with the usual formalities, and acknowledged emperor of the faithful by all his subjects in that city. His mother Bakhtajaknah, called by some writers Khâde', and by others Hihac or Hihaca, was the daughter of Al Kasem Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Solimân Ebn Waheb, the prime minister, or visir. This we find asserted by Eutychius, though the contrary seems to be intimated by Abu Jaafar Al Tabari; who relates, that this Al Kasem, in Al Mo'taded's life-time, formed a design to exclude Al Moctafi from the succession, with the privity of Badar or Badîr, who had a great ascendant over that khalif. Al Kasem being afraid that Badar would discover the whole affair to Al Moctafi, inspired the khalif with sentiments by no means favourable to his interest. As Badar then resided in Al Jebâl, or the Persian Irâk, at some distance from Baghdâd, and consequently was incapable of obviating the ill impressions made on the khalif's mind by his enemy's insinuations, Al Kasem easily prevailed upon Al Moctafi

^d Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 279—283. D'Herbelot. Bibl. Orient. p. 759. Gol. Not. ad Alfragan. p. 185.

to send an army against him: but before this measure was actually pursued, the khalif found means to bribe the greatest part of Badar's troops to desert him, by privately distributing considerable sums of money amongst them; which obliged that commander himself to retire to Wâset. Al Moctafi, having been informed of what had happened, advanced at the head of his forces to attack him; but, before hostilities commenced, Al Kafem sent Al Harâm, the principal judge, to Badar, to offer him a pardon, provided he would submit to the khalif, and lay down his arms. This being accepted by Badar, upon the terms prescribed, he immediately disbanded his troops, and departed with Al Harâm for Baghdâd. Of which circumstance Al Kafem having been apprized, he sent a person to take off his head upon the road; which being done, and the head brought to Baghdâd, Al Moctafi returned to his capital in peace. This circumstance renders it improbable, if we admit it to be true, that the new khalif's mother was Al Kafem's daughter; as it cannot be supposed that the visir would have entered into any scheme that had the least tendency to forward the exclusion of his grandson Al Moc-tafi from the Moslem throne *.

In the same year, the Karmatians, under the command of Yahya Ebn Zakrûnna, advanced to Rûfâfa, and defeated Shahr, the Deylamite, who was sent against them by the khalif, in the neighbourhood of that city. Shahr himself was killed in the action, and his forces were utterly dispersed; after which battle, the rebels burnt the great mosque at Rûfâfa, and ravaged all the adjacent territory. From thence they marched into Syria, routed Harûn Ebn Khamarawiyah Ebn Ahmed Ebn Tolûn's forces, under the conduct of Ta'j Ebn Hanaf, or Tagaj Ebn Jof Al Far-gâni, as he is called by Eutychius, and at last laid siege to Damascus: but Harûn, having sent Bedr Al Yamâmi with a reinforcement into Syria, after the junction of those troops with the army commanded by Ta'j, his forces attacked Yahya with such bravery, that they entirely defeated him, killed him upon the spot, with a great number of his men, and forced his camp. This blow, however, did not dishearten the Karmatians; who thereupon elected his brother Al Hosein, then not above twenty-two years of age, their general, in his room. Al Hosein, having been

*The Kar-
matians
make an
irruption
into Syria.*

* Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn. ubi sup. p. 181, 182. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 486—489. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 283. Abulfed. ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. Art. Moktafi, p. 592.

joined by a body of auxiliary troops, penetrated to Hems, and made himself master of that city. From thence he marched towards Damascus, in order to form a second time the siege of that place; but the inhabitants, by advancing a large sum of money, prevailed upon him to lay aside that design. He, therefore, returned to Hems; from whence he advanced to Hamah and Maara or Maarara, near two days journey from Kinnifrîn, seized upon both those cities, and put the greatest part of their inhabitants to the sword. The people of Baalbec he served in the same manner: but Salamiyah, a town in the district of Hems, or, as others say, in that of Hamah, being a place of considerable strength, he was obliged to promise the people their lives, and the secure possession of all their effects, before he could induce them to surrender; notwithstanding which promise, he had no sooner entered the town, than he ordered them all, without distinction of sex or age, to be put to the sword^f.

And committed dreadful devastations there.

It must be observed, that this Al Hosein, now at the head of the Karmatians, pretended to be Ahmed, the son of Mohammed, the son of Ismael, the son of Jaafar, surname Al Sadik, or *the Just*, the sixth imâm; and, in order to render this pretence the more credible, he shewed a mole, or wart, on his face, which, as he affirmed, resembled that of his father Mohammed in the same place. Hence he acquired, by way of derision or ridicule, the surname of Saheb Al Samah, and the general that commanded under him that of Saheb Al Khal; the words *Samah* and *Khal* in Arabic denoting the same thing. About two years after this irruption of the Karmatians into Syria, Ali Ebn Abd'alaziz Al Bagawi died at Mecca. After the surrender of Salamiyah, Al Hosein destroyed a great number of towns and villages in Syria, killed many of the khalif's subjects, carried others into captivity, and desolated the most considerable part of that fine country with fire and sword^g.

The military operations between the Moslems and the Greeks.

A little before this time, the African Moslems, having equipped a strong fleet, reduced the island of Lemnos, and, ravaging without control the coasts of Asia, threw the imperial city itself into great consternation. The Arab fleet in this expedition was commanded by Leo Tripolites, a renegado, who reduced Thessalonica, cutting to pieces the greatest part of the garrison, and taking Chatzilacius,

^f Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 182. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 490, 491. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. & D'Herbel. ubi sup. Gollii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 126, 127. 276, &c.

^g Khondemir.

the

the imperial governor, prisoner. However, the place was afterwards redeemed with a large sum by Simeon, one of the emperor's secretaries, who was on that account raised to the rank of patrician. Leo then sailed to Crete, and distributed part of the plunder he had acquired, at Lemnos, (which he abandoned soon after it fell into his hands), Thessalonica, and on the coasts of Asia, amongst the Moslems there. After which expedition, he returned home, without having sustained any considerable loss. The emperor, not being able to oppose the Moslems by sea, sent Andronicus Ducas, and Eustathius Argyrüs, into the East, in order to attack them by land; a service which they performed with great success, and gained several victories. These events we learn from the Greek writers only, not the least mention being made of this expedition by any of the Arab historians ^b.

In the following year, being the 290th of the Hejra, commencing December 5, 902, the khalif Al Moctafi sent Al A'z, one of his commanders, with a body of ten thousand men, to attack the Karmatians. As soon as that general came up with the rebels, his men immediately charged them with great fury; but the Karmatians, animated by Al Motawek, who commanded them, routed the khalif's forces, and cut the most considerable part of them in pieces; Al A'z himself, attended by the shattered remains of his army, with great difficulty making his escape to Aleppo, whither he was closely pursued by Al Motawek, who laid siege to the town; but the inhabitants, supported by Al A'z's troops, repulsed him in all his attacks, and at last forced him to abandon the siege. The khalif, receiving advice of what had happened, retired to Al Rakka, and sent several other bodies of troops afterwards against the Karmatians, but without effect. This success enabled Al Hosein to ravage the provinces without control.

The khalif's forces not able to reduce the Karmatians.

It seems to appear from some of the Greek writers, that, about this time, the Moslems invaded the imperial territories with a very numerous and formidable army; which obliged the emperor to dispatch Himerius and Andronicus Ducas against them. They were both generals of great courage, experience, and conduct, continue these authors; but a fatal misunderstanding between them, owing to the malicious intrigues of Samonas, put a stop to

The Christians invade the Moslem territories.

^b Georg. Cedren. ubi sup. p. 599—602, &c. Joan. Zonar. ubi sup. lib. xvi. p. 188, 189, &c.

the progress of their arms. But the particulars of this expedition, as well as those of the former, have been passed over in silence by both the Persian and Arab historians.

The khalif's troops overthrow the Karmatians.

The next year the khalif, having been informed that Al Husein had pillaged several parts of Syria, and put the rest under contribution, took the field with an army of one hundred thousand men, in order to reduce him. He advanced first to Al Rakka, upon the Euphrates, and from thence detached Mohammed Ebn Solimân, with a large body of troops, in quest of the rebels, who retired at his approach; but at last he came up with them, and attacked them with such bravery, that he entirely defeated them, without having sustained any considerable loss. A great number of the rebels perished in the action, and Husein himself, together with the general who acted under him, and three hundred and sixty of his men, fell into the hands of one of the khalif's officers, who conducted them under an escorte, as prisoners, to Baghdâd. The battle was fought at a place called Tamna. After this victory, the khalif triumphantly entered his capital, and ordered the hands and feet of all the Karmatian prisoners, not excepting those of Al Husein himself, to be first cut off, and afterwards their heads.

The Turks make an irruption into Mawarâ'nahr.

The same year, according to Abu'l-Faraj, the Turks made an irruption into Mawarâ'nahr with a prodigious army; no less than seven hundred officers of superior rank having, amongst the rest, pitched their tents in that province. However, the khalif's forces attacked this great multitude early in the morning, and routed them with great slaughter. Soon after this event, the Greeks entered the Moslem territories with an army of one hundred thousand men, divided into ten bodies, which burnt several towns and villages, carried off a great number of prisoners, and then retired, without having done any thing very considerable. This may possibly be the expedition mentioned in the preceding page; but that it really is so, we must not presume to assert. Be that, however, as it may, as it has been but slightly noticed by Abu'l-Faraj, who has scarce touched upon any particulars relating to it, we can say nothing farther of it. It appears from Abulfeda, that Ibrahim Ebn Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ibrahim Ebn Al Aglab, khalif of Kairwân died in the month of Du'lkaada, in Sicily, during the present year: the body was carried out of that island to Africa, and interred at Kairwân. This Ibrahim was a person of great penetration,
famous

famous for his extraordinary memory, extremely devout, charitable to the poor, and, indeed, one of the best and most excellent princes of the family of Al Aglab^{*}.

If we believe Eutychius, the Moslems took Seleucia from the Romans, in the month of the Latter Rabî, either this or the preceding year, and sent a great number of the enemy, whom they had made prisoners on this occasion, in the month of Rajeb, into Egypt. The same author writes, that, in the second year of the khalifat of Al Moctafi, the Nile did not rise above thirteen cubits, notwithstanding the prayers of the Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans, to implore from heaven a farther increase of the waters of that river.

The Moslems take Seleucia.

The 292d year of the Hejra proved fatal to the house of Tolûn in Syria and Egypt. The khalif Al Moctafi, flushed with the great success that had attended his arms the preceding campaign, resolved to attempt the entire reduction of those provinces. To this undertaking he was farther excited by the loss sustained by Harûn Ebn Khamarawiyah Ebn Ahmed Ebn Tolûn in the Karmatian war, two or three years before, wherein all his best commanders were cut off, and the flower of his forces perished. He, therefore, sent Mohammed Ebn Solimân with a powerful army to conquer Syria and Egypt; who first attacked and defeated a large body of the Karmatian troops near Hems, and took seven hundred of them prisoners. Soon after, one of his parties came up with Al Nâjem, the general that commanded them, who had made his escape from the battle, at a village called Al Dâlia, seized him, and brought him to Mohammed Ebn Solimân, who sent him, together with the seven hundred prisoners, to the khalif, then at Al Rakka. Upon their arrival, that prince ordered them all to be conducted to Baghdâd; where Al Nâjem was first tortured, and afterwards beheaded, and the others butchered, without mercy. The bodies of Al Nâjem and the other principal Karmatian captives were, after these executions, hung upon gibbets erected for that purpose without the gates of the city. From Hems, which after this victory immediately surrendered to him, Mohammed Ebn Solimân marched to Damascus; the gates of which city Badr Al Jamâni, Harûn's commandant there, opened at his approach. After the surrender of Damascus, Mohammed led his army through Palestine, in order to

The khalif's forces conquer Syria and Egypt;

^{*} Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Ism. Abulfed. excerpt. ex Cod. Arab. MS. in Biblioth. D. Laurent. Escorial. Vide etiam Joan. Bapt. Carus. ubi supra, p. 19.

reach with all possible expedition the borders of Egypt. Harûn, receiving advice of Mohammed's march, advanced with his forces to the frontiers, to dispute the passage into his kingdom. By the advice of his generals, he took post in a place called Al Abbâsîa, in that part of Egypt known by the name of Al Hûf, where he waited for Mohammed Ebn Solimân. In the mean time, Damianus, or Damîân, a Greek, the khalif's admiral, appeared with that prince's fleet off the coasts of Egypt, and landed a body of troops, which routed a large detachment of Harûn Ebn Khamarawiyah's forces at Tanûhah. Shaibân Ebn Ahmed Ebn Tolûn, imagining that a favourable opportunity now offered of obtaining the throne, assassinated his nephew Harûn Ebn Khamarawiyah, on Sunday, the 18th of the month Safar, and for some days was considered as the sovereign of Egypt. But the officers of the army having an utter aversion to the assassin, wrote a letter to Mohammed Ebn Solimân, pressing him to hasten his march, and assuring him that they were ready to submit to the khalif, provided that prince would take them under his protection. Mohammed, having granted their request, and sent them such an answer as satisfied them in every particular, entered Egypt the 28th of Safar, without opposition. He advanced with his army drawn up in order of battle to Al Riyah, at a small distance from Mefr, where he was met by Shaibân himself, and several of his brothers, who submitted to the khalif; upon which an unlimited pardon and amnesty were granted by Mohammed, in his master's name, both for their lives and effects. However, that general ordered all the officers and secretaries who had been in the service of the family of Tolûn to leave Egypt, and retire with their effects, the possession of which was secured to them, to Baghdâd. Mohammed himself exacted of those to whom he had granted the khalif's protection, and others, the sum of one million of dinârs, remained six months at the head of the administration in Egypt, and then, after he had substituted in his room İsa Al Nûsheri, to govern the province, repaired to Irâk. There he also collected another sum, drawn out of various provinces, amounting to one million of dinârs, for the use of the khalif. But that prince having been informed that Mohammed had embezzled a considerable part of the public revenues of Egypt, and amassed great sums of money, put him under arrest, and even loaded him with irons, in order to oblige him to refund what he had secreted in that opulent country. After Mohammed's ar-
rival

rival in Irâk, Mohammed Ebn Ali Al Khalîj, one of Harûn's commanders in Syria, who had remained for some time with Mohammed Ebn Solimân, revolted against the khalif, and posted himself with a body of troops he had assembled at Al Ramla, threatening to make an irruption into Egypt. The news of Al Khalîj's design reaching the ears of Ifa Al Nûsheri, he and Al Hosein Ebn Amed Al Mâderâni put themselves at the head of the forces in Egypt, and advanced towards the frontiers, in order to give him battle; but receiving advice of his approach, and being informed that his army was much more numerous than had before been supposed, they retired with great precipitation to Al Fostât. Not thinking themselves safe in that place, they fled to Al Jîza, burning two bridges in their flight, to prevent Al Khalîj from coming up with them. In short, they were struck with such terror, that they never continued long in one place, but run about the country as if they had been pursued by an enemy of superior strength. The inhabitants of Al Fostât, now entirely abandoned, and left without a governor, as well as those of the adjacent district, were so overwhelmed with consternation, that Al Khalîj seized upon Mesr, which he entered on Thursday, the 16th of Dhu'lkaada, the present year, without opposition, and resided there eight months.

Next year, being the 293d of the Hejra, Al Moctafi sent an army into Egypt, under the command of Fâtec, his freedman, and Badr Al Fadl Jamâmi, to reduce the rebel Mohammed Ebn Ali Al Khalîj. The khalif's forces found him encamped near Al Fostât, and, after a sharp engagement, entirely defeated him. Al Khalîj himself, however, found means to make his escape, though he was soon after taken out of the place where he had lain concealed, and brought to Ifa Al Nûsheri; who sent him, with a great number of rebel officers, in the month of Rajeb, to the khalif at Baghdâd. Upon their arrival Al Moctafi ordered them to be loaded with irons, and thrown into prison. He also recalled Fâtec, after he had made a triumphant entry into Al Fostât, and appointed Ifa Ebn Mohammed Al Nûsheri to preside over the province of Egypt¹.

*and defeat
Mohammed
Ebn Ali
Al Khalîj
there.*

The same year the Karmatians, under the command of Zakrûna Ebn Mahrûna, seized upon Adhraât and Basra,

¹ Eutych. ubi supra, p. 498, 499. Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin. et Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. D'Herbel. Bibl. Orient. ubi supra, p. 592.

The Karmatians and the Greeks invaded the Moslem empire.

pillaged those two cities, and put all the inhabitants to the sword. Then they advanced to Damascus, slew Saleb Ebn Fadl, the governor's deputy, and plundered the adjacent district. But they were repulsed, in a fally, by the gar-rison, who drove them from the place, after they had destroyed abundance of their men. Notwithstanding which repulse, Zakrûna marched to Tiberias, called by the Arabs Tabariyah, where he was met by Yusef Ebn Ibrahim, with a body of the khalif's forces, who gave him battle, entirely defeated him, and pursued him into the Desert as far as Al Sawân. Here, however, Zakrûna waited for Yusef, routed him in his turn, with very great slaughter, and made himself master of his camp. The place where this battle was fought is called by some authors Sabian, and said to be in the neighbourhood of Kadefia, a city of the Babylonian Irâk, about fifteen parafangs from Cûfa. Be that as it may, so unexpected a blow as this greatly embarrassed the khalif's affairs. The Greeks invaded the Moslem territories, took the city of Cyrrihus, or Kûrûs, burnt the great mosque, massacred most of the inhabitants, and carried off the rest prisoners, in the course of the present year.

The Karmatians plunder a caravan going to Mecca.

In the 294th year of the Hejra, the Karmatians, who still remained in the Desert, attacked a caravan going to Mecca, plundered it, and put about twenty thousand pilgrims to the sword. This insult so enraged the khalif, that he immediately sent Wasîf, one of his generals, with a considerable body of troops, to take vengeance for so daring an affront. Wasîf, in pursuance of his orders, attacked them, loaded and incommoded with the spoils they had taken, so opportunely, that, after an obstinate resistance, he put them to the rout. Zakrûna, their chief, was taken prisoner in the action, and died of a contusion he had received, which hurt his brain; nevertheless, Wasîf sent his body, attended by his wife, domestics, and a great number of Karmatian prisoners, to Baghdâd. Upon their arrival, the body, preceded by Zakrûna's wife, was carried in triumph through the principal streets of the city, and all the prisoners were put to a cruel death. This year, Ismael Ebn Ahmed Al Samâni, the khalif of the Transoxana and Khorafân, died at Samarkand. The last defeat so humbled the Karmatians, that they did not attempt to disturb the repose of the empire for several years.

In the 295th year of the Hejra, the khalif Al Moctâfi departed this life at Baghdâd, after he had reigned either six years six months and twenty days, or six years nine months

months and two days. With regard to his age, the Arab writers likewise differ; some of them making him a little above thirty-one, and others thirty-three years old at the time of his death. He was short of stature, had a handsome face, large eyes, and a long beard. He was likewise religious, munificent, and had a natural aversion to the effusion of human blood; though he found it absolutely necessary, on some occasions, to punish rebellion and other capital crimes in a severe manner. He left behind him immense riches, and a numerous army; though he could not re-annex to the empire all the provinces that had been lost by some of his predecessors. He bore an uncommon affection for the family of Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, as his father had done before him. The famous physician Yusef, surnamed Al Sâher, that is, *the Watchful*, or *the Vigilant*, and Al Kas, importing, *the Elder*, or *the Ancient*, flourished in this khalif's reign. Some authors relate, that he seldom slept above four hours, and spent all the rest of the night in study; from whence he received the appellation of Al Sâher. Others say, that he was deprived of his natural rest by a cancer, and derived from thence the first of his surnames; and, in confirmation of this sentiment, it clearly appears from some of his works, that he was troubled with such a disorder. About nine months before Al Moctafi's death, Ismael Ebn Ahmed Al Sammâni, the sovereign of Mawarâ'nahr and Khorasân, departed this life; as did Mohammed Ebn Nafr Al Merûzi, a celebrated author, the preceding year, at Samarkând. We must not forget to observe, that, according to the eastern historians, Al Mondar Ebn Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, of the house of Ommiyah, notwithstanding what has been advanced to the contrary by Roderic of Toledo, died the 16th of the month Safar this year, in Spain^m.

*The khalif
Al Moctafi
dies at
Baghdâd.*

Upon the death of Al Moctafi, Jaafar Abu'l Fadhl Al Moktader, surnamed Bi'llah, in common with his two immediate predecessors, ascended the Moslem throne. He was inaugurated at Baghdâd the very day on which his brother Al Moctafi died; being then, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabâri, not quite fourteen years of age. His mother's name was either Sa'f, or Sha'b, and his own at large Jaafar Abu'l Fadhl Al Moktader Bi'llah Ebn Al Motaded. This year, Abu Nafr Ahmed Al Sammâni suc-

*And is suc-
ceeded by
Al Mokta-
der Bi'llah.*

^m Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 184, 185. Khondemir, Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 295. Vide etiam Eutyche Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, et D'Herbel, ubi sup.

ceeded

ceeded his father Ismael Ebn Ahmed Al Sammâni in the sovereignty of Khorasan and Mawarâ'nahr; as did Abd'allah his brother Al Mondar in that of Andalusia, or Spain. An emir arrived in Sicily, from Africa, with some Moslem troops, in the month of May; and, being reinforced by a body of the Silician forces, reduced Taormina, the Tauromenium of the ancients, called by the Arabs Tabermînⁿ.

*Al Mortadi
Ebn Al
Mo'tazz is
placed upon
the Moslem
throne.*

Next year, being the 296th of the Hejra, Al Abbâs Ebn Al Hosein, Al Moktader's visir, and Fâtec, were cut to pieces by the soldiery, commanded by Al Hosein Ebn Hamdân, who assembled in a tumultuous manner, the 20th of the Former Rabî; and, not content with that outrage, afterwards deposed the khalif himself, whom they despised on account of his tender age. The Moslem throne being thus become vacant, they elected Abd'allah Ebn Al Mo'tazz, surnamed by them Al Mortadi Bi'llah, who appointed Mohammed Ebn Dawd his visir. But Al Mortadi being immediately deserted by many of those who assisted him in his elevation to the khalifat, Al Moktader's forces proved superior to those of the new khalif, and entirely dispersed them. However, Al Mortadi made his escape into the Desert, after he had reigned about twenty-four hours, where he remained a short time concealed. But being soon taken, he was instantly brought to Al Moktader; who ordered him to be strangled, together with Mohammed Ebn Dawd Ebn Al Harâh, his visir, and Sawdar Ebn Al Hafâs, who had concealed him. After these executions, Al Mortadi's body was carried out of the imperial palace, and interred in a spot of ground opposite to his own house, the 2d of the Latter Rabî; Al Moktader's adherents affirming that he died a natural death. Al Mortadi, at the time of his tragical exit, is said to have been about forty-nine or fifty years of age. During this state of confusion, the populace committed great disorders at Baghdâd; but the ringleaders were soon seized, and brought to condign punishment, and all commotions appeased, both there and in every other part of the empire. As for Al Hosein Ebn Hamdân, though he had been the chief author of the late revolt, and the principal fomenter of all the consequent disturbances, the khalif, at his brother Ibrahim's intercession, not only pardoned him, but likewise made him a present of a sumptuous vest, and con-

ⁿ Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, Ism. Abulfed. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, et Eutyech. ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Moctader Bi'llah, p. 590. Chroniq. Sic. Arb. Cantabrigienf. ubi sup.

ferred

ferred upon him the government of Komm and Kâshân. This year, there fell such an immense quantity of snow, in one day, at Baghdâd, that it was four feet deep in every part of the district of that metropolis; a phenomenon which before had not been known in the memory of man. This was followed by a severe frost; during which the cold was so intense, that it destroyed most of the palm-trees and vegetables in the territory of Baghdâd. Not only water, vinegar, and all other liquors, but likewise eggs of every kind, were frozen, and rendered unfit for use. It appears from Eutychius, that Abu Abd'allah Al Mohtaseb Bi'llah defeated the khalif of Kairwân's forces, and drove the family of Al Aglab from thence, in the present year; upon which, Abu Nafr, or Nasser, Ziyâdat'allah Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Ibrahim Ebn Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ibrahim Ebn Al Aglab, the head of that family, fled into Egypt, where he arrived in the month of Ramadân, and from thence retired to Al Ramla, in which city he spent the remainder of his days. Abu Abd'allah Al Mohtaseb, having thus, by the expulsion of the Aglabites, made himself master of Kairwân, placed Abu Mohammed Obeid'allah, one of Ali's descendents, upon the throne, and obliged all the subjects of that khalifat to take an oath of fidelity to him. This revolution in Africa occasioned an insurrection of the Sicilian Moslems, under the conduct of Abu'l Fawâres, against Ebn Ziyâj, whom they forced to abandon Sicily, the 1st of April 909, and to make his escape to Africa.

In the following year, being the 297th of the Hejra, Isa Ebn Mohammed Al Nûsferi, Al Moktader's governor of Egypt, died, the tenth of Shaabân, at Al Fostât; and, as soon as the news of his death arrived at court, the khalif sent Yakîn Al Harari to preside over that province in his stead. About this time, Abu Mohammed Obeid'allah, the founder of the dynasty of the Fâtemites, assumed the surname of Al Mohdi, and greatly extended his conquests in Africa. He likewise visited the Aglabite territories in Sicily, and exacted an oath of allegiance of the Moslems settled in that island. He also put himself at the head of the grandees, whom he convoked soon after his arrival in the island, and assisted at their deliberations. Whilst he resided in Sicily, Al Isa, the prince, or regulus of Sejelmeffa, who had refused to recognize his authority, was brought before him, and put to death by his order. After he had spent forty days in this part of his dominions, he returned to Africa. He likewise caused an exact account to

*Al Mohdi,
the khalif
of Kair-
wân, ex-
tends his
conquests.*

to

to be taken of all his subjects, their properties and effects, during his residence at Rakada, or Rakkada, the seat of the later princes of the house of Al Aglab, and sent officers to collect the tribute demanded of them. At the same time, he dispatched governors into all the western provinces constituting the khalifat of Kairwân; and in particular Al Hafan Ebn Ahmed into Sicily. Though Abu Mohammed Obeid'allah assumed the surname of Mohdi, or *director of the faithful*, yet the Moslems believe, that this title is properly applicable to none but the twelfth imâm, who is to make his appearance at the end of the world°.

*Authors not
agreed a-
bout the
origin of
Al Mohdi.*

In the 298th year of the Hejra, Al Mohdi took upon himself the title, or appellation, of emperor of the faithful, and insisted that he was descended, in a right line, from Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb and Fâtema, the daughter of Mohammed. For which reason, the Arab writers call him and his descendants Fâtemites; though some of them have given a very different account of this usurper's origin, as will hereafter be more particularly observed. He was born, as some assert, at Salamiyah, or, as others with more probability believe, in Irâk, about the 269th year of the Hejra; and built a city, from him denominated Al Mohdia, wherein he afterwards fixed his residence during the present year. Before the conclusion of it, according to Eutychius, he likewise put to death Abu Abd'allah Al Mohtaseb, his general; but for what crime this punishment was inflicted on him, we have not been by that annalist informed.

*He continues
victorious over
the house of
Al Aglab.*

Next year, the khalif Al Moktader having been offended by Ali Ebn Mohammed Al Farât, removed him from the post of visir. Soon after which removal, the khalif threw him into prison, and appointed Ali Ebn Mohammed (or rather Abu Ali Mohammed) Ebn Obeid'allah Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâkân to succeed him. This visir was surnamed Dakka Sedraho, that is, *the Person beating his Breast*, because he always appeared in that attitude, whenever any petition was offered him. Al Moktader was at this time entirely governed by his women and eunuchs. About this time, the Moslems, under the command of Damîân, the emir of Tyre, and Leo of Tripoli, with a

° Abu Jaafar Al Tabar. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 185. Eutych. ubi sup. Ism. Abulfed, ubi sup. Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abi'dam Al Hamani, in Tarikh, seu Histor. cui tit. Asmodfer, in Bibliothec. Escurial. D'Herbel. Bibliothec. Orient. p. 342. Vide etiam Marcum Dobelium, apud Augustin. Inveg. in Annal. Panorm. tom. secund. & Joan. Bapt. Carus, p. 19.

fleet of three hundred ships, committed dreadful ravages on the coasts, and in the islands, of the *Ægean* sea, and totally defeated the Greek navy in a sea-fight near the island of Samos; Himerius himself, the Greek admiral, having with much difficulty escaped to Mitylene. The famous Lacapenus was at that time governor of Samos; but he could afford Himerius no considerable assistance in this naval engagement. Al Mohdi continued victorious over the partizans of the house of Al Aglab, throughout the whole course of the present year.

In the following, Habbafah, one of Al Mohdi's generals, defeated the khalif's forces in the neighbourhood of Barka, and made himself master of that city. After the reduction of Barka, then extremely populous, situated between Tripoli and Egypt, Habbafah marched directly to Alexandria, routed another of the khalif's armies, drawn up in order of battle to cover the place, and then entered the town without opposition. One of his detachments likewise reduced Al Fayûm, taken particular notice of by Abulfeda and Al Bahnafa. Al Mohdi, receiving advice of the great success that had attended his arms, sent a strong reinforcement, commanded by his son Abu'l Kâsem, to the victorious troops which had in a manner conquered Egypt. Al Moktader also, being informed of what had happened, dispatched Al Kâsem Ebn Samâ, with a body of auxiliaries, to reinforce his army in Egypt, and to drive the rebels out of the western provinces; who, upon his arrival at Al Jizah, or Al Jiza, was joined by great numbers of the khalif's subjects, who flocked to him from all parts. Al Moktader's army, therefore, in Egypt, after the junction of the forces commanded by Yakîn Al Harari, the governor of that province, and Al Kâsem Ebn Samâ, consisted of an hundred thousand effective men. Habbafah, having been acquainted that the khalif's troops were in motion, advanced at the head of his army to give them battle, and came up with them in the island denominated by the Arabs Ard Al Khamfîn. Here he attacked them with uncommon bravery, notwithstanding their force was much superior to his; but the approach of night obliged the generals on both sides to sound a retreat. The action, therefore, was by no means decisive, though extremely bloody; Takîn and Al Kâsem having lost in it twenty thousand men, and Habbafah ten thousand. The latter, however, durst not renew the engagement the next morning, but retreated in the night, and found himself obliged to return home; so that the khalif's troops remained masters

*His forces
under the
command
of Habba-
fah invade
Egypt.*

of

of the field of battle, and, in effect, gained a victory, as they forced the enemy to abandon Egypt. The great church at Alexandria, called by the Arabs Al Kaifaria, or Cæsarea, which had formerly been a pagan temple, erected in honour of Saturn by the famous Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, was set on fire the 3d of Shawâl; though it does not appear from Eutychius, who mentions this accident, that it was then entirely consumed. The same year, died Abd'allah Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Thâher and Abd'allah Ebn Al Mondar Ebn Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, of the house of Ommiyah, who swayed the Moslem sceptre in Spain. The former of these was a brave experienced general, of consummate skill in the art of war, who had distinguished himself in many gallant actions; and the latter was succeeded by his brother Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Mondar Ebn Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, who, according to Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, first assumed the title of emperor of the faithful in Spain. Abulfeda styles this prince the lord or emir, of Andalusia, and calls him Abd'allah Ebn Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân Ebn Hefhâm. He also relates, that this Abd'alrahmân was forty-two years of age at the time of his death; that he was grey-eyed, of a middle stature, with a reddish beard, which he died black, and of a fair complexion; that he reigned almost six years, and had eleven sons, one of whom, named Mohammed Al Maçtûl, he condemned to death, for some crime he had been guilty of; and that he was succeeded by Abd'alrahmân, this prince's son. We are assured also by Roderic of Toledo, that this Abd'alrahmân was the son of Mahommed, Abd'allah Ebn Al Mondar's son, and consequently his predecessor's grandson; that he was twenty-three years of age when his grandfather died; and that he governed the Moslems in Spain about fifty years^p.

*Abu Sa'id
Al Hamâni
is assassi-
nated.*

The next year, being the 301st of the Hejra, Abu Sa'id Al Hamâni, the Karmatian general, who made an irruption into Yamâma, and took Hajr and Al Ahfâ, in the reign of the khalif Al Mo'taded, was assassinated by one of his domestics in a bath, and succeeded in the command of the Karmatian forces by his son Sa'id. The new general, immediately after his election to that high post, ordered the flesh of the assassin, who murdered his father, to be torn off with pincers, till he expired. The khalif, Al

^p Eutych. ubi sup. p. 502—507. Sharif Al Edrisi, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 185. Ism. Abulfed. in Ægypt.

Moktader, being offended at the conduct of Abu Ali Mohammed Ebn Obeid'allah Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâkân, his visir, deprived him of his office, and advanced to the high post of prime minister Ali Ebn Al Jarâh in his room. Ahmed Ebn Ismael Al Sammâni was killed by his guards the 22d of the Latter Jomâda, and buried in the city of Bokhâra. Amrân, the Moslem prince of Al Khams, was murdered at Palermo, January 27, and Korhab appointed emir May 18, the present year.

In the following, Habbafah, or Habafah, returned with a numerous army of Magrebbians, or Western Arabs, into Egypt, and possessed himself of Alexandria. He also defeated a body of the khalif's forces commanded by Munes, or Munas, and killed seven thousand upon the spot, though the remainder found means to throw themselves into the city of Alexandria, that had been abandoned by the Magrebbian troops. Soon after Munes deprived Takîn of the government of Egypt, and Dacâ Al A'war was sent from Baghdâd to succeed him. Korhab, or as he is sometimes called Ebn Korhab, fitted out a fleet that destroyed a squadron of ships sent by Al Mohdi to the coast of Sicily, under the conduct of Abu Khazîr, his admiral, who was killed in the action ^a.

The Magrebbians invade Egypt.

In the 303d year of the Hejra, Hosein Ebn Hamdân rebelled against the khalif in Mesopotamia, defeated an army sent against him under the command of Al Ratek the visir, took all their baggage, and even threatened the imperial city of Baghdâd itself; but he was at last vanquished by Munas, or Munes, the eunuch, the best general Al Moktader had, who took him and his son Abd'alwahâb prisoners, and conducted them under a guard, upon a camel, with oblong caps or turbans upon their heads, and vests of red hair-cloth on their bodies, through Al Mawfel to Baghdâd, where, immediately after their arrival, they were thrown into prison. This year the Moslems made an irruption into the imperial territories, under the conduct of Damiân, emir of Tyre, and attacked a fortress called Strobeldon, which they would undoubtedly have taken, had not Damiân been surprised by death whilst he was carrying on the siege. According to Abulfeda, the Greeks likewise penetrated almost as far as the borders of Mesopotamia, and afterwards retired into their own dominions with many prisoners and a vast quantity of

A rebellion extinguished in Mesopotamia.

^a Al Makin, ubi supra, Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 302. Chronic. Sic. Cantabrigienf. & Joan. Bapt. Caruf, ubi supra, p. 8.

spoil. However, the empress Zoe, who had assumed the administration, in order to employ the whole strength of the empire against the Bulgarians, sent Joannes Radenus and Michael Toxaras, as her ambassadors, to the khalif's court, to conclude a peace with that prince. These probably were the ambassadors said by some of the Arab historians to have arrived from Constantinople at Baghdâd, in the 304th, and by others in the 305th year of the Hejra, and to have been received by the khalif Al Moktader with the utmost magnificence. The terms of the pacification being settled, and the treaty signed, the imperial ministers, who had been treated with uncommon marks of distinction at the Moslem court, returned home. About the same time Melîh, the Armenian, invaded the Moslem territories, advanced as far as Mara'sh, plundered all the neighbouring district, and carried off with him a vast number of prisoners. Ebn Korhab, the emir of the Moslem conquests in Sicily, lost a considerable fleet, that he had fitted out against the Christians, in the course of this year.

*The khalif
appoints
Ahmed Ebn
Al Abbâs
his visir.*

In the next, the khalif removed Ali Ebn Môhammed Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Al Farât from the office of visir, sent him a second time to prison after he had filled the post of prime minister about a year, and appointed Hamed Ebn Al Abbâs to succeed him. It should be remembered, that Ali had been dismissed from the aforesaid employment in the 299th year of the Hejra, and succeeded by Abu Ali Mohammed Ebn Obeid'allah Ebn Yahya Ebn Khâkân, who incurred Al Moktader's displeasure in 301. Upon which Ali Ebn Al Jarâh was advanced to the dignity of visir, and deprived of his office by the khalif in 303. Afterwards Ali Ebn Mohammed Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Al Farât held a second time the reins of the empire about a year. The Sicilian Moslems deposed Ebn Korhab in the month of July, and sent him back to Africa, where he and his son afterwards died. Abu Sa'îd Al Daif arrived likewise in Sicily, with a large body of troops from Africa, in order to bring the Sicilians back to a sense of their duty. About the same time died Yusef Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Al Râzi, and Al Hosein, one of Ali's descendents, who had expelled the Sammânians out of Tabrestân.

In the following year, being the 305th of the Hejra, the Greek emperor sent an embassy to the Moslem court,

¹ Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 286, 287. Georg. Cedren. ubi supra, p. 612. Ebn Shohnah. Ism. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 303. Chron. Sic. Arab. Cant. & Joan. Bapt. Carus, ubi supra.

in order to settle with the khalif's ministers a truce, or cessation of arms, and a ransom of prisoners. The two ambassadors had first an audience of the visir, and afterwards of the khalif. The first of these treated them with great marks of distinction, being most richly dressed; and the latter received them sitting on his throne, and surrounded by his guards, with the utmost pomp and magnificence. He also agreed to the emperor's demands, and sent Mûnes, one of his most experienced generals, to conduct the cartel for the redemption of prisoners on the part of the Moslems, and gave him a hundred and twenty thousand dinârs to redeem the khalif's subjects that had been carried into captivity by the Greeks. Ebn Shohnah writes, that the imperial envoys arrived Baghdâd the preceding year; that the khalif's palace was adorned on this occasion with the most valuable furniture belonging to it, and all sorts of arms disposed in a proper manner; that his guards were ranged in order of battle to the number of a hundred and sixty thousand men, and received their pay out of a golden purse; that forty thousand white eunuchs and thirty thousand black ones, together with seven hundred ushers or door-keepers, appeared upon the avenues and at the gates of the palace; that an infinite number of vessels upon the Tigris presented themselves to their view, and made a most brilliant appearance; that the palace was hung within and without with twelve thousand pieces of silk, five hundred brocades, and twelve thousand five hundred pieces of rich tapestry of admirable workmanship, and almost inestimable value; that, in the middle of the great saloon, there was exhibited a tree of massive gold, which had eighteen principal branches, on which there fluttered a great number of little birds, made likewise of gold and silver, that warbled their notes with most delightful harmony; and that the Greek ambassadors beheld these scenes of grandeur with prodigious admiration. About the same time Abu'l Hîjâ, with his brethren and domestics, was delivered out of prison, where, by Al Moktader's order, he had been confined. The Sicilian Moslems discovering no inclination to submit to Abu Sa'îd Al Daif, he entered the port of Palermo with his fleet, landed a body of troops, and laid siege to the town. The Sicilians, however, having formed an alliance with Ebn Ali Wâwâ Al Saari, and being reinforced by him, defended the city with great bravery till the 12th of March, though they laboured under such a scarcity of provisions, that an ounce of salt was sold for two tariens or

*An embassy
from the
Greek
emperor
arrives at
the Moslem
court.*

tarens : but notwithstanding this vigorous resistance, the troops in garrison found themselves obliged to capitulate, and to open their gates to the victors, after they had granted them their lives, and the secure possession of all their properties and effects^s.

*The khalif
of Kair-
wân's
forces sur-
prize
Reggio.*

Nothing material happened in the Arab empire during the course of the 306th year of the Hejra. The khalif of Kairwân's forces, and his fleet, returned home in the month of September, after they had made Salem, emir or viceroy of the Moslem conquests of Sicily. Some of that khalif's ships of war, with a body of land-forces on board, also surprised the city of Reggio in Calabria, towards the conclusion of the present year.

*Abu'l
Kasem
invades
Egypt.*

In the 307th year of the Hejra, Abu'l Kasem, son of the first Fâtemite khalif of Kairwân, or, as he is called by the Cambridge Chronicon, the sultân of Africa, invaded Egypt with an army of a hundred thousand men. The Magrebian forces at first met with extraordinary success, and over-ran a very considerable part of that fine country. They made themselves masters of Alexandria, Al Fayûm, Al Baknafa, and the isle of Al Ashmaryîn, and even penetrated into Al Jîzah, where the khalif's army, under the command of Mûnes, had posted itself in order to oppose them. In the mean time, Al Moktader having received advice that the enemy had a strong squadron on the coast of Egypt, off Rashîd or Rosetta, consisting of a hundred ships, sent a powerful fleet, under the conduct of Thamâl, his admiral, to attack them. Thamâl, in pursuance of his orders, assailed the enemy with such fury, that he either took, sunk, or burnt, almost the whole Magrebian fleet, though his naval force did not consist of above fifty ships. The Sicilian and African prisoners taken by Thamâl in this action were spared; but the others, amounting to about five hundred men, were all put to the sword. After the destruction of this fleet, Abu'l Kâsem retired from Alexandria to Al Fayûm, and left in the former of those places only a garrison of three hundred men; of which circumstance Thamâl having been apprized, he in a few days appeared with his fleet before the town, and carried off the remainder of the citizens to an island of the Nile, called the island of Abukair. This step he took in order to prevent Abu'l Kâsem from meeting with any entertainment at Alexandria, in

^s Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 287. Ebn Shohnah, Ism. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 305. Chronic. Cantabrig. ubi supra, p. 2, 9.

case he should think fit to return thither from Al Fayûm. It appears from Eutychius, that above two hundred thousand of the miserable inhabitants of that city had perished since the beginning of the campaign. About this time a period was put to the power of the Edrisites in the western part of Africa. A truce, or cessation of arms, was concluded between Salem, the emir of Sicily, and the people of Taormina, called by the Arabs Tabermin, about the end of this year¹.

The 308th year of the Hejra was rendered famous by the entire defeat of the Magrebian army in Egypt. Munes, Al Moktader's general, having come to a resolution to give the enemy battle, quitted his fortified camp in Al Jîzah, advanced into the neighbourhood of Al Fayûm, and attacked Abu'l Kafem's forces with such bravery, that he overthrew them with very great slaughter. He also made himself master of all their baggage, as well as of all the plunder they had acquired. This defeat entirely ruined Abu'l Kâsem's affairs in Egypt, and obliged him to fly, with the shattered remains of his army, to Kairwân in the month of Dhu'lhajja, the present year. Mûnes remained about two months in the neighbourhood of Al Fayûm, after the signal victory he had obtained, and then returned to Baghdâd; but before his departure he appointed Helâl Ebn Badar to preside over the province of Egypt, which he had wrested out of the enemy's hands².

The Magrebian army defeated by the khalif's troops.

Next year, Abu Mogith Al Husein Ebn Mansûr Al Hallâj was put to death at Baghdâd. This extraordinary person has been considered in different lights by the Moslems; some of them having revered him as a sort of divinity, and others as a juggler and impostor. We are told, that, in summer, he could make winter-fruits appear before any number of spectators, and summer-fruits in winter; that, by stretching out his hands in the air, he could make dirhems fall upon the ground, with this inscription upon them, Allah ahed, *There is but one God*; which he called the dirhems of omnipotence; that he knew every particular transaction in private families; and that he could even penetrate into the most secret recesses of men's minds. A persuasion of such surprising abilities as these could not fail to gain him a vast number of disciples and followers amongst the vulgar; nor could even several doc-

Al Hallâj executed at Baghdâd.

¹ Eutych. ubi sup. p. 506—511. Ism. Abulfed. ad an. Hej. 307. Chronic. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiens. ubi sup. ² Eutych. ubi sup. p. 510, 511.

tors of the law themselves for some time tell what to make of him. Some writers inform us, that he frequently fasted for several days together; and that, when he broke his fast, he only took three mouthfuls of bread, and a little water. With regard to the place of Al Hallâj's nativity, authors are not perfectly agreed; some asserting that he was born at Nisabûr, others at Merû, others at Tâlakân, and others at Al Ray. He came from Khorasân into Irâk, and went from thence to Mecca, where he lived a year in a cave, or, as some say, in a place called Al Hejra, which was always open at top. He was seen upon mount Abu Kobais standing with his bare feet on a stone, and his head uncovered, being at the same time in a violent sweat. After his return to Baghdâd, he was much talked off; many pretending that the Deity resided in him, nay, that he was God himself. The visir Hamed having been told, that he had raised several people from the dead, sent for him, in order to interrogate him about his pretensions. Upon his appearance before the visir, he disclaimed the gift of prophecy, the power of working miracles, and the residence of the Divinity in him; saying, that he had nothing extraordinary in him, and that he worshipped God like other men. Hamed, therefore, must have immediately dismissed him, had not one of his books been produced, wherein he maintained, that if a Moslem could not go in pilgrimage to Mecca, he ought to perform all the prescribed ceremonies in some convenient room at home, fitted up and devoted to that purpose, on the 9th and 10th of Dhu'lhajja; feed and clothe thirty orphans, and afterwards give each of them seven dirhems; and that if he acted in this manner, he would from thence reap all the benefits and advantages accruing to all Moslems from a performance of the aforesaid pilgrimage. This position being manifestly repugnant to what has been advanced in the Koran, the doctors of the law unanimously judged Al Hallâj to death; which decision being confirmed by the khalif, he was executed in the following manner: first, he received a thousand stripes, without even uttering a groan; then one of his hands was cut off, then one of his feet, afterwards the other foot, then the other hand; and, lastly, the fatal stroke was given him, which put an end to his pain. After his execution his body was burnt, the ashes were thrown into the Tigris, and his head was exposed to public view in the market-place of Baghdâd. The kâdi who condemned Al Hallâj was Abu Omar, who passed sentence upon him, not only because he endeavoured to propagate a tenet subversive of

of the Mohammedan faith, but likewise because he ascribed so pernicious a notion upon the irreproachable doctor Al Hasan Bakhteri, in none of whose works it was to be found. It appears from some good authors, though he denied this charge, that he was thoroughly infected with the blasphemous opinions of the Sûfis, and even scrupled not to assert, that God had taken up his habitation in him. Abu'l Hosein Ali Ebn Isa, a famous and learned doctor, who disputed with him, found him altogether illiterate, according to Abu'l-Faraj, and reproved him for his great vanity and impiety.

In the following year, being the 310th of the Hejra, Abu Jaafar Mohammed Ebn Jorair Ebn Mowayyad Al Tabari, the author of the history we have in general followed to this period, departed this life at Baghdâd. He was an imâm of great piety, as well as of most extensive reading and erudition. The Moslems call his valuable work Al Târikh Al Tabari, and hold it in such high esteem, that they consider it as the basis and foundation of all their other histories. Ebn Al Jûzi writes, that his history at first consisted of a great number of volumes, and that the copies we now have of it are only an abridgment of a larger work. Ebn Al Sobki relates, that Abu Jaafar Al Tabari having asked his friends whether they could take any pleasure in reading a history of every thing that had happened in the world to the age in which they lived, they replied, that they should very willingly read such a history, if it could any where be found: upon which, this author having told them, that he had actually compiled thirty thousand leaves upon that subject, they immediately replied, that their whole life-time would not be sufficient to read over so voluminous a work. Whereupon, Al Tabari assured them, that he would abridge it as much as he could for their use; and this, says Ebn Al Sobkî, is the abridgment that still remains in our hands. Ebn Shohnah writes, that this history began with the creation of the world; that Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, who was born in the year of the Hejra 224, was a strenuous defender of the Koran; and that, nevertheless, he was censured as a heretic, or Shiite, at Baghdâd. The Tarikh of Al Tabari has been translated into Persic by Abu Ali Mohammed Al Yali, who served some of the Sammânian princes in the capacity of visir, in the time of Mansûr Ebn Nûh, and the 352d year of the Hejra, according to M. D'Herbelot. The same history has also been translated into Turkish by an unknown author, and many copies of this version are to

*Abu Jaafar
Al Tabari
dies.*

be found amongst the Turks. Abu Mohammed Abd'allah Ebn Mohammed Al Fargâni obliged the world with a continuation of the *Târîkh* of Al Tabari, and published it under the title of *Selat*. Abu'l Hasan Mohammed Ebn Abd'almâlec Al Hamadâni, who died in the year of the Hejra 521, has written another supplement, wherein he has brought the history of which we are now speaking down to his own times. Abu Jaafar is said by Abulfeda to have been born at Amû or Amol, the capital of Tabrestân, and from thence to have derived the surname of Al Tabari. Abulfeda relates, that the *Târîkh* of Al Tabari concludes with the year of the Hejra 302. However, we are inclined to believe, that our author continued his work, which he began at the creation of the world, to the day of Al Hallâj's execution, if not to the very time of his own death. We must observe, that an imperfect MS. copy of the *Târîkh* of Abu Jaafar Al Tabari, in Arabic, according to Mr. Ockley, has a place assigned it in the Bodleian library at Oxford^w.

*The Karmatians
take Basra.*

In the 311th year of the Hejra, Abu Thâher Solimân Ebn Abu Sa'îd Al Jannâbi, who succeeded his brother Sa'îd in the command of the Karmatian forces, and pretended to great skill in the occult sciences, penetrated to Basra with an army of a hundred and seven thousand men, made himself master of that city, put all the inhabitants that fell into his hands to the sword, burnt the great mosque, and plundered every part of the town. However, being apprehensive of a visit from the khalif's troops, after he had possessed himself of it seventeen days, he thought proper to abandon the place. The khalif constituted Ali Ebn Ahmed (or Mohammed) Ebn Al Farât, whom he delivered out of prison for that purpose, in the Latter Rabî, the third time, his visir. It appears from Eutychius, that the Moslems demolished the Melchite churches of St. Cosmas and St. Cyriacus in Al Ramla; two others in Askalon, Ashkelon, or Askalân, and Cæsarea; and another in Tannîs or Tinnîs, a very ancient city in the Lower Egypt; which were all afterwards rebuilt by Al Moktader's order, in the Latter Jomâda and Rajeb of the present year.

Next year, Abu Thâher intercepted a caravan of pilgrims, on their return from Mecca to Baghdâd, in a place

^w Al Makîn, ubi sup. Ism. Abulfed. ad an. Hej. 310. Ebn Al Juzi, Ebn Al Sobki, Khondemir. Vide etiam D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Tarikh Al Thabari, p. 866, 867. & Golji Not. ad Alfragan, p. 194. Ockley's Hist. of the Sarac. vol. ii. Introd. p. 39, 40.

called Al Naher or Al Nahr, attacked their escorte, commanded by Abu'l Hîjâ Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân Abu Saïfo'ddawla, the governor of Al Mawfel, Diyâr Rabîa, Dînawâr, a city about forty parasangs from Cûfa, and at the same distance from Marâga in Adherbijân, and Al Jebâl in the Persian Irâk, entirely defeated it, and cut to pieces the greatest part of the khalif's troops, of which it was composed. As for Abu'l Hîjâ himself, he was taken prisoner in the action, which was extremely bloody, together with a very considerable number of his soldiers and officers, who all fell into the enemies hands. The success Abu Thâher experienced on this occasion excited him to advance to Hajr, where he took post, without any obstruction from the khalif's forces, which were too weak to oppose him. Most of the people that he permitted to make their escape died of thirst, and the fatigue they were obliged to sustain in the Desert. The Karmatian general, who was at this time not above nineteen years of age, is said by the authors followed by Al Makîn to have made two thousand two hundred and twenty men and fifty women prisoners, and to have acquired a booty of one million of dinârs in money, together with all the rich effects and provisions of the caravan, worth at least as much more, in this successful expedition *.

Abu Thâher attacks and plunders a caravan.

He released Abu'l Hîjâ, and many of the other prisoners, and sent an ambassador to Baghdâd, the purport of whose commission was to desire Al Moktader to grant his master the sovereignty, or at least to make him perpetual governor of Basra and Ahwâz; but this demand the khalif peremptorily refused. However, as he was not able to reduce the rebels, he treated the ambassador with marks of distinction, and made him a present of a sumptuous vest. About this time an insurrection happened at Damascus, wherein the Moslems demolished the large and beautiful church of St. Mary, on which there had been expended two hundred thousand dinârs, and carried off all the sacred vessels, and other ornaments belonging to it, of almost inestimable value. They also plundered several monasteries and nunneries in that district, and particularly a nunnery near St. Mary's church. They likewise pulled down the church of the Nestorians, and many of those belonging to the Melchites, in the month of Rajeb. The khalif put

Abu Thâher sends an ambassador to Baghdâd.

* Al Makîn ubi sup. p. 190. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 312. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 222. 223.

*He takes
and pil-
lages Cûfa.*

Ali Ebn Mohammed Ebn Al Farât, his visir, and his son Al Mohsen, to death, in the former Rabî, of this year ^v.

In the following year, being the 313th of the Hejra, Abu Thâher advanced to Cûfa, pillaged the town, put many of the inhabitants to the sword, and carried a great number into captivity. He likewise took away with him from thence four thousand pieces of rich coloured stuff, or silk, and three thousand camels, besides several other effects that he found in the place, of very considerable value. About the same time, Abd'allah Ebn Mohammed Ebn Khâkân, Al Moktader's visir, wrote to Ali Ebn Isa at Mecca, ordering him to repair immediately to Egypt, and enquire into the state of affairs in that country. Ali in pursuance of the order he had received, entered Egypt in the beginning of Rajeb, and exacted tribute of all the religious settled in the lower part of that tract going under the name of Al Sa'îd, particularly of the bishops and monks in the monastery of Mînâ. Many of these oppressed people, thus harassed, retired to Irâk, and carried their complaints to the khalif; who thereupon commanded the tribute that had been imposed upon them to be remitted, removed the visir from his office, and appointed Abu'l Abbâs Ahmed Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Ahmed Al Khasîb to succeed him. A surprising meteor, resembling an exceeding large and bright star, or comet, of a very red colour, moving with great velocity from north to east, followed by a terrible flame, and attended with an infinite number of sparks issuing from it, about thirty lances long, and two broad, appeared in Egypt on the fifth of the Latter Rabî, at sun-set. This meteor exhibited the appearance of a fiery serpent, and continued about three hours; after which, not the faintest traces of it were to be seen.

*The Greeks
take Ma-
latia.*

In the 314th year of the Hejra, the Greeks penetrated to Malatîa, the Melitene of the ancients, situated on the borders of Armenia and Cappadocia, took it, slew part of the inhabitants, and made slaves of the rest. However, after they had remained there a few days, they found themselves obliged to abandon the town. The khalif Al Moktader commanded Yusef Ebn Abu'l Sâj, the governor of Adherbijân, to advance to Wâset against the Karmatians. About the same time, Nafer, or Nafr Ebn Ahmed Al Sammâni possessed himself of the city of Ray; but soon after, being seized with a violent illness, he found himself obliged to relinquish that place.

^v Eutychn. ubi supra, p. 514—517.

Some of the Greek authors relate, that the Moslems invaded the Christian territories several years before the above irruption of the Greeks into Cappadocia; and that Johannes Curcuas, the imperial general in those parts, not only drove them back with great loss, but having besieged and taken the city of Melitene, reduced the adjoining country to the form of a province. This, however, was perhaps the expedition placed in the 314th year of the Hejra by Al Makîn. It seems to appear likewise from Zonaras, that, about this time, Leo of Tripoli, the Moslem admiral, was defeated by the Christian fleet near the island of Lemnos, and had almost all his seamen cut to pieces, and his ships sunk: but we find not the least mention of these transactions in any of the Arab historians ².

The Christians gain several advantages over the Moslems.

Next year, being the 315th of the Hejra, Abu Thâher Ebn Abu Sa'id, the Karmatian general, overthrew the khalif's forces with very great slaughter, and took Yusef Ebn Abu'l Nabâj, who commanded them, prisoner. He also possessed himself of the city of Cûfa, and even threatened to penetrate to Baghdâd, the inhabitants of which were struck with the utmost terror and consternation. However, Al Moktader, taking three hundred thousand dinârs out of the treasury, and being supplied by his mother with five hundred thousand more, raised a body of ten thousand horse, which he sent to act against the Karmatians: but the general who commanded them, not having been able to bring the enemy to a battle, returned, after the conclusion of the campaign, to Baghdâd, without having effected any thing considerable. This inactivity so animated Abu Thâher, that he advanced at the head of his forces to Anbâr; though he soon retired without having attempted any thing against that place. As Anbâr was not above ten parasangs from Baghdâd, the khalif considered the Karmatian's retreat, in the present situation of affairs, as equivalent to a victory; and therefore, with his mother and visir, returned God thanks, in the most solemn manner, for it; and even, as a farther acknowledgment to the great Arbiter of events, distributed amongst the poor of Baghdâd no less than fifty thousand dinârs. Abu Thâher afterwards appeared with his army before Hît, or Hait, a strong castle on the northern bank of the Euphrates, about twenty-one parasangs above Anbâr, bordering on the deserts of Al Jazîra; but upon taking a view

The Karmatians make a farther progress in Irâk.

² Georg. Cedren. ubi supra, p. 622—627. Joan. Zonar. ubi sup. p. 188—191.

of it, he retired with precipitation to Hajr. This retreat so raised the drooping spirits of the khalif, that he ordered a second thanksgiving for so auspicious an event, and a farther distribution of one hundred thousand dirhems amongst the poor. Abulfeda relates, that Abu Thâher, with a small body of troops, consisting of only eight hundred foot and seven hundred horse, routed Yusef Ebn Abu'l Sâj, probably the Yusef Ebn Abu'l Nabâj of Al Makîn, at the head of forty thousand men, when he thought himself so sure of conquering, that he had ordered his secretary to write a letter to the khalif, congratulating him on the victory his troops had gained over the rebels, before the beginning of the action. In this battle Yusef Ebn Abu'l Sâj himself was taken prisoner, and afterwards put to the sword, by the Karmatian general; who found an immense quantity of wealth at Cûfa, defeated another of the khalif's armies commanded by Mûnes, ravaged all that part of Irâk bordering upon the Euphrates, and, after having thrown the cities of Baghdâd into an inexpressible panic, returned laden with spoil to Hajr. Abd'alrahmân Al Nafr Ebn Mohammed, of the house of Ommiyah, the emir or lord of Andalusia, or rather the khalif of Spain, according to the same author, reduced also the city of Toledo, and destroyed a considerable part of it, after it had rebelled against him, and sustained a very long siege, in the course of the present year. Mûnes, one of Al Moktader's best officers, having entertained a suspicion of that prince's sinister intentions towards him, refused for some time to go to the imperial palace, at the khalif's invitation; but at last he was prevailed upon to repair thither, and kiss his hand, by the troops that promised to support him. About this time, according to the Cambridge Chronicon, the hâjeb, or *chamberlain*, of the khalif of Kairwân agreed upon a truce, or cessation of arms, with the Calabrians, after he had taken from them Aura, or Ura, the Uria of the ancients, denominated by the moderns Oria; upon which, they left in his hands as hostages, says the writer of that Chronicon, Leo, bishop of Sicily, and the prefect or governor of Calabria. This affair being terminated, the khalif of Kairwân dispatched Al Bolzami and Al Kolshâni, two grandes of his court, called by that writer sheiks, with Ebn Sâlem, into Sicily, to fine the inhabitants of that island for some disturbances that had happened. We must not forget to observe, that at this juncture the Deylamites, the first of whose princes was Washûdân Ebn Al Marzabân,

bân, who fixed his residence at Shahrestân, began to make a figure.

In the following year, being the 316th of the Hejra, Abu Thâher seized upon the town of Rahaba, and put a great number of the inhabitants to the sword. He also made himself master of Karkîsîa, or Karkîsyâ, in Mesopotamia, and afterwards retired to Hajr, in Yamâma, where he chose for the most part to reside: here he built a palace, to which he gave the name of Hajra. The khalif dismissed first from his employment Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Al Khasîb, his visir, and afterwards Ali Ebn Isâ Ebn Al Jarâh, his successor; substituting in the room of the latter Abu Ali Ebn Mohammed Ebn Ali, commonly called Ebn Moklah, about the middle of the Latter Rabi. After the reduction of Rahaba, Abu Thâher, according to Abulfeda, reduced Al Rakka upon the Euphrates, and treated the inhabitants of that place in a cruel manner. He likewise penetrated to Sinjâr, the Singara of Ptolemy, a considerable city of Mesopotamia, in the province of Diyâr Rabîa, which immediately submitted to him. About the same time, if we will credit this author, Mardawîj Ebn Zayyâr, or as he is called by Al Makîn, Mardawîj Ebn Ramâz, the Deylamite, having cut off Asfâr Ebn Shirûyeh, his master, who had seized upon Jorjân the preceding year, subdued Kazwîn, Ray, Hamadân, Dînawar or Al Deina-war, Kenkewar, Yazdejerd, Komm, Kâshân, Esfahân, Jarbâdkân, and the whole mountainous region of Tabrestân. The dynasty, therefore, of the Deylamites, according to Abulfeda, commenced the present year. The same historian farther relates, that Johannes Curcuas, who presided over all the imperial territories extending from the Hellespont to the frontiers of the Moslem empire, obliged the citizens of Akhlath and Bedlis, in Armenia, at this time, to erect crosses upon the spots, in their respective principal mosques, on which the Christian pulpits had formerly stood. A body of the khalif of Kairwân's forces, under the conduct of an African general, named Sâîn, at this period took the fortrefs of Zarnîna, or rather Zarnîwa, in the month of Shaabân, according to the Cambridge Chronicon.

In the 317th year of the Hejra, beginning February 14, 929, Al Moktader was constrained to abdicate the khalifat. Mûnes, his general, who was greatly esteemed by the soldiery, having conceived an invincible aversion to him, entered the imperial palace, with a party of twelve horse, the 14th of Al Moharram, plundered it, and carried Al Moktader,

Abu Thâher takes Rahaba and Karkîsîa.

Al Moktader is deposed, and re-ascends the Moslem throne.

Moktader, together with his mother, aunt, children, wives, and concubines, prisoners to his own house. Next day the soldiers saluted Mohammed Ebn Al Mo'taded, surnamed Al Kâher, khalif. Upon his elevation to the Moslem throne, the new khalif made Abu Ali Ebn Moklah his visir, and Bârûk, or, as others maintain, Abd'allah Abu'l Hîjâ Ebn Hamdân Abu Saifo'ddawla, his chamberlain. When the imperial palace was pillaged, Al Moktader's mother lost six hundred thousand dinârs. After the late khalif's abdication, letters were sent into all the provinces, notifying Al Kâher's accession; and people entertained hopes, that the tranquillity of the empire would be settled upon a lasting foundation. But, the third day of the new khalif's reign, the troops assembled in a tumultuous manner, with great insolence demanded their pay, cut in pieces Bârûk the captain of the guards, drove Ebn Moklah the visir out of the palace, and placed Al Moktader again upon the throne. That prince no sooner found himself repossessed of the khalifat, than he sent for his brother Al Kâher, forgave him what was past, expressed an inviolable attachment to his interests, recalled Ebn Moklah, and ordered him to communicate to the provinces intelligence of this last revolution. According to Eutychius, not only Mûnes, but likewise Abu'l Hîjâ, Nâzûk, and other principal commanders, contributed to the abdication of Al Moktader, and assisted at the inauguration of Al Kâher; however, continues the same author, the body of infantry, called Al Mosâfiâ, two days after that event happened, slew Nâzûk and Abu'l Hîjâ, and brought about the restoration of Al Moktader, without any considerable effusion of human blood. Abulfeda relates, that Al Moktader had rendered himself extremely disagreeable to the army, by permitting his women and eunuchs to govern with absolute power, and to fleece his subjects in a most arbitrary and oppressive manner. He also seems to intimate, that Mûnes, contrary to his own inclination, was forced by the soldiery to concur with them in the violent measures which were at this time pursued; but that afterwards this general greatly contributed to Al Moktader's re-establishment upon the Moslem throne. About this time, Egypt was infested with such swarms of locusts, that they darkened the air, intercepted the solar rays, and devoured every thing green in all those parts of that fruitful country which they traversed. The same year, Abu Thâher, the Karmatian general, and prince of Hajr, entered Mecca with his troops, killed a great number

number of the pilgrims, on the 8th of Dhu'lhajja, in the temple, demolished the small building and cupola that covered the well Zemzem, and plundered the Caaba. Nay, we are told by Abulfeda, that they filled this well with the carcases of those going in procession round the Caaba, whom they had massacred, amongst which was that of Ebn Al Mohalleb, the prince of Mecca, himself. Among other profanations offered to that celebrated place of the Moslem worship, they took away the famous black stone, of which we have formerly given our readers a full and ample description, and could not be prevailed upon by any means to restore it, though Yahcam, in the name of the people of Mecca, offered not less than five thousand dinârs for it. However, after they had kept it above twenty-two years, finding they could not by that expedient draw the pilgrims from Mecca, they sent it back from Hajr; at the time bantering its devotees, by telling them it was not the true stone: but, as it is said, it was proved to be no counterfeit, by its peculiar quality of swimming on water. The Karmatian, however, who was sent to take away the golden spout, or pipe, that carried the rain-water from the top of the Caaba, broke his neck in the attempt. Before Abu Thâher advanced to Mecca, he incamped in a place known by the name of Tel Arkûf, at a small distance from Baghdâd, and had several engagements with the khalif's forces; after which, he stopped up all the wells between that capital and Mecca, not permitting the caravans of pilgrims to pass to the latter of those cities, either from Mesopotamia or Khorasân. He butchered an infinite number of people both within and without the Caaba, as also in the streets of Mecca; in-somuch that filled with dead bodies, most of the houses of the town, and the ways, vallies, and desert places of the neighbourhood. To complete all these misfortunes, if any person escaped out of the city with his effects, he was cut to pieces and plundered by the Arabs themselves, who were assembled in considerable numbers not far from the gates for that purpose. Some, however, fled to Jodda, and made their escape by sea. As the Karmatian general carried off all the rich furniture and utensils, both of gold and silver, belonging to the temple of Mecca, held in such high veneration amongst the Mohammedans, except the spout, or pipe, abovementioned, the spoil he acquired on this occasion was of immense value: besides which, he gained a considerable booty in the town; as he gave the place up to
his

his troops to be plundered for seven days together. After he had committed these depredations, he abandoned Mecca, and ordered the pillage that had fallen into his hands to be conducted to Hajr. This year, a very sharp debate was carried on at Baghdâd between Abu Becr Al Merûzi, or Al Marwazi, the principal of those who were followers of the famous Ahmed Ebn Hambal, with his adherents, and the members of another sect in that metropolis, concerning the true import and meaning of a controverted passage in the Koran. The former inferred from it, that God would hereafter place Mohammed upon the throne of his glory near himself; and the latter only, that God would accept of the prophet's intercession for all true Moslems, at the day of judgment. The minds of the disputants on both sides were so agitated and inflamed on this occasion, that many murders were committed; and the city of Baghdâd, for some months, became a scene of blood and confusion. It appears from the Cambridge Chronicon, that Sâin, one of the khalif of Kairwân's generals, made this year an incursion into Italy, and penetrated as far as the borders of the Lower Lombardy, that is, Campania, the duchy of Benevento, and the neighbouring tract, with a body of the Magrebian troops, took many prisoners, and agreed upon another cessation of arms with the Calabrians ^a.

*The trans-
actions of
the year
318.*

The next year, being the 318th of the Hejra, Solimân Ebn Al Hafan Ebn Mokhalled was appointed by the khalif his visir. The body of infantry, termed by the Arabs Al Mofâfiâ, being grown extremely insolent since the restoration of the khalif Al Moktader, were first expelled the city of Baghdâd, then that of Wâset, and at last totally dispersed. This year, Sâin made an incursion into Calabria, took a fortress in that province, named Termûlah, and carried with him into the Moslem territories twelve thousand prisoners, without having sustained any considerable loss.

*Mardwîj,
the king of
Deylam,
extends his
conquests.*

The following year, being the 319th of the Hejra, Obeid'allah Ebn Mohammed was nominated by the khalif to act in the capacity of visir. He did not, however, continue long in the high post to which he had been advanced; Al Hafan Ebn Al Kafem Ebn Obeid'allah Ebn So-

^a Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 193, 194. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 289, 290. Eutych. ubi. sup. 518-525. Ahmed Ebn. Yusef, Ism. Abulfed. Poc. Not. in Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 119. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Abou Thaher, p. 40. Chron. Sic. Cantabrigiæ. ubi sup.

limân Ebn Waheb being appointed to succeed him, before the end of the month Shawâl. About the same time, died Abu Becr Al Nahrawâni, a noted poet, who wrote some celebrated elegiacal verses upon a cat; being, at the time of his death, about a hundred years old. This year, Mardawîj Ebn Ramâz, or Mardawîj Ebn Zayyâr, the king or prince of Deylam, made himself master of Hamadân, violated the women, and put thirty thousand of the inhabitants to the sword. The khalif, receiving advice of the havoc he had made, sent an army, under the command of Haûn Ebn Arab, to reduce him: the Deylamite advanced at the head of his troops to attack the khalif's forces, engaged them between Hamadân and Kazwîn, and defeated them with incredible slaughter; he then ravaged the country as far as Holwân, and the frontiers of Irâk, and at last carried the city of Esfahân by assault ^b.

In the 320th year of the Hejra, answering to January 13, 932, the khalif Al Moktader was killed at Baghdâd; of which tragical event some of the Oriental historians have preserved the following particulars. Mûnes, the khalif's general, having entertained a suspicion, that his master intended to throw him into prison, left the court in disgust, and retired to Al Mawfel. Soon after his arrival, he assembled a body of troops, with which he marched directly to Baghdâd. Al Moktader, having received advice of his approach, led his forces out of the city, in order to give him battle. A fierce conflict ensued between the contending parties, in which the khalif was killed, stripped, and had his head cut off by one of the Barbarians in Mûnes's army, who immediately brought it to his general. The body of that prince was buried by a Curd, who passed by it soon after the action, and saw it lie naked, and exposed to public view, on the field of battle. In this manner fell Al Moktader, on Wednesday the 28th of Shawâl, soon after he had completed the thirty-eighth year of his age, and had sat upon the Moslem throne about twenty-five years. After his death, his head was carried on a lance, in the midst of a great crowd of people, through the principal streets of Baghdâd.

This transaction, however, has been more particularly related by Abulfeda and Abu'l-Faraj. Those authors write, that Mûnes, being greatly displeased with the khalif's conduct, retired towards Al Mawfel; of which re-

The Khalif Al Moktader is killed at Baghdâd.

This tragical event more particularly related by Abulfeda and Abu'l-Faraj.

^b Eutych. ubi supra, p. 522—525. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 191, 192. Ifin. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 319. D'Herb. Biblioth. Orient. art. Dilem. p. 295. et art. Mardavige, p. 555.

treat that prince being apprized, he wrote to the head of the family of Hamdân, who then governed the people of that province, and commanded him to oppose the rebel with all his forces. The prince, or emir, of Al Mawfel, having received the khalif's letter, immediately assembled an army of thirty thousand men, with which he advanced toward Mûnes, then attended by only a body of eight hundred horse, in order to attack him. That general, however, having probably been reinforced by some fresh troops, waited for him upon a spot of ground at a small distance from Al Mawfel, engaged him with great resolution, and at last put him to flight; after which action he made himself master of all the towns and villages, as well as all the riches, belonging to the descendants of Hamdân. This victory had such an effect upon the minds of the soldiery, that a very considerable part of the khalif's forces cantoned in Syria and Egypt, and even at Baghdâd itself, deserted him, and joined Mûnes; a circumstance which enabled that rebel, after nine months preparations at Al Mawfel, to march through Tecrît, at the head of a numerous army, to Baghdâd. Upon his arrival, he pitched his tents before the gate Al Shammâsîa, and immediately invested the town. Al Moktader's friends, finding their master and themselves upon the point of being closely besieged, persuaded the khalif to go out of the city in Mohammed's cloak, preceded by the doctors of the law, and other persons of consequence, with copies of the Koran open in their hands, in order to shew himself to the rebels; imagining that they would be touched with reverence of his person at so august a sight, and be thereby the more readily induced to return to a sense of their duty. At first he stood upon an eminence, with his attendants, and seemed unwilling to fight; but the signal at last, by his order, being given, a general action immediately ensued. The flower of his troops having already deserted him, Al Moktader's men were soon routed, and he himself, with several of the runaways, endeavouring to return into the town, surrounded by a party of the Magrebian soldiers; one of whom, after using the most opprobrious language, ran him through with his sword. Then they cut off his head, and carried it upon a pole to the rebel general, at Al Rashîdîa, who had not been present in the action. The Magrebian likewise entirely stripped him, not even leaving him his breeches on to cover those parts which decency commands us to conceal, and buried him in the place where he fell. When Al Moktader's head was brought

brought to Mûnes, at the sight of it he is said to have wept, and to have discovered signs of the most unfeigned grief. He also posted a guard upon the imperial palace, in order to prevent its being plundered, and commanded his men not to offer the least violence to any of the late khalif's family or domestics ^c.

Mirkhond, the Persian historian, has given us a long detail of the circumstances attending this prince's death, most of which have been omitted by the Arab writers. Al Moktader, according to this author, having caused his brother Al Kâher to be imprisoned, for the part he had taken in the late revolt, which terminated in the elevation of that prince to the Moslem throne, which he possessed only two days, resolved at last to put him to death. Al Kâher, having been informed of his brother's design, engaged a Barbarian or Magrebian officer, who was an excellent horseman, and entirely at his devotion, to assassinate him. In order to effect this purpose with the greater facility, he procured the assistance of Mûnes, the eunuch, who was entirely disaffected to the khalif, and who consequently came into Al Kâher's measures with uncommon alacrity. The Magrebian charged with this commission sought all opportunities of killing the khalif; and one day observing him seated in the place called Shammâfîa, to see some feats at arms and horse-races, he presented himself before him, in order to be admitted to partake of those diversions; when he performed his part with so much dexterity and address, that the khalif made him repeat it several times, and commanded his guards to retire, that he might have a more free and extensive view in the place. The Magrebian, thinking that a proper opportunity of carrying his design into execution now offered, immediately turned his horse towards the khalif, rushed upon him in an instant, and thrust his lance into his breast with such force, that he fell from his seat, and soon after died of the wound he had received. As soon as the officer had given the blow, he rode directly to the prison where Al Kâher was confined, in order to deliver him, and put him in possession of the khalifat. But passing through the market-place, he met an ass loaded with thorns, which the people of that country make use of to heat their ovens; at sight of this object the Magrebian's horse took fright, and ran with his master against a butcher's stall with such violence, that a

The circumstances attending Al Moktader's death, according to Mirkhond.

^c Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 320. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 290, 291.

hook stuck fast in his chin; the horse being thus deprived of his rider, and leaving him hanging thereon. Soon after this accident, a party of the khalif's guards, who observed what had been done, and closely pursued the assassin, came up with him, made a fire of the thorns on the ass's back, and burnt him to death. This is the account of Al Moktader's death preserved by Mirkhond, an author of authority; though, for several reasons, we prefer, as more consonant to truth, the relation of that tragical event handed down to us by the Arab historians.

*His person,
character,
and the
great officers
of his
court.*

With regard to his person, Al Moktader had a round handsome face, and the hair of his head, as well as his beard, was exceeding grey; though he had but just completed the thirty-eighth year of his age at the time of his death. He had likewise very good eyes, was of a middle stature, and a fair complexion. In his disposition he was religious, delighted in giving alms, and fasted often. He had many secretaries, governors of provinces and cities, and counsellors or visirs. Some of the women and girls belonging to the court had a great share in the administration, particularly a girl named Yamek, who was so thoroughly versed in all the weightier points of the Mohammedan law, that both the judges, in the determination of criminal causes, and the doctors of the law, in their most important decisions, found themselves obliged to have recourse to her assistance. From the time that the Karmatians took Mecca, and carried off the celebrated black stone, to the day of this prince's death, not a single Moslem performed the pilgrimage thither. Al Moktader is said to have given away to the poor, and appropriated to charitable uses, above seventy millions of dinârs. He also distributed a great number of jewels, and a considerable quantity of the most precious unguents, amongst the girls that he kept for his amusement, and some other favourites. That this khalif, in whose reign the two Greek emperors Leo and Alexander died, was a prince of great justice and moderation, appears from his remission of the tribute imposed upon the Christian bishops and clergy in Egypt by Ali Ebn Isa, his governor of that country, as well as from several other actions we have related of him; and particularly from the order he issued to oblige his Moslem subjects to rebuild several churches in Egypt which his officers had demolished. We are told by Al Makîn, that a Greek pinnacle, sent by the emperor to discover a proper place for landing a body of troops, was taken by some of the Moslem guard-ships stationed in the mouths of
of

of the Nile, in the 314th year of the Hejra; and that a man, who by his dress seemed to be a person of distinction, was found in the vessel, who confessed that he was a spy, and declared that the Christians would soon appear on the coast with a fleet of one thousand sail, and a numerous body of land-forces on board, in order to make a descent. These tidings greatly alarmed the governor of Egypt, who immediately sent for a reinforcement from Syria, and took all other necessary precautions to render abortive the enemy's designs. But the Christian fleet being soon after dispersed by a storm, in which were lost above three hundred ships, and all the soldiers and sailors therein drowned, the Greeks found themselves obliged to take shelter in their own ports, and thereby delivered the Egyptians, whom they had struck with such terror, from all apprehensions of the invasion with which they had been threatened ^d.

Before we conclude our history of the khalif Al Moktader, it may not be improper to touch upon the characters of two of the most learned men that flourished in this reign. The famous Mohammed Ebn Jâber Ebn Senân Abu Abd'allah Al Harrâni, a native of Batân or Battân, one of the dependencies of Harrân, and on that account commonly called Al Battâni, or Albatâni, so justly celebrated for the accurate astronomical observations he made at Aracta, or Aracca, that is, the city of Al Rakka upon the Euphrates, departed this life in the 317th year of the Hejra. This great mathematician and philosopher professed the Sabian religion, which chiefly prevailed at the time of his birth in the city of Harrân, and all the adjacent territory, which is the reason that his tables are called the Sabian Tables. He began his observations in the year of the Hejra 264, and concluded them in 306; though the fixed stars are placed according to their situation in the year 299. In the 320th year of the Hejra, according to Abu'l-Faraj, died Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Zacaria, Zachariah, or Zacarias Al Râzi, a person extremely well versed in all kinds of ancient learning, though he excelled most in physic, and is styled the phoenix of his age by that writer. In his youth he gave himself up entirely to music; but afterwards applied himself to the study of philosophy with so much success, that he made a wonderful progress in every branch of it, and composed a great number of books both upon physical and philosophical subjects. He

*Several
learned
men flourished in
Al Moktader's reign.*

^d Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 195—198. Eutych. ubi supra, p. 524—527. Georg. Cedren. & Joan. Zonar. ubi supra.

first presided over the hospital either at Ray or Jondisâbûr, and afterwards for some time over that at Baghdâd. He contracted webs or pearls in his eyes by immoderate eating of beans; and, towards the close of his life, lost both of them by cataracts. He would not permit an oculist, who came to couch his eyes, to touch them with his instrument, because he could not tell of how many tunics or little coats the eye consisted; saying at the same time, that he was not so desirous of recovering his sight, as he had already seen enough of the world to make him nauseate and abhor it. We are told, that he spent almost all his time in writing, either adversaria or fair copies of books. He is said to have composed twelve pieces in alchemy, wherein he asserted the possibility of a transmutation of metals; and to have understood astrology, or the art of predicting future events from the aspects and configurations of the celestial bodies. He was liberal, munificent, and courteous to all men, likewise extremely charitable to the poor when they were sick, not only giving them his advice as a physician, but supplying all their wants in the most liberal manner. Some authors relate, that he was one of the principal physicians of the khalif Al Moktader, and at the head of his profession when he was not above forty years of age. This is the doctor who, in the schools of physic, is commonly called Rhazes, or Rhazis, a corruption of Razi; which surname he derived from the city of Ray, where he was born. He has by some been accused of Pyrrhonism, or Scepticism, because he did not sufficiently understand Aristotle in many particulars. M. D'Herbelot thinks, that he was the author of the piece intitled, *Ekhtiarat Al Najûmîah*, which has been abridged in Persic under the title of *Hakkam Alâlamîah*, in the French king's library, No. 890, and not Fakhro'ddîn Ebn Omar, as some suppose. Al Râzi also wrote a comment upon Aristotle's treatise *Περὶ Ἑρμηνείας*, *De Interpretatione*, called by the Arabs *Bari Arminias*, that is, the *Book of Interpretation*, according to some of the eastern writers. Al Ca'bi is reported to have told Al Râzi, that he proved himself to be ignorant of physic, by his not being able to cure his own eyes; to be a stranger to astrology, by not foreseeing the misfortunes that came upon himself; and to be unacquainted with alchemy by his poverty: but all the facts here mentioned are despised as envious falsehoods by Abu'l-Faraj. Bakhtîshûa Ebn Yahya and Senân Ebn Thâbet Ebn Korra, the Sabian, and father of Thâbet Ebn Senân, the historian, were likewise two of the khalif Al Moktader's

Moktader's principal physicians, and in great favour with that prince*.

After the death of Al Moktader, Mûnes proposed that prince's son Abu'l Abbâs, who had been his pupil, to the grandees of the court for khalif: but, in opposition to this motion, Ishak Al Nûbakhti observed, that the late khalif, Al Moktader, had been entirely under the management and direction of his mother, his aunt, and his servants; that they should be again in the same situation if a minor ascended the throne; and that therefore, as they now wanted a prince who could govern both himself and his subjects, they ought to turn their eyes upon Abu Mansûr Mohammed Ebn Al Mo'taded, surnamed Al Kâher Bi'llah, as the most proper person of the house of Al Abbâs to be advanced to the khalifat. Mûnes, for some time, appeared extremely averse to the elevation of Al Kâher, being perfectly well acquainted with the cruel and avaricious disposition of that prince: however, he suffered himself at last to be persuaded by Al Nûbakhti to concur with the other great officers in the election of the new khalif, assisted at his inauguration, and took the oath of allegiance to him. Al Kâher, upon his accession, conferred the office of hâjeb, that is, *chamberlain*, or *master of his chamber*, upon Balîk; ordered all Moktader's children and domestics to be brought before him, and caused them to be tortured, to force them to confess what sums of money his predecessor had distributed amongst them. He also put his mother-in-law Sha'b, or Sa'f to the rack, to oblige her to produce the remainder of her money and her jewels, after she had deposited in his hands all her rich cloaths, her most valuable furniture, and other effects, besides a hundred thousand dinârs. However, she persisted in the declaration she had made upon oath, that she had nothing remaining in her possession of any real value, though two persons, asserting the contrary, appeared as evidences against her. This obstinacy so enraged the khalif, that he commanded her, though then very infirm, and even afflicted with the dropsy, to be stript naked, and hung up by the heels, with her head downwards, in such a posture, that her urine ran all over her body: and he is said not only to have exposed to public view, but even to have

*Al Kâher
succeeds his
brother Al
Moktader
in the
khalifat.*

* Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 291—293. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an Hej. 317. Osaiba, Ebn Shohna, D'Herbel. Biblioth. art. Batan, p. 193. & art. Razi, p. 712, 713. Vide etiam Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 213, 214. 251, 252.

kicked and beaten those parts that modesty enjoins her sex to conceal. In the midst of her tortures, however, she had courage enough to tell him that she was his mother, and to reproach him with ingratitude, she having once diverted the khalif Al Moktader, her son, from his resolution, when he had determined to put him to death. This monster's own mother, according to some of the eastern writers, was named Fenûn ^f.

*He cuts off
several of
his great
men.*

In the following year, being the 321st of the Hejra, beginning Jan. 1, 933, Al Kâher gave the charge of visir to the famous Ebn Moklah, who, according to an eastern writer of authority, first formed the beautiful character now used by the Arabs from the Cûfic. About this time the khalif commanded Ahmed Ebn Al Moctafi to be confined in a house by himself, where he soon pined away with grief. Sha'b, or Sa'f, Al Moktader's mother, died this year, after Al Kâher had stripped her of all her possessions, and treated her in a most barbarous manner. This, and other instances of his avarice and cruelty so alienated the affections of Balîk, Ali his son, Ebn Moklah, Ahmed Ebn Zairac, and Mûnes, who was at first inclined to favour Ahmed Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Al Moktader's pretensions to the khalifat, from Al Kâher, that they conspired against him, and came to a resolution to depose him; but Tdharîf, or Tharîf, Al Saccari having found means to convey himself into the palace in women's cloaths, notwithstanding the conspirators had possessed themselves of all the avenues to it, discovered the whole affair to the khalif; that prince, thus fortunately informed of the design, by the assistance of the dependents of Yusef Ebn Abu'l Sâj, got Balîk, his son Ali, Mûnes, and Ahmed Ebn Zairac into his hands, and ordered all their heads to be cut off. Ebn Moklah made his escape to Wâset, where he kept himself concealed, till, by the assistance of Simâ, the chief of the Turkish militia, or rather the leader of the partisans of Yusef Ebn Abu'l Sâj, he effected a new revolution at the Moslem court. He was succeeded by Abu Jaafar Mohammed Ebn Al Kafem in the important post of visir or wazir. Ebn Salma and Ebn Aldâya returned this year to Africa, but met with a very indifferent reception from the khalif of Kairwân, that prince being highly displeased with their conduct. About this time, according to Abulfeda, commenced the dynasty of the Bûiyans, which was

^f Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 293, 294. Eutyck. ubi sup. p. 526, 527. Al Makin. ubi sup. p. 198—200. Ism. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 320. Khondemir, Chron. Sic. Cantabr. ubi sup.

founded

founded by Bûiya, a Deylamite, of royal extraction, furnished Abu Shajā'.

Next year, being the 322d of the Hejra, Ebn Moklah excited the Sâjians and Hajarians to revolt against Al Kâher, by insinuating to their leaders, that he had broken his word with regard to Balîk, his son Ali, Ahmed Ebn Zairac, and Mûnes, whom he had executed after he had promised them their lives, and taken them under his protection; that he had served many other persons of great merit in the same manner; and that, in short, they themselves had great reason to dread his perfidious conduct. Secret conferences were likewise held betwixt him and Sîmâ, general of the Sâjians and Hajarians, who had all the Turkish militia at his devotion; whom he sometimes visited in women's cloaths, sometimes in the habit of a common beggar, and at others in that of a blind mendicant; wherein the plan of operations relative to the deposition of the khalif was gradually settled and adjusted. He also made a present to Sîmâ's astrologer of two hundred dinârs, and another to his interpreter of dreams, engaging them to assist him in the execution of this plan, and by their predictions and interpretations to inspire the general himself with such sentiments as might impel him to act with vigour in the affair. The former of these, therefore, assured Sîmâ, that his horoscope indicated a violent death to him on the part of the khalif; and the latter declared, that his dreams pointed out to him the same fate. These prognostics so alarmed and terrified Sîmâ, that, in his own defence, he resolved to drive Al Kâher from the throne as soon as possible; of which design the visir being informed, he sent Salâm or Salâma, the khalif's chamberlain, and Isa, his physician, to apprise him of the danger he was in: but Al Kâher having spent the greatest part of the night in carousing, and being then asleep, upon their arrival at the palace, they were not permitted to see him. Soon after, the Sâjians and Hajarians forced their way into the palace, possessed themselves of every apartment, and by the noise they made on this occasion awaked him; when, being struck with terror, he concealed himself under the roof, or covering, of a bagnio: but the rebels soon discovered him, deprived him of the use of his eyes with a red-hot iron, threw him into prison, and plundered the city of Baghdâd. A little before his deposition, he put to death Ishak Al Nûbakhti, who had been so instrumental in his elevation to the khalifat. Al Kâher was deposed on Wednesday, the 6th of the Former Jomâda, after he

*Al Kâher
is deposed.*

had reigned about one year and seven months, and was succeeded by Ahmed Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Al Moktader, surnamed Al Râdi or Al Râdi Bi'llah; he himself, according to Al Makîn, having been the first who saluted him khalîf. However, if we credit Abulfeda, he could not be prevailed upon, by any means whatsoever, to abdicate, before proper witnesses. Al Kâher remained in a state of confinement till the Latter Rabî, in the year of the Hejra 333, when the khalif Al Mottaki released him, and sent him home. After he had recovered his liberty, he was reduced to such extreme poverty, that he found himself obliged to beg on Fridays at the door of the great mosque in Baghdâd. The son of Abu Mûsa Al Hâshemi at one time gave him a thousand dirhems. Another person, according to Al Makîn, at a certain time saw him in rags addressing himself to the people that resorted to the mosque of Al Mansûr, in the following terms: "Remember him who was formerly your khalif, and is now reduced to the necessity of asking you for alms." He died either in the 338th, or the 339th year of the Hejra; being then, according to some, fifty-two, or, as others say, fifty-five years of age; and was buried in the house of Ebn Thâher. He was rash, cruel, avaricious, and a person of a very iniquitous conduct §.

Some farther particulars relating to Al Kâher.

Mirkhond writes, that the khalif Al Kâher owed his advancement to Mûnes, the eunuch, who had been his master and governor; but that he soon forgot his obligations to that general, and ordered him, together with many other servants of the khalif Al Moktader, to be assassinated. The same author likewise observes, that Mûnes was a person of an extraordinary size; and that his head was so large, that his brains, being taken out, after it had been cut off, weighed six pounds of Baghdâd; upon which, a Persian poet remarked, that the larger any head was, the greater number of infirmities it was subject to. After this execution, continues that historian, the dependents and domestics of Yusef Ebn Abu'l Sâj excited a tumult in Baghdâd, during which, they talked of placing Abu Ahmed Ebn Al Moctâfi upon the Moslem throne. Al Kâher, having been apprized of this design, commanded Abu Ahmed to be brought before him; and, after having sent him into the haram, the most retired part of the palace where the women lived, ordered him to be nailed with four nails to

§ Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 298, 299. Al Makîn. ubi sup. p. 199, 200. Ism. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 322. Ebn Shohnah, Khondemir. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 526, 527. 530, 531.

the wall of one of the chambers; though, according to some of the Arab writers, this prince was only immured in that place, where he soon after ended his days. Whilst Abu Ahmed was in this wretched situation, Al Kâher sent for Abu Yahya, a man of the gown, who was very rich, and told him he wanted two hundred thousand dinârs. Abu Yahya declared to the khalif, that he was not able to supply him with so large a sum. Upon which, that prince replied, "Abu Ahmed, who is within here, assured me that you could, and he would advise you to do it." Abu Yahya then stepped into the room where Abu Ahmed was confined, and, to his infinite surprize, saw him nailed to the wall. This sight struck him with such terror, that he immediately furnished Al Kâher with the money demanded, and, by that compliance, maintained himself in the possession of all his dignities and employments^h.

Amongst the learned men that flourished in Al Kâher's reign, we may rank Isa, already mentioned, and Senân Ebn Thâbet Ebn Korra, likewise taken notice of above, both of them physicians to that prince. Isa was the son of Yufef, who went under the name of Ebn Al Attâr, and was a great favourite of the khalif he had the honour to serve. Such confidence did Al Kâher repose in Isa, that he frequently intrusted him with his commands to the visir, and imparted many secrets to him. Senân Ebn Thâbet likewise had great interest with his master; but was not so much esteemed by him as Isa Ebn Yufef Ebn Al Attâr. However, the khalif, being sometimes greatly delighted with his conversation, pressed him to embrace Mohammedism; which, for some time, he resolutely refused, but, as he was extremely afraid of Al Kâher's ferocity, he at last agreed to profess himself a Moslem. After which, he continued, during a certain time, in the khalif's service; but being often terrified by Al Kâher's commands, he fled into Khorasân, whence he afterwards returned to Baghdâd, where he died in the 331st year of the Hejra. The following pleasant story has been told of this Senân by Abu'l Faraj. The khalif once commanded him to examine the physicians of Baghdâd, in order to discover their abilities, and see whether they imposed upon his subjects. Soon after he had received this order, a person of gravity and a very good aspect, exceedingly well dressed, came to be examined; upon which, Senân, having first paid his respects to him in a proper manner, desired him

*Isa Ebn
Yufef Ebn
Al Attâr
and Senân
Ebn Thâ-
bet Ebn
Korra
were Al
Kâher's
principal
friends.*

to give a specimen of his skill in physic, and to name the doctor who had instructed him in that art. The other took a paper out of his sleeve, which contained in it a certain number of dinârs, laid it down before Senân, and frankly owned that he knew nothing at all of the matter; that he could neither read nor write; but that, as he supported himself and his family by his practice, he begged he would not ruin him, by telling the truth to the khalif. To this declaration Senân, who could not forbear laughing at what he heard, replied, that he would not expose him, provided he would promise never to attend a patient whose distemper he did not understand, and that he would neither prescribe phlebotomy nor cathartics in any cases but such as were perfectly well known to him. This proposal the doctor readily agreed to, saying at the same time, that he never ventured beyond oxymel and a julep, when he prescribed to his patients; and immediately left him. Next day, a young physician of an agreeable mien, in a neat and decent dress, waited upon Senân, who asked him to whom he was obliged for his knowledge in the art he professed. The other replied, "To my father." "Who is your father?" said Senân. "The doctor," replied the young man, "who was with you yesterday." "A noble doctor, truly!" replied Senân. "Do you," continued he, "prescribe in the same manner?" "Always," returned the young physician. "Take care then," said Senân, "that you go on as you have done, improve in your profession as your father does, that he may have a son as like him as possible." All Senân's works are held in great esteem. He was an excellent astronomer, and one who had rendered himself famous throughout the East. Nor is this to be wondered at, since the Sabians, whose religion both he and his ancestors professed, cultivated the study of astronomy above any other sect or nation, during the period we are now treating. As the khalif Al Kâher obliged Senân to embrace Mohammedism, he has been surnamed Al Kâheri, or the Kâherian, by some of the Oriental writers¹.

*Al Râdi is
proclaimed
khalif.*

After the deposition of Al Kâher, his nephew Abu'l Abbâs Ahmed Ebn Al Moktader, surnamed Al Râdi, or Al Râdi Bi'llah, was taken out of the prison where he had been confined by that prince, and placed upon the Moslem

¹ Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 299—301. Edm. Castel. Lex. Heptaglot. in voc. רָדִי. p. 3157. Lond. 1669. Not. MS. ad Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. apud Joannem Swintonum, A. M. Oxoniens. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Senan Ben Thabeth, p. 804.

throne,

throne, on the 6th of the Former Jomâda, the very day his uncle was deposed. The khalif's mother was denominated Talûm, according to Al Makîn. Upon his accession, Ali Ebn Ifa petitioned for the post of visir; but the new khalif told him, that Ebn Moklah was better qualified to take upon himself the government of the empire, in the present critical situation of affairs; and therefore he conferred upon him that arduous charge. About this time, Mardawij Ebn Ramâz, the king or prince of Deylam, defeated, in several engagements, Ma'hcân Ebn Mâli, took Amid or Amed in Mesopotamia, and subdued the province of Tabrestân; Motâhar Atâ'a, the khalif's lieutenant of Khorasân, not being able to oppose him. It appears from some of the eastern writers, that Al Kâher, a little before he was deposed, granted to Mardawij Ebn Ramâz the investiture of Ray, Markab, Zanjân, and Abhar, upon condition that he restored the city of Esfahân, from whence his brother Wasmakîn had driven the famous Ali Abu'l Hasan Amado'ddawla Ebn Bûiya a little time before. With this proposal Mardawij immediately closed, and recalled his brother from Esfahân; but soon after receiving advice that Al Kâher was deposed, and his nephew Al Râdi advanced to the khalifat, he sent Wasmakîn with all possible expedition to seize again upon that city, and to secure to himself the possession of Ray, Ahwâz, and Fârs. He also concluded a treaty of peace with Amado'ddawla Ebn Bûiya; the principal article of which was, that each party should keep possession of what he had made himself master of. It appears from Abulfeda, that Joannes Curcuas, the imperial general, invaded the Moslem territories, and took the city of Malatia, after a long and obstinate siege, the first day of the Latter Jomâda, in the present year. After the surrender of the place, he sent a detachment of his troops to conduct the Moslem garrison, which had made a brave defence, to one of the khalif's fortresses, and reduced a large extent of territory to the obedience of the emperor. Abu Mohammed Obeid'allah Al Mohdi, the first of the Fâtemite khalifs of Kairwân, died the 14th of the Former Rabî, after he had reigned twenty-four years three months and six days; being at the time of his death about fifty-three, or, according to Abulfeda, sixty-three years of age. He was succeeded by his son Abul Kasem Mohammed, surnamed Al Kayem, who was created khalif at Al Mohdia, the day his father expired; though the Moslems of Sicily, for near six months, heard nothing of this remarkable event. And, if we believe

lieve Abulfeda, the new khalif, for reasons of state, concealed his father's death a whole year. We are told by Abulfeda and the Cambridge Chronicon, that Abu'l Kasem sent a body of troops into Italy, that reduced the city of Genoa, and made a descent upon the island of Sardinia, in the course of the following year^k.

Before we conclude our account of the transactions of this year, it must be observed, that the infamous Mohammed Ebn Ali Al Shalmagâni, so denominated from Shalmagân, a town in the territory of Wâset, the place of his nativity, was crucified, together with Ibrahim Ebn Abu Awn, one of his disciples, for the impious opinions he maintained. This impostor held, that as much of the Deity resided in created beings, and particularly men, as their respective capacities would admit; that every human soul passed from one body to another, through an indefinite and indeterminate series of ages; and that Ali was the most excellent of mortals, and that he was either God himself, or at least a partaker of the divine nature, and extremely like him. Al Shalmagâni, with many of his followers, kept himself for some time concealed; but at last, in the month of Shawâl, this year, he left his lurking-place, and endeavoured to poison the minds of the khalif's subjects with his impious tenets. Being brought before Ebn Moklah, upon whom Al Râdi, at Simâ's persuasion, had conferred the post of Wazîr, he denied the erroneous opinions laid to his charge; though he owned, that his followers asserted God to have taken up his residence in him. Ebn Moklah, not satisfied with what he alleged in his defence, sent him, for farther examination, to the khalif; Ibrahim Ebn Abu Awn and Mohammed Ebn Abdûs, two of his disciples, at the same time attending him. Upon the appearance of these impostors before the khalif, he commanded Ebn Abu Awn and Ebn Abdûs to beat Al Shalmagâni with their fists, though they had not scrupled to attribute divinity to him: the latter of them complied with no small reluctance, though the other, instead of obeying the khalif, kissed his head and his beard, crying out, "My Supporter, my Lord, and my God!" Al Shalmagâni was then asked, whether he had not before denied, that he ever arrogated to himself divine honours? to which interrogation he answered in the affirmative, and

^k Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 201, 202. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi supra, p. 301. Eutych. ubi sup. p. 528, 529. Abulfed. ubi supra. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 555. Chron. Sic. Cant. p. 10. Joan. Bapt. Caruf. Saracenic. Rer. Epit. p. 99. Panormi, 1720.

blamed

blamed Ebn Abu Awn for his extravagant conduct. However, being at last examined by all the great doctors of the law, he was by them judged worthy of death; and, in consequence of the sentence then passed upon him, he was with Ebn Abu Awn, executed, in the month of Dhu'lkaa-da, at Baghdâd. After the execution, the bodies of both impostors were reduced to ashes, in order to inspire the populace with the greater abhorrence of their impiety ¹.

In the year of the Hejra 323, Mardawîj Ebn Ramâz, or Ebn Zayyâr, the king of Deylam, who had subdued Al Jebâl, and other adjacent provinces, was assassinated by some of the Turks in his service, and succeeded by his brother Wasmakîn, Wasmakîn, or Wasmakîr. The same year Abu Thâher, the Karmatian general, and prince of Hajr, plundered a caravan, and put a great number of pilgrims to the sword. About the same time, Amaddawla Ali Ebn Bûyia possessed himself of Esfahân, and proposed afterwards to reduce to his obedience Hamadân, Komm, Kâshân, Karaj, Al Ray, Kazwîn, Kenkewar, and all the territories of Wasmakîn. In the month of either the Former or Latter Jomâda, the troops mutinied at Baghdâd, broke open the house of Ebn Moklah, Al Râdi's wasîr, and obliged him and his son to fly over the Tigris into the western town; though the commotion raised on this occasion was afterwards appeased. Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Ta'j, or Mohammed Ebn Tagaj, surnamed Al Akhshid, also conquered Egypt, which he entered in the month of Ramadân, and annexed it to the opulent province of Syria, which he had before wrested out of the khalif's hands. Several violent shocks of an earthquake were felt in Egypt, the third of Dhu'lkaada: about the same time, many of those meteors called falling stars, of a very remarkable kind, likewise appeared in Egypt. This year, the followers of the famous Ahmed Ebn Hanbal, who were now become very numerous, raised a great commotion in Baghdâd, entering people's houses, spilling their wine, beating the singing-women they met with, and breaking their instruments to pieces; insomuch that a severe edict was published against them, before they could be reduced to their duty.

In the following year, being the 324th of the Hejra, the khalif Al Râdi, finding himself pressed on all sides by the usurpers who had dismembered the Moslem empire, and reduced to

The principal events of the year 323.

Al Râdi creates a minister superior to his wîsir.

¹ Al Shahrestan. apud Pocock. in Not. ad Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 265. D'Herbelot. ubi supra, in art. Hakem Beamrillah. Sale's Prelimin. Disc. p. 176, & seq.

great distress by the incapacity of his visir, created Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Rayek, emir al omra, or assigned him the charge of *commandant of commandants*, which the title of emir al omra, that is, the *emir of emirs*, or the *supreme emir*, imports. This great officer, or rather prime minister, was trusted with the administration of all military affairs, and had the entire management of the finances, in a much more absolute and unlimited manner than any of the khalif's visirs, committed to him: he even officiated for the khalif in the great mosque at Baghdâd, and had his name mentioned in the public divine service throughout the empire. In a word, Al Râdi was so entirely governed by this Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Rayek and his secretary, that he could not take out of the treasury a single dinâr for his own use, without their permission. As for Ebn Moklah, who was a person of considerable abilities, though not equal to the post in which he had been placed, the khalif left him for some time in possession of the charge of visir; but at last, on account of his pragmatcal disposition, he found himself obliged to dismiss him from his service. Ebn Rayek came from Wâset, over the people of which city he then presided as governor, or rather sovereign, the 25th of Dhu'lhajja, to Baghdâd. Soon after, he appointed Ahmed Ebn Ali Cûfa his secretary of state. Abulfeda relates, that the Hajarians, with Al Modhaffer Ebn Yâkût at their head, deposed Ebn Moklah, and after him Ali Ebn Isa, Abd'alrahmân Ebn Isa, and Abu Jaafar Ebn Al Kafem, whom they had successively appointed to officiate as visir, within the space of a few months. He also writes, that Ebn Rayek, who had assumed the sovereignty of Wâset and Basra, Al Barîdi, who had seized upon Ahwâz, and the other governors of provinces, having refused to send their respective tributes to Baghdâd, the khalif's treasury was quite exhausted, insomuch that he found himself obliged to employ Ebn Rayek, who had amassed considerable sums, as the emir al omra; a step which put the government of the Moslem empire, without any restriction or reserve, into his hands. The same author likewise intimates, that he disarmed the Sâjians immediately after his arrival at Baghdâd; a circumstance which inspired the Hajarians with an aversion to him. Mohammed Ebn Tagaj, and some of his officers, assembled a body of troops at Barka, whither they had been obliged to retire from Egypt, with which they returned to Alexandria, drove the garrison of that city to the river of Rashîd, pursued them thither, and entirely defeated them.

Many

Many of the Egyptians were killed in the action, and most of the rest taken prisoners; after which action, the citizens of Alexandria, that had been forced to abandon the place, returned home. About the same time, Al Râdi granted the investiture of Egypt, in the fullest and most solemn manner, to Al Akhshîd, and recalled Ahmed Ebn Keigalag from that country. From this time the office of visir became only a nominal post, the emir al omra continuing to govern the khalifat with an absolute sway, till the power of the Seljûkians, or Oriental Turks, began to decline at Baghdâd ^m.

Next year, being the 325th of the Moslem æra, Ebn Rayek, who possessed the charge of emir al omra, and, in consequence of that office, had the entire direction of the state, concluded an inglorious treaty of peace with Abu Thâher, prince of the Karmatians, who had made himself master of Cûfa. The principal article of this treaty was, that Ebn Rayek should remit the Karmatian from Baghdâd the annual sum of one hundred and twenty thousand dinârs. However, Abu Thâher, in consideration of this tribute, engaged never for the future to molest the caravans of pilgrims in their passage to Mecca.

An inglorious treaty concluded with Abu Thâher.

The same year, Ebn Rayek, and the khalif in person, marched with a powerful army to Wâset, in order to reduce the rebel Abu Abd'allah Al Barîdi, who had seized upon that city. Al Barîdi, finding himself not in a condition to make head against the khalif's forces, purchased a peace of Al Râdi, by submitting to pay a monthly tribute of thirty thousand dinârs. But, after the khalif's departure to Baghdâd, he rebelled again, took Basra, together with the district belonging to that city, and in a short time grew more powerful than he was before ⁿ.

Al Barîdi becomes tributary to the khalif.

This rebellion greatly embarrassing the khalif's affairs, the scene of it being in the very neighbourhood of Baghdâd, Ebn Rayek sent Yahcam, the Turk, with a numerous army, to extinguish it, and, if possible, to get the author into his hands. But Al Barîdi, finding himself not in a condition to oppose Yahcam, fled at his approach; upon which Wâset, Ahwâz, and Basra, immediately submitted to the khalif's forces, and Ebn Rayek appointed Yahcam to preside over Ahwâz in quality of governor, who thereupon engaged to pay an annual tribute to the khalif

Al Barîdi is driven from Wâset, Ahwâz, and Basra, and flies to Amado'd-dawlas's court.

^m Khondemir. Vide etiam Al Makin, Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. Eutych. Ism. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 324. Chronic. Sic. Cantabrigiens. & Joan. Bapt. Caruf. ubi sup. ⁿ Khondemir & Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 204. Ism. Abulf. in Chr. ad an. Hej. 325.

of thirty-eight thousand dinârs. After Al Barîdi had been driven from Wâfet, Ahwâz, and Basra, he took sanctuary at Amado'ddawla Ali Ebn Bûiya's court; who sent his brother Moezzo'ddawla Ahmed Ebn Bûiya with him, attended by a strong body of troops, to dislodge Yahcam from his new acquisitions in the following year. The Moslems, about this time, plundered the church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem, and reduced a considerable part of it to ashes; Christopher, a native of Askalon, or Askelon, being then the patriarch. An insurrection happened at Gergenti, the Agrigentum of the ancients, in Sicily, April 17, when the people of that city assembled in great numbers, drove Ebn Amrân from Calata-Bellotta, called by the Arabs Ka'lat Al Bellût, and pillaged the garrison of that place. Al Emir Sâlem, receiving advice of what had happened, marched against the insurgents with an army of Sicilians and Cottâmians, or Catâmians, a very powerful and warlike Arab or Moorish nation, and laid siege to Afrah, or Ofrah; of which step the Gergentines being informed, they advanced to the besiegers camp, engaged the emir's forces, on Saturday, June 24, and overthrew them with incredible slaughter. A prodigious number of the Cottâmians, together with Abu Dekâk, their general, perished in the action. After this defeat, they made excursions as far as the gates of Palermo, and even attempted to form the siege of that city. For which purpose, they advanced to a place going under the name of Mesîd Balîs, not far from the town; but were repulsed by the inhabitants of Palermo with very considerable loss; who, being supported by Al Emir Salem Ebn Al Rashîd, and Al Maimûn Ebn Mûsa, pursued them as far as Marnûa, and put many of them to the sword. This emir had been appointed governor of the Moslem conquests in Sicily by Abu'l Kafem, or Al Kayem, the khalif of Kairwân, and grievously oppressed the Sicilians, particularly the Gergentines, who could not bear his yoke, and therefore expelled the Moslem garrison out of their city. This expulsion so enraged the African khalif, that he sent an army to reduce them; which surrounded them on all sides, cut off all communication between them and the other Sicilians, and reduced them to very great difficulties. However, they found means to apply to the Greek emperor for assistance, who thereupon sent a body of his best troops to their relief; which enabled them to repulse the besiegers in all their assaults, to destroy vast numbers of their men, and,

in

in short, to sustain a sharp and vigorous siege during four whole years °.

The provinces of the khalifat at this time were divided in such a manner amongst divers princes, that the khalif possessed only an appearance of pre-eminence in dignity, which regarded more the affairs of religion than those of the state. This will be sufficiently manifest from the following list of the tyrants, or usurpers, who had assumed sovereign power, in different parts of the Moslem empire, at the commencement of the present year.

The khalif at this time is only in possession of the city and district of Baghdād.

The cities of Wâset, Basra, and Cûfa, with the rest of the Arabian Irâk, were considered as the peculiar property of Ebn Rayek, the emir al omra; though Al Barîdi seized upon them, in the beginning of the present year.

The country of Fârs, Farsistân, or Persia properly so called, was possessed by Amado'ddawla Ali Ebn Bûiya, the first prince or chief of the dynasty of the Bûiyans, who resided in the city of Shîraz.

Part of the country denominated Al Jebal, together with the remainder of the Persian Irâk, which is the mountainous part of Persia, and the country of the ancient Parthians, recognized for their master Rocno'ddawla, or Rucno'ddawla, Al Hasân Ebn Bûiya, the brother of Amado'ddawla Ali Ebn Bûiya, who resided at Esfahân.

The other part of that territory was possessed by Wafmakîn, Washmakîn, or Washmakîr, the Deylamite, the brother of Mardawîj.

Diyar Rabia, Diyar Becr, Diyar Modar, and the city of Al Mawfel, or Mosul, acknowledged for their sovereigns the Hamdanites, or the princes of the race of Hamdan.

Egypt and Syria no longer obeyed the khalifs, but only Mohammed Ebn Ta'j, or Tagaj, surnamed Al Akhshîd, who had been formerly appointed governor of those provinces by the same khalifs.

Africa had been conquered by the Fâtēmites, who had expelled the Aglabites, governors of the city of Kairwân and its dependencies for the khalifs. The master of that country at this time was Al Kayem Abu'l Kasem Ebn Obeid'allah Al Mohdi, whose successors founded a new khalifat in Egypt.

° Al Makin, ubi sup. Eutych, ubi sup. p. 528—531. Ism. Abu'l-fed. ubi sup. Chronic. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiensis: p. 11, 12. Joan. Bapt. Carus. ubi sup. p. 99, 100. Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn. Abildam Al Hamawi, in Hist. cui tit. Asmodfar, Conservat in Biblioth. Escorial. & Lat. reddit. à Marco Dobelio. Vide etiam Augustin. Inveg. Annal. Panorm. tom. ii.

Spain, or at least the Moslem part of it, was governed by Abd'alrahmân Al Nafr Ebn Mohammed, of the house of Ommiyah, who soon after this time assumed the title of Emir Al Mûmenîn, *prince, king, or emperor of the faithful*, which was peculiar to the khalifs.

The Moslem provinces in Sicily, except the city of Gergenti, whose inhabitants had expelled the Magrebian garriſon, had for their immediate governor Al Emîr Sâlem Ebn Al Raſhîd, who was the khalif of Kairwân's lieutenant in that iſland.

The Moslem territories in Crete, owned for their ſovereign one who probably was a deſcendent of Apochapſus, or Abu Kabs, the Spaniſh Magrebian admiral, who reduced that iſland, about the year of our Lord 812.

The provinces of Khorafân and Mawarâ'nahr, or the Tranſoxana, were under the domination of Al Nafr Ebn Ahmed, of the dynasty of the Sammânians.

The provinces of Tabreſtân, Jorgân or Georgiâna, and Mazanderan, had kings of the firſt dynasty of the Deylamites.

The province of Kerman was occupied by Abu Ali Mohammed Ebn Eylâ, or Elias, Al Sammani, who had made himſelf maſter of it before the commencement of the preſent year.

And, laſtly, the provinces of Yamâma and Bahrein, including the diſtrict of Hajr, were in poſſeſſion of Abu Thâher, the Karmatian.

Hence it appears, that, in the 325th year of the Hejra, the khalif Al Radi, or rather Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Râyek, the emir al omra, kept poſſeſſion of only the city of Baghdâd, and its dependencies; ſcarce even the very ſhadow of ſovereignty remaining to him in any other part of the empire. It is true, at firſt the name of the khalif was revered by the princes, who had declared themſelves independent in all the provinces, mentioned in the moſques, during the time of public ſervice, throughout the empire, and impreſt upon the current coin. But their veneration being gradually diminiſhed, the princes, or emirs, conſidered him only as the great imâm, or ſovereign pontiff of the religion of the Moſlems, who had nothing more to do than to perform divine ſervice, harangue the people in the great moſque at Baghdâd, and decide certain points of right; in the laſt of which particulars his power was likewiſe very much limited. It is alſo true, that the ſame khalifs, in proceſs of time, ſhook off the yoke of theſe emirs, and aſſerted their independency on them. But, never-

vertheless, their power gradually declined, from the period we are now treating, to the taking of Baghdâd by the Tartars, or Moguls, who entirely abolished the khalifat ^p.

In the 326th year of the Hejra, Ebn Moklah, who had been re-established in the post of visir, wrote, on the part of the khalif Al Radi, a letter to Yahcam, the Turk, telling him that now it was time for him to advance to Baghdâd at the head of a body of troops, in order to deliver the khalifat from the tyranny of Ebn Râyek, and to occupy his place. But this letter having been intercepted, Ebn Râyek discovered to the khalif the treason of the visir, who had dared to write such a letter to Yahcam, without his master's knowlege, and even against his express orders. Ebn Moklah, upon his appearing before the khalif, at first denied the fact; but the letter in his own handwriting being produced, he was found guilty of what had been laid to his charge, sent immediately to prison, brought afterwards to his trial, and condemned by the judges to have his right hand cut off, for having committed so heinous a crime. When sentence was pronounced, he complained bitterly of the severity of it, and of the iniquity of cutting off the right hand of a man who had invented the most beautiful character that had ever been in use amongst the Arabs, had written several copies of the Koran, the book held in the highest veneration and esteem amongst the Moslems, in so elegant a manner that they passed for master-pieces in the art of writing, and had finally been visir to three successive khalifs. Nor did he content himself with bare complaints. He inveighed bitterly against the judges, Ebn Râyek, and the khalif himself: wherefore, the executioner, in pursuance of the sentence that had been passed upon him, not only deprived him of his right hand, but likewise, some days afterwards, cut out his tongue. After which operations, he was confined in one of the dungeons belonging to the imperial palace. Al Makîn, or rather his translator Erpenius, relates, that having no servant allowed him, he drew water out of a well that was by him with his left hand and his mouth. He died, according to Al Makîn, in the month of Shawâl 329, and was no less than three times interred; first, in the prison where he died, afterwards in his son Abu'l Hasan's house, and lastly in his own. He is said likewise to have

Ebn Moklah is removed from the post of visir.

^p Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 203, 204. Mirkhond, Khondemir, Ebn Shohnah, Abu'l-Faraj, Ism. Abulfed. Eutych. Chronic. Sic. Cantab. Georg. Cedren. Joan. Zonar. Roderic. Toletan. D'Herbel. Carusius, aliique scriptor. plurim. pass.

written three copies of the Koran that in beauty surpassed all the rest, and to have performed three times the pilgrimage to Mecca. It has also been remarked, that when he beat Ebn Sîbûd for reading in a careless manner, that reader wished he might lose his hand. We are informed by Abu'l-Faraj, that Ebn Moklah wrote a letter to the khalif himself, advising him to dismiss Ebn Râyek, and all his adherents, and telling him, that this would bring into his coffers three thousand millions of dinârs. But the khalif, continues that writer, communicated the contents of this letter, in which Ebn Moklad likewise pressed him to confer the post of emir al omra upon Yahcam, to Ebn Râyek; which, at last, proved the total ruin of the visir.

*Yahcam
seizes upon
Baghdâd,
and forces
the khalif
to make
him emir
al omra.*

The deposition and imprisonment of Ebn Moklah for the present occasioned a sort of calm, though Ebn Râyek was by no means secured in the possession of his charge. For, Yahcam, resolving not to lose the opportunity offered him by the treason of the visir, advanced at the head of his troops into the territory of Baghdâd, overthrew the khalif's forces under the command of Ebn Râyek, and made himself master of that capital. This event obliged Ebn Râyek to betake himself to flight, and to abandon the post of emir al omra, which was immediately occupied by Yahcam. The khalif himself, however, gained nothing by this change; still living in entire dependence on his minister, and even without the least appearance of authority. The affairs of the Karmatians this year were in such a declining condition, that Abu Thâher found it extremely difficult to maintain himself in the possession of Hajar. We must not forget to observe, that Moezzo'ddawla Ahmed Ebn Bûiya took Ahwâz in the beginning of the campaign, and put Basra once more into the hands of Al Barîdi; though he could not possess himself of Wâset. Here Yahcam still kept his ground, forced Moezzo'ddawla to retire, and afterwards drove Ebn Râyek from Baghdâd. Upon Yahcam's expulsion of his predecessor from the khalif's councils, after he had remained in the honourable post of emir al omra one year ten months and sixteen days, he himself immediately entered upon that charge, and made Mohammed Ebn Yahya Ebn Shîrazâd his secretary of state. This year, the Sicilians, under the conduct of Ebn Al Sabâyah and Abu Târ, revolted against Al Emir Sâlem; but were routed by him September the 17th, though he lost one of his principal officers in the action, named Abu Nattâr Al Aswad, who seems to have been of Moorish or Magrebian extraction. Several of the ringleaders, that
fell

fell into his hands, the emir ordered to be impaled the 20th of the same month, to deter others from joining the revolt; but this severity produced a quite contrary effect: for the Sicilians, being exasperated at Sâlem's cruelty, assembled a numerous army, and engaged the Magrebian forces, commanded by the emir in person, October 7, with very great bravery; but, after an obstinate dispute, they were entirely defeated, and pursued as far as the gates of Palermo, which the victors entered without opposition, and immediately formed the siege of the citadel. Abu'l Kafem, or Al Kayem, the khalif of Kairwân, having received advice of this rebellion, sent Khalîl with a powerful fleet, and a strong body of land-forces on board, to extinguish it. Khalîl soon arrived on the coast of Sicily, made a descent with his troops, took possession of the city of Palermo, October 23d, and entirely dismantled it; a step which so incensed the Gergentines, that they sallied upon the khalif of Kairwân's troops with such courage, that they put them to flight, killed many upon the spot, amongst which were Ebn Abu Harîr and Ali Ebn Abu'l Husein, Sâlem's son-in-law, two officers of distinction, and dispersed the rest in such a manner that they could never afterwards rally. But, notwithstanding this blow, Khalîl continued the siege of Gergenti; though for the space of eight months he could make little or no impression upon the town. It must be remembered, that the Moslems concluded a treaty of peace with the Greeks, by one article of which a mutual release of prisoners was agreed upon, in the course of the present year⁹.

In the 327th of the Hejra, the khalif Al Râdi, with a powerful army, commanded by Yahcam, marched against Nafero'ddawla Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân, who presided over the people of Diyâr Rabîa, Diyâr Becr, and Al Mawfel, routed him with very great slaughter, and pursued him to the gates of Al Mawfel; to which city he afterwards laid siege, and obliged Nafero'ddawla to fly to Amed; but whilst the khalif was engaged in this expedition, Ebn Râyek appeared at the head of a body of troops in the neighbourhood of Baghdâd; of which circumstance Yahcam being informed, he concluded a peace with Nafero'ddawla Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân, on condition that he paid him an annual tribute of five hundred thousand di-

The transactions of the year of the Hejra 327.

⁹ Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 205, 206. Ebn Shohnah, Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 705. Ibn. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. Chronic. Sic. Cantabrigienf. p. 12, 13. Joan Bapt. Caruf. ubi sup. p. 100. Panorini, 1720.

nârs. In order to pacify Ebn Râyek, he also put him in possession of Harrân, Al Rohâ, or Edeffa, Al Awâsem, Kinnisrîn, and several districts bordering upon the Euphrates. This year, Abu Thâher, prince of the Karmatians, permitted the caravans of pilgrims, together with the escort that attended them, to pass, for the first time since the year 319, out of Syria to Mecca; though he obliged them to pay for this permission the sum of twenty-five thousand dinârs. At this period, Omayyah Ebn Ishak, according to Abu'lfeda, rebelled against Abd'alrahmân Al Nafr Ebn Mohammed, the emir or lord of Andalusia, in the city of Shantarîn. Ebn Ishak, being supported by a body of Gallician troops, defeated a Moslem army, sent against him; but, in a second engagement, he was overthrown by Abd'alrahmân's forces, and lost the greater part of his men; a defeat which obliged him to submit immediately, upon the terms prescribed by the emir. Khalîl, the Magrebian general, who commanded the khalif of Kairwân's forces that carried on the siege of Gergenti, returned with most of his troops to Palermo, where he exacted a large sum of money of the inhabitants, by way of fine, which he sent immediately to Africa. This enabled the khalif to order him a reinforcement; after the arrival of which in Sicily, he took Abûthûr, or Buteria, Al Sîrât, the Afforus or Afforium of the ancients, and the modern Azaro or Afaro, Aklâfinah, or Scafanum, and Kalbarah, all of them places of considerable strength. He also advanced at the head of his army to Calata Bellotta, to form the siege of that town; of which design the Gergentines, to whom the preservation of that fortress was of the utmost consequence, receiving advice, they fell upon the besiegers with such fury, that they put a great number to the sword, and, as the Cambridge Chronicon seems to insinuate, forced the rest to abandon the siege. This action happened on the 10th of July, and proved so fatal to the Magrebian troops, that they durst not appear again in the neighbourhood of Calata Bellotta before the commencement of the following campaign^r.

*Ebn Râyek
is defeated
by Al Akh-
shîd.*

Next year, being the 328th of the Hejra, Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Râyek reduced Hems, Damascus, and Al Ramla; after which conquests, he penetrated to Arish in Egypt. But here Mohammed Al Akhshîd Ebn Tagaj

^r Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 206. Ism. Abu'lfed. ad an. Hej. 327. Chron. Sic. Arab. Cantab. et Joan. Bapt. Carus. ubi sup.

met him, and gave him battle, about the middle of the month of Ramadân. Ebn Râyek's troops behaved with such bravery in the beginning of the action, that they bore down all before them, and forced the Egyptians every-where to give way. But, instead of following their blow, and pursuing the fugitives, they amused themselves with plundering their camp; upon which, a body of Al Akhshîd's troops that had been placed in ambuscade, and observed the disorder they were in, rushed out upon them, and charged them with such fury, that they soon put them to flight. Great part of Ebn Râyek's forces were killed upon the spot, and the rest so effectually dispersed, that they could never afterwards rally; Ebn Râyek himself not having been able to make his escape to Damascus with above seventy men. After this action, Ebn Râyek defeated Abu Nafr, Al Akhshîd's brother, in the month of Dhu'lkaada, and put a vast number of his men to the sword. This victory was soon followed by a peace between Ebn Râyek and Al Akhshîd, by the principal articles of which the city of Al Ramla was ceded to Al Akhshîd, upon condition that he paid to Ebn Râyek the annual sum of one hundred and forty thousand dinârs; and the latter of these emirs remained in peaceable possession of the remaining part of Syria, which he had before in a great measure reduced by force of arms.

It appears from some of the authors followed by Al Makîn, that Sa'id Ebn Batrik, known also by the name of Anba Eutychius, an excellent physician, and a native of Al Fostât, who had been advanced to the patriarchate of Alexandria in 321, died the present year. This author, who was a Melchite, began his annals with the creation of the world, and brought them down to the year of the Hejra 327. This work, intituled *Nadhm Al Jawhar, a Con-texture of Gems, or a String of Pearls*, has been published with a Latin version by the famous Dr. Pococke, professor of the Hebrew and Arabic languages in the university of Oxford, where it was printed in the year of our Lord 1656. We are told by M. Renaudot, that it is incomparably better than any general history to be found amongst the Orientals; and that it has been followed not only by the Christian writers, but likewise by Al Makrizi, and other Mohammedan authors. Eutychius is also said to have composed a physical treatise, which bore the title of *Kitâb fil thebb*, and to have been extremely well skilled in all the branches of literature then in vogue. Another piece has likewise been ascribed to him of the contro-

*Sa'id Ebn
Batrik, or
Eutychius,
dies.*

versial kind, which was written against the Egyptian heretics, who gave him no small trouble, during the time that he sat in the patriarchal see of Alexandria, which was seven years and six months. He was at last attacked by a diarrhoea, which from the beginning he judged would prove fatal, and therefore removed to Alexandria, where he died on Monday, the last day of the month Rajeb. His brother Isa Ebn Batrick was likewise a physician of great reputation, on whose account he compiled the general history above mentioned.

*The trans-
actions in
Sicily this
year.*

In the course of the same year Khalil, with the Magrebian forces, encamped again before Calata Bellotta, and formed a second time the siege of that place; of which enterprize the Gergentines being apprized, they sent a body of troops to the relief of the town, which, in the month of November, surprised the besiegers by night, and made themselves masters of their camp. About the same time Al Emir Sâlem, who had presided over the Moslem conquests in Sicily twenty-two years, and had been a victorious prince, departed this life in his castle. A terrible famine likewise raged in Palermo and the neighbouring villages to such a degree, that parents found themselves obliged to eat their children for want of other food. The Magrebbians laid siege a third time to Calata Bellotta, notwithstanding the blow they had formerly received, and took it in the month of March of the present year.

*The khalif
Al-Râdi
dies.*

In the following, being the 329th of the Hejra, commencing October 6, 940, the khalif Al Râdi died of a dropfy at Baghdâd. Some authors, however, relate, that immoderate coition was the cause of his death. He reigned six years ten months and ten days; and had completed the thirtieth year of his age a few months before his decease, according to Al Makîn. As to his person, he had, if Abu'lfeda may be credited, a thin beard, and was of a swarthy complexion. With regard to his disposition, he was liberal, munificent, mild, well versed in the literature of the Arabs, eloquent, a good poet, and a great admirer of the conversation of learned men. He was the last of the khalifs who wrote verses, at least of the khalifs that wrote such verses as were thought worthy of having a place assigned them in the Moslem annals. A specimen of his poetical performances has been preserved by Abu'lfeda and Al Makîn. He was the last likewise of the Moslem emperors that officiated constantly in the mosque, that commanded the forces, that had the disposal of the public money, and that in short exercised any kind
of

of real authority over the Arabs. His successors, for a considerable period at least, enjoyed little more than the bare title of khalif, and of this they were even at last deprived by the Tartars. Ebn Moklah was his first wazir, or visir, and Mohammed Ebn Yâkût, his first chamberlain. Senân Ebn Thâbet Al Harrâni, that most celebrated physician, was one of his constant companions, and in the highest favour with him. Some of the eastern writers have represented Al Râdi as endued with many virtues worthy a great prince, several of which have been just touched upon; but for a detail of these, the learned and curious reader must have recourse to those writers themselves, the limits we have prescribed ourselves in this part of our work not permitting us to expatiate any farther upon particulars*.

When the khalif Al Râdi expired, Yahcam, then emir al omra, was at Cûfa, and, upon his receiving advice of that prince's death, he immediately dispatched one of his secretaries to Baghdâd, with orders to Abu'l Kasem Solimân, the nominal visir, to convoke the descendents of Ali, the judges, the house of Al Abbâs, and all the principal officers of the empire, to elect a new khalif. They had not been long assembled before they chose Ibrahim Abu'l Ishak Ebn Al Moktader, surnamed afterwards Al Mottaki, or Al Mottaki Bi'llah, whom they unanimously saluted emperor of the Moslems. Al Mottaki, after his inauguration, sent a sumptuous vest and a banner, or standard, to Yahcam at Wâset, and continued him in the post of emir al omra. He also confirmed Abu'l Kasem Solimân in the office of visir, though he had then not the least authority in the state, the empire being absolutely governed by Yahcam's principal secretary, Abu Abd'allah, who was a native of Cûfa. Salâma Al Tolûni was made hâjeb, or chamberlain, by Al Mottaki, at the recommendation of Yahcam.

*Al Mottaki
succeeds Al
Râdi in
the khalif-
fat.*

In the course of this year Mahcân Ebn Mâli, Ma'hcân Ebn Mâli, or Macân Ebn Cali, as he is called by the learned M. Reiske in his Latin version of part of Abu'l-feda's Chronicon, was driven out of Jorjân, of which he had taken possession some time before, by Abu Ali Ebn Mohammed Ebn Modhaffer Ebn Al Mohtaj, one of Al Emir Sa'îd Nafr Ebn Ahmed Al Sammâni's generals. This Mahcân, Ma'hcân, or Macân, according to some of

* Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 201, 207, 208. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 303, 304. Ism. Abu'l-feda. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 329. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Radhi, p. 706.

the Oriental writers, was king or prince of Deylam, and sustained an overthrow from Nafr; but whether this was the defeat hinted at by Abu'lfeda in the place here referred to, we cannot take upon us to determine. Be that, however, as it may, Mahcân, finding himself obliged to abandon Jorjân, retired into Tabrestân, and from thence marched at the head of his forces to join Washmakîn, whom Abu Ali, after his late victory, was then advancing against with a powerful army. After the junction of these two Deylamite princes they moved against Abu Ali with all their forces, and gave him battle; but were defeated with very great slaughter, and lost the most considerable part of their troops, the rest being so entirely dispersed, that they could never afterwards be rallied. Mahcân Ebn Mâli himself was killed in the action, having been shot through the head by an arrow, that pierced his helmet, and laid him dead upon the spot. After this defeat Washmakîn fled into Tabrestân, and left Ray to the mercy of the victor, which immediately submitted, the place at that time not being in any posture of defence. The victory gained on this occasion was very glorious to the arms of Al Emir Sa'id Nafr Ebn Ahmed Al Sammâni, and enabled Abu Ali Ebn Mohammed to annex a large extent of territory to the dominions of that prince^t.

*Yahcam is
assassinated
by a party
of Curds.*

In the same year a party of Curds, according to Abu'l-Faraj, assassinated Yahcam, as he was hunting on the banks of the Jaur, the 24th of the month Rajeb, after he had possessed the office of emir al omra two years eight months and nine days. Of this unexpected event Abu'lfeda has transmitted the following particulars. Yahcam having sent a body of troops from Wâset to reduce Abu Abd'allah, Al Barîdi set out from that city to take upon him the command of these troops; but he was met upon the road by an express, who informed him, that his forces had already proved superior to the enemy, and obliged Al Barîdi to betake himself to flight. Yahcam, therefore, directed his course towards the banks of the Jaur, hunting through all the tract he traversed. He made an incursion, with a small party, into a district bordering upon that river, inhabited by a rich and numerous tribe of Curds, in order to pillage them; and having surprised this people, who little expected such a visit, he killed

^t Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 209, 210. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 304. Ebn Sholnah, Khondemir, Ism. Abu'lfed. &c. Vide etiam Jo. Jac. Reiske, in Abu'lfed. Annal. Moslemic. &c. p. 261, 262. Liphæ, 1754.

several of them, and dispersed many of the rest. However, a young Curd, observing the barbarity and rapacity of this plunderer, whom he did not know to be Yahcam, made directly at him, and ran him through with his lance; upon which he fell instantly to the ground, and soon after expired. The khalif, receiving advice of what had happened to Yahcam, immediately took possession of his palace, where he found immense treasures buried under ground, all which he seized for the service of the state. He also found the rich tapestry, and other valuable furniture, of which Yahcam had caused the imperial palace to be stripped, immediately before the elevation of Al Mottaki to the Moslem throne. After Yahcam's death the khalif conferred the post of emir al omra upon Cûrtakîn the Deylamite; but not being pleased with his conduct he soon dismissed him, and appointed as his successor Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Râyek, who came from his residence in Syria to Baghdâd for that purpose. Before the dismissal of Cûrtakîn, Abu Abd'allah Al Barîdi, prince of the city of Basra and its dependencies, who had possessed himself of those territories and Ahwâz in the khalifat of Al Radi, and had been lately defeated by Yahcam, aspired to the dignity of generalissimo of the khalif's forces, entered Baghdâd, and demanded of Al Mottaki the sum of five hundred thousand dinârs to distribute amongst his troops. With this demand the khalif was at last obliged to comply; but Al Barîdi having got the money into his hands, refused to bestow any part of it upon the soldiery; who thereupon munitied for their pay, and drove him, his brother, son, and many of his attendants, out of Baghdâd. About this time so grievous a famine raged in several parts of Sicily, that many of the towns and villages of that fruitful island were entirely depopulated. The khalif of Kairwân's forces, under the command of Khalîl, made themselves masters of Calata Bellotta and Gergenti, in Sicily, before the close of the present year. The latter of these cities had been besieged about four years by the Magrebian troops. Soon after it had surrendered Khalîl sent a considerable number of its inhabitants, who had been the most active in the late revolt, prisoners to Africa; but before they had reached the African coast, the ship, in obedience to a private order Khalîl had received from Al Kayem, was sunk, and all the wretches on board were drowned.

In the 330th year of the Hejra Al Barîdi, according to Abu'lfeda and Al Makîn, marched at the head of his forces
to

*The khalif
is driven
from Bagh-
dâd.*

to Baghdâd, in order to reduce that city, and the khalif Al Mottaki being in no condition to sustain a siege, retired to Al Mawfel. He was attended by Abu Becr Môhammed Ebn Râyek, Abu'l Hafan Ebn Abu Ali Ebn Moklah, and Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân; the last of which persons joined him and his retinue near Tecrît. That city, called by the Syrians Tagrit, is, according to Abu'lfeda, situated near the confines of Affyria, about six days journey from Al Mawfel, and not far from the source of one of the branches of the Tigris that waters the adjacent tract as far as Baghdâd. Al Mottaki was supplied on this occasion with carriages, beasts of burden, money, and all kinds of provisions, by Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân, who conducted him and his train, in a proper manner, to Al Mawfel. The khalif, after his arrival at Tecrît, wrote to Abu Mohammed Al Hafan Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân, the prince of Al Mawfel, to desire his assistance and protection; and this emir not only surrendered to Al Mottaki one part of the city of Al Mawfel for his residence, but likewise, as he expresses it, poured out upon the head of his son dinârs, that is, gave him a large sum of money. The khalif was so well pleased with his reception at Al Mawfel, that he dignified Abu Mohammed Al Hafan Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân with the title or surname of Nasero'ddawla, that is the *Protector*, or *Defender of the State*. In order to re-establish the khalif in the sovereignty of Baghdâd, this prince sent an army, under the command of his brother Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Abd'allah, to that city, which drove out Al Barîdi, overthrew him with great slaughter, and took above two thousand Deylamites prisoners; all which Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Abd'allah sent under a guard to Al Mawfel. Before the khalif's return to Baghdâd, Nasero'ddawla ordered a party of his guards to dispatch Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Râyek, the 24th of Rajeb, and caused himself to be created emir al omra in his room. After the defeat of Al Barîdi, the khalif conferred upon Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân the honourable surname or title of Saifo'ddawla, or Seifo'ddawla, that is, the *Sword of the State*, or of the *Court*. Al Barîdi was driven from Baghdâd three months and twenty days after he had possessed himself of that city. The first thing that Nasero'ddawla took upon him to do after the expulsion of Al Barîdi from Baghdâd, was to reduce the gold coin of the empire to its primitive and original standard; the dinârs at that time having been so much debased, that they were

were not in reality worth above ten, though they passed for thirteen dirhems. Al Mottaki, at this juncture, took Nafero'ddawla's daughter in marriage for his son, and gave her a dower of five hundred thousand dirhems and a hundred thousand dinârs; by which means Nafero'ddawla reduced the khalif to the necessity of alienating his own and his mother's domains, emptied that prince's coffers, and secured to himself all the ready money which could then be raised. This conduct excited great murmurings amongst the Turkish soldiery, and disposed them to come to a rupture with him as soon as a favourable opportunity offered. And they soon after drove his brother Saifo'ddawla from his camp, and even obliged Nafero'ddawla himself to retire to Al Mawfel, if we believe Abu'l-Faraj.

Next year, being the 331st of the Hejra, Nafero'ddawla went to Al Mawfel from Baghdâd; of which removal the Deylamite troops being informed, they plundered his house. His brother Saifo'ddawla soon after followed him thither; having, with great difficulty, escaped the fury of a body of Turks he commanded at Wâset. However, in a short time, he left Al Mawfel, made the best of his way to Baghdâd, and prevailed upon the khalif to put into his hands the sum of four hundred thousand dinârs, to distribute amongst his forces, in order to engage them to drive Tozûn, or Tûzûn, the Turk, out of the city: but as soon as the money was paid, he abandoned the metropolis to Tûzûn, who entered it without opposition the 25th of Ramadân; and the khalif was obliged to confer upon him the post of emir al omra, though he entertained very unfavourable sentiments of him. About the same time, Al Emîr Sa'id Nafr Ebn Ahmed Al Sammâni, the lord or sovereign of Khorasân, and several adjacent provinces, after a lingering illness, departed this life. He has been represented as a just, pious, merciful, and magnanimous prince; and was succeeded by his son Nûh Al Sammâni, surnamed Al Emîr Al Hamîd, in the government of Khorasân and Mawarâ'nahr. This year, Al Mottaki sent as a present to the Greek emperor the handkerchief with which our Saviour wiped his face, and wherein the resemblance of his countenance was to be seen, which had been preserved in the church of Al Rohâ, or Edeffa, at present called Orfa. The emperor, in consequence of this present, released a great number of Moslem prisoners. Al Makîn relates, that our Saviour sent the handkerchief above mentioned to Abgar, the black king of Al Rohâ; and that upon its arrival at Constantinople, it

Tûzûn is appointed emir al omra.

was

was conducted in great pomp by the patriarch, bishops, clergy, and Greek nobility, to the church of Santa Sophia, where it was then deposited, and for a long time afterwards remained ^u.

The khalif is obliged a second time to abandon Baghdâd.

In the following year, being the 332d of the Hejra, a robber, supported by Ebn Shîrazâd, one of Tûzûn's chief commanders, to whom he paid monthly for his protection fifteen thousand dinârs, appeared in the neighbourhood of Baghdâd, and committed even within sight of that capital terrible depredations. In the mean time, the khalif Al Mottaki, perceiving that Tûzûn became every day more insolent, discovered an inclination to deprive his prime minister of the office he had assigned him the preceding year; a design which so incensed the Turk, that he obliged the khalif to abandon a second time the city of Baghdâd. That prince, being thus reduced to the necessity of leaving his capital, formed a design to retire to Al Mawfel. Of which the house of Hamdân, then in possession of that place, having been apprised, Saifo'ddawla met him first upon the Tigris, at a small distance from Tecrît; and was followed by Nafero'ddawla, who, in a short time, joined them. These princes conducted Al Mottaki to Al Mawfel, attended by a guard, and for some time treated him in a manner suitable to his dignity and high rank: but finding at last that they began to grow weary of him, he meditated a return to Baghdâd; and was accompanied by them to Al Rakka, upon the Euphrates, where, for a short time, he resided. From this place he wrote to Tûzûn, and made him some overtures for a reconciliation; intimating in his letter, that, if these proved acceptable, he would soon follow them to Baghdâd. This year, the Russians, by means of a fleet they had equipped on the Caspian Sea, and the river Corr, or Kor, made an irruption into the Greater Armenia, penetrated as far as the city of Barda'a, or Bardaa, which they took and sacked, and then returned without having sustained any considerable loss. About the same time, Nafero'ddawla appointed Mohammed Ebn Ali to preside over the provinces of Kinnifrîn, Hems, and Al Awâsem, which he had annexed to his territories in Mesopotamia. Such a scarcity of all sorts of grain prevailed for several months at Baghdâd, that the inhabitants of that metropolis were terrified with the thoughts of a famine. The famous Abu Thâher, prince of the Karmatians, died

^u Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi supra, p. 305, 306. Ism. Abulfed. n Chron ad ann Hej. 331. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 213, 214. Joseph. Sim. Asseman. ubi supra.

of the small-pox in the course of this year. He left behind him three brothers, Sa'id Abu'l Kafem, the eldest, Abu'l Abbâs, who was of a very weak and infirm constitution, and Abu Yakûb, who was greatly addicted to gaming. The Greeks are said to have taken Râso'lain, Râs Al Ain, Refaina, or Refæna, on Tuesday the 12th of the Former Rabî, of the present year, and to have pillaged the town two whole days. We are likewise told, that they took about one thousand Moslems prisoners in this expedition, and put a very considerable number of the khalif's subjects to the sword.

In the 333d year of the Hejra, the khalif Al Mottaki was deposed by Tûzûn, before he had sat quite four years upon the Moslem throne. In answer to the khalif's letter, sent him from Al Rakka, towards the close of the preceding year, the usurper assured this prince, that the proposals he had offered for an accommodation were perfectly agreeable to him; that he would engage himself by oath, if required, to perform all the articles of the future treaty demanded by the khalif; and that Al Mottaki might depend upon being received with all the honours due to a person in his sublime station, by him at the head of the troops, and the people of Baghdâd. In the mean time, Al Akhshîd, to whom the khalif had likewise written, complaining of the miserable situation of his affairs, and desiring that general's assistance against Tûzûn, arrived at Al Rakka, with many rich presents, for Al Mottaki's use; which, with the promise of large sums of money, and a strong body of troops to support his interests, raised the drooping spirits of that prince. However, Tûzûn's answer had such an effect upon him, that he resolved to return to Baghdâd; though both Al Akhshîd and the princes of the house of Hamdân tried their utmost to divert him from that resolution, not thinking it safe for him to rely upon the faith of Tûzûn, whom they considered as an insolent and perfidious traitor: but not being able to prevail upon him to follow such salutary advice, Al Akhshîd departed from Al Rakka for Egypt, taking the road of Haleb, or Aleppo, in his way to Mesr, or Al Fostât; and Nafero'ddawla set out at the same time for Al Mawfel. Soon after their departure, the khalif Al Mottaki, who had refused to fix his residence in Egypt, under the protection of Al Akhshîd, left Al Rakka upon the Euphrates, and arrived at Hît, or Heit, a town of Irâk, seated on the northern bank of the Euphrates, at a small distance from the deserts of Al Jazira, and about twenty-one parasangs from

*Al Mottaki
is deposed.*

from Al Anbâr. Here he remained till he received advice, that Tûzûn had promised again, and even engaged himself by oath, to obey and defend him, upon his arrival at Baghdâd; then he set out, with a considerable retinue, for that city. At some distance from which, he was met by Tûzûn, at the head of a body of troops, which formed a camp in a place called Al Sendiya, who lighted off his horse, walked by the khalif's stirrup on foot, prostrated himself before him, and assigned him a proper place in his camp, where he treated both him and his family with all possible deference and respect: but notwithstanding these marks of submission, by which he pretended to have fulfilled his promise, he had no sooner got the unfortunate prince into his hands, than he dispatched a courier to Baghdâd, to bring Abu'l Kasem Abd'allah Ebn Al Moctafi to the camp; whom, in open violation of his oath, and defiance of the most solemn engagements, he caused to be proclaimed khalif in the presence of Al Mottaki, and gave him the surname of Al Mostacfi. The deposed khalif was soon after deprived of his sight, and reduced to the condition of a private person; in which he lived till the month of Shaabân, and the year of the Hejra 357, when he departed this life in the sixtieth or sixty-first year of his age. He was deposed on Saturday the 20th of Safar, after he had almost completed the fourth year of his khalifat, according to Al Makîn. With regard to his disposition, he has been considered by the eastern writers as a just and religious prince, who had scarce any thing left him besides the bare title of khalif, the privilege of having his name impressed upon the current coin, and the liberty of officiating as imâm in the public mosques. In the year of the Hejra 329, when this prince filled the Moslem throne, a grievous famine visited several parts of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Irâk; which was succeeded by a dreadful pestilence, that raged till the beginning of the following year. At Baghdâd, in particular, the people were forced to live upon bran and hay for a considerable time, and such a dreadful mortality hereupon ensued amongst the Moslems, that many of them were frequently buried in the same grave, and that without either funeral-service or ablution. We are likewise told, that, in the course of this year, the Russians laid siege to Constantinople, and were obliged to abandon that siege, after they had sustained considerable loss *.

* Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 307. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad Ann. Hej. 333. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 211, 212, 213. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 637.

S E C T. VI.

From the Election of Al Mostacfi to the Khalifat, to the Abdication of Al Moti.

THE same day on which Al Mottaki was deprived of his power, Abu'l Kafem Abd'allah Ebn Al Moctafi, surnamed Mostacfi Bi'llah, was elected khalif. His mother's name was Gafn, or Ghafn; but from whence she came, or in what country she was born, does not clearly appear from any good author. We are told by Abu'l-Faraj, that a woman, named Alam, who was one of Al Mostacfi's greatest favourites, having assured a Moslem, very intimate with Tûzûn, that he was an exceeding prudent, pious, and opulent prince, and this having been immediately imparted to Tûzûn, he was instantly saluted Emîr Al Mûmenîn, or *Emperor of the Faithful*. Upon his accession, he continued his benefactor Tûzûn in the post of emir al omra; who, in consequence of this office, had the government of Baghdâd, with the district belonging to it, entirely committed to his charge.

Al Mostacfi is elected khalif.

At this period, Abu Yezid Ebn Condâd, of the tribe of Zenat, or Zanat, whose mother was an Ethiopian slave in the city of Tofer, or Tozer, the Tifurus of Ptolemy, rebelled against Al Kayem, the Fâtemite khalif of Kairwân, in Africa. His arms were attended with such wonderful success, that he reduced the cities of Kairwân, Al Rakkâda, and Tunis, besides all the other fortresses of less strength, overthrew, in a bloody battle, an army sent against him by Al Kayem, besieged that prince himself in the citadel of Al Mohdia for seven months, and flattered himself with the hopes, as he was reduced to great distress for want of provisions, of starving him to a surrender. We must not forget to observe, that the new khalif Al Mostacfi released his predecessor Al Kâher from his confinement in the imperial palace, in the Latter Rabî of the present year, and sent him to the house of Ebn Thâher, that he might not be in a condition to disturb his future repose. Abu'lfeda relates, that this unhappy prince had only a cotton shirt on his back, and wooden shoes on his feet, when he was conducted to the place destined for his reception.

Abu Yezid rebels against Al Kayem in Africa.

Not long after the deposition of Al Mottaki, Saifo'dawla, according to Abu'lfeda, reduced Hems and Aleppo; but was forced to raise the siege of Damascus by Al Akh-

The operations of this campaign in Syria.

shîd, who pursued him into the prefecture of Kinnisrîn, and brought him to a general action. Victory, however, declared absolutely on neither side; upon which Al Akhshîd returned to Damascus, and Saifo'ddawla retreated to Al Mawfel. Soon after the Greeks made an irruption into Syria, and penetrated almost as far as Aleppo; but were overthrown by Saifo'ddawla, and forced to fly into the Christian territories, with very considerable loss. Some authors, however, have related the operations of this campaign in Syria in a different manner.

Moezzo'd-dawla assumes the title and office of emir al omra.

Next year, being the 334th of the Hejra, Tûzûn died, in the month of Al Moharram, at Baghdâd. He was succeeded in the office of emir al omra by Zairac Ebn Shîrazâd, a Turk, in the violence and impetuosity of his disposition no way inferior to his predecessor, to whom the army took the oath of fidelity, as well as to the khalif. Zairac was at Hît, or Heit, a town of Irâk upon the Euphrates, when that honourable post was conferred upon him; but being obliged to take upon himself the government without delay, he immediately proceeded to Baghdâd. In the mean time, Moezzo'ddawla Ebn Bûiya, having received advice of the death of Tûzûn, moved with a strong body of troops from Ahwâz into the neighbourhood of Baghdâd; of which the khalif and Ebn Shîrazâd being informed, they hid themselves, and the Turks abandoned the city to Moezzo'ddawla, retiring with great precipitation towards Al Mawfel, at his approach. Soon after the retreat of the Turkish forces, Moezzo'ddawla took possession of Baghdâd, recognized the authority of Al Mostacfi, who appeared in his imperial robes before him, appointed Ebn Shîrazâd to preside over all the officers employed in collecting the tribute and public revenues, and assumed to himself the charge of emir al omra. This pacification was effected by the intervention of Al Hafan Ebn Mohammed Al Mohallebi, one of Moezzo'ddawla's most intimate friends, on the 12th of the former Jomâda, the day on which that prince entered Baghdâd. And, in commemoration of this happy event, the khalif gave him the name, surname, or title, of Moezzo'ddawla, or *the Strength and Support of the Court, or of the State*. His brother Ali also, at the same time, was denominated by Al Mostacfi Amado'ddawla, or *the Pillar of the Court, or of the State*; and his other brother Al Hafan Rucno'ddawla, or Rocno'ddawla, that is *the Angular Stone of the Court, or of the State*. The khalif, in order to testify the high regard he had for them, likewise commanded all their names, surnames, and titles,

titles, to be stamped, or impressed upon the current coin. Moezzo'ddawla distributed his troops over all parts of the city of Baghdâd, occupied himself the house or palace that had been built for Mûnes, and assigned Al Mostacfi, for the subsistence of himself and his family, a daily allowance of five thousand dirhems.

But the repose of the khalifat was soon disturbed by the intrigues of Alam, Al Mostacfi's female favourite, who was now no less instrumental in his deposition than she had before been in his elevation to the Moslem throne. For Moezzo'ddawla having been apprized that she was cabaling with some of the great men at court, who formed a faction, in order to remove him from the post of emir al omra, he appeared at the head of a strong party in the khalif's palace, on the 22d of the Latter Jomâda, being the day appointed by that prince for granting an audience to the ambassador of the emir of Khorasân. Moezzo'ddawla, according to custom, took his seat close by the khalif, and prostrated himself before him; which ceremony was scarce over, when two Deylamite officers approached Al Mostacfi, who held out one of his hands to each of them to kiss; but, to his great surprize, they seized upon him, dragged him from his throne, tied his turbant, which they had before unfolded, about his neck, and hurried him away to Moezzo'ddawla's palace, where he was immediately thrown into irons. As for Alam, who had been the principal cause of this new revolution, the conspirators seized upon her, and cut out her tongue. They also, by Moezzo'ddawla's order, deprived Al Mostacfi of his sight, and plundered the imperial palace. This khalif reigned only one year, four months, and two days; though he did not die before the year of the Hejra 338, being then in the forty-first year of his age^{*}.

*The khalif
Al Mostacfi
is deposed.*

The same day that Al Mostacfi was deposed, Abu'l Kasem Al Fadl Ebn Al Moktader was created khalif, and inaugurated at Baghdâd. The new khalif, whose mother's name was Mafa'la, received the surname or title, of Al Motî, or rather Al Motî Li'llah, and continued Moezzo'ddawla Ahmed Ebn Bûiya in the office of emir al omra; having himself no other share of the public revenues, nor of the power and authority formerly annexed to his high station, than what that prime minister, or rather haughty

*Al Motî is
created
khalif.*

^{*} Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 308, 309. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 216, 217. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 334. Khondemir, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. in art. Mostacfi Billah, p. 627, 628.

usurper, was pleased to allow him. Nor would Moezzo'd-dawla permit him to have a wazîr, or even any servant whatsoever, except a secretary, whose sole business it was to keep an exact account of the money with which he was supplied out of the treasury, and the expences of his family.

Nafero'd-dawla possesses himself of the eastern part of Baghdâd.

The unsettled state of affairs at Baghdâd excited Nafero'd-dawla Al Hasan Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân, the lord or emir of Al Mawfel, to undertake an expedition against that city, or rather against the Deylamite forces, under Moezzo'd-dawla Ahmed Ebn Bûiya, then cantoned in it. As the people of Baghdâd, according to Khondemir, had before requested Moezzo'd-dawla Ahmed Ebn Bûiya to deliver them from the tyranny of Zairac Ebn Shîrazâd, the Turk, so now, according to Abu'lfeda, they seem to have called in to their assistance Nafero'd-dawla, in order to expel the Deylamites, whose yoke at this time began to sit very heavy upon them. Moezzo'd-dawla having received advice of Nafero'd-dawla's approach, quitted the city with great precipitation, and conducted the khalif Al Motî, whom he took along with him, to Tecrît, a place belonging to Nafero'd-dawla; which he gave up to his troops to be plundered, ravaged the adjacent territory in a dreadful manner, and then returned to Baghdâd. Upon his arrival, he found that Nafero'd-dawla had possessed himself of that part of the town seated on the eastern bank of the Tigris; and that it would be extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to dislodge him. However, he took post with all his forces in the other part, and made the proper dispositions for attacking the enemy. Before the close of the year, the Deylamite parties frequently skirmished with those of the Hamdânites; but nothing decisive happened on either side. In the mean time, the khalif himself seems to have been treated with great contempt; not the least mention being made of his name, during these troubles, in any of the mosques of Baghdâd.

Al Kayem and Al Akhshîd die, and Saïfo'd-dawla is driven from Damascus.

In the month of Safer, this year, the rebel Abu Yezid raised the siege of Al Mohdia; and, in that of Shawâl, Al Kayem Abu'l Kafem Mohammed Ebn Al Mohdi, the Fâtemite khalif of Kairwân, died in his capital city. He was succeeded by his son Ismael, who assumed the surname, or title, of Al Mansûr. On the 22d of Dhu'l-hajja, the famous Mohammed Al Akhshîd, the sovereign of Egypt and part of Syria, departed this life at

† Ism. Abulfed. & Al Makin, ubi supra.

Damascus.

Damascus. He was born, in the 268th year of the Hejra, at Baghdâd. A little before he left Egypt, in order to march against Saifo'ddawla, and not long before his death, he found in his palace a satirical paper, written by an unknown hand. This piece was composed with great bitterness and virulence, censured his conduct in the most severe terms, and contained some menaces, which made no inconsiderable impression upon him. After his decease, Abu'l Kasem Mahmûd, or, as he was called in the Turkish language, Abu'l Kasem Anûjûr, his son, mounted the throne of Egypt; but being a child, Câfûr, an Ethiopian, one of his father's eunuchs, took the government of that kingdom upon him. In the mean time, Saifo'ddawla made himself master of Damascus, and fixed his residence there. But having, by his indiscreet behaviour, alienated the affections of the people of that large and opulent city, they implored the protection of Câfûr, and, by the assistance of the Egyptian forces, expelled him. Before Câfûr returned to Mefr, Misr, or Al Fostât, he appointed Badr, or Bedr, who had formerly been one of Al Akhsîd's slaves, to preside over Damascus, and all the circumjacent territory. Bedr continued about a year in that post, and was succeeded by Abu'l Modhaffer Ebn Tagaj, Al Akhsîd's brother. After his expulsion from Damascus, Saifo'ddawla went to Aleppo, and shut himself up in that place. It appears from Al Makîn, that there was so great a scarcity of grain the present year at Baghdâd, that it occasioned a dreadful famine; and that, during part of the time of this public calamity, several women roasted and boiled children, in order to eat them; for which inhumanity, they were executed, and their bodies thrown into the Tigris ^z.

In the 335th year of the Hejra, it was reported at Baghdâd, that Rucno'ddawla Al Hafan Ebn Bûiya had seized upon Ray, and subdued all the neighbouring mountainous tract. The same year, Saifo'ddawla took the castle of Ziyâd, and made an irruption into the Christian territories, where he committed dreadful ravages and depredations. A great number of prisoners likewise fell into his hands. He also defeated an imperial army, sent to oppose him, killed twenty thousand Greeks upon the spot, took two thousand prisoners, and then retired into his own dominions, without having sustained any considerable loss.

The military operations of the year 335.

^z Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. Ism. Abu'lfed. & Al Makin, ubi sup. Khondemir, D'Herbel. Bibl. Orient. in art. Akhschid, p. 48.

*Saifo'ddawla's
success, in
the year
336.*

In the following year, being the 336th of the Hejra, Saifo'ddawla besieged the castle of Bursa, or Bursia, in Bithynia, the Prusa of the ancients; which surrendered to his arms in the beginning of the next campaign. The imperial general also took the fortrefs of Al Hadb, and dismantled it, as we learn from Al Makîn. Saifo'ddawla likewise demolished the walls of Bursa, and ruined its fortifications, as appears from the same author. About this time, Al Moteraffi, prince of the Karmatians, with a body of Arabs, vanquished Abu Awîl Ebn Dawd Ebn Hamdân, who had been made by his cousin-german Saifo'ddawla governor of Hems. This defeat put that city, with all its dependencies, into the victor's hands. Of which event, Saifo'ddawla being informed, he marched with a body of troops from Aleppo, and came up with Al Moteraffi in the territory of Damascus, upon which a sharp and bloody conflict ensued. This battle ended in the entire defeat of Al Moteraffi, who was killed in the action, and all his men, except a few that made their escape, were put to the sword. Saifo'ddawla ordered the head of the Karmatian to be cut off, and carried in triumph upon the point of a lance to Aleppo; on which occasion an elegant distich of Arabic verses was composed by Abu Farâs Ebn Hamdân, that has been preserved by Al Makîn. That prince reached Aleppo in about ten days time, attended by his cousin-german Abu Awîl Ebn Dawd Hamdân, whom he had delivered out of the enemies hands. Soon after, Moezzo'ddawla Ahmed Ebn Bûiya had an interview at Al Mawfel with Saifo'ddawla; which terminated in a treaty of peace, or rather an alliance, between those two powerful princes. The treaty was no sooner concluded, than Moezzo'ddawla, pleased with the success of this negotiation, took his leave of Saifo'ddawla, and returned to Baghdâd^a.

*The Fâtemite khalif
Ismael Al Mansûr,
extinguishes the rebellion in Africa.*

In the same year, Ismael Al Mansûr, the emir of Libya, as he is called by Abu'lfeda, or rather the khalif of Kairwân, in the month of Ramadân, returned in triumph to Al Mohdia. The rebellion in Africa had been extinguished by that prince, who defeated Abu Yezid in two engagements, the preceding year, by the reduction of Al Catâma, or Al Cottâma, a fortrefs of very great strength, which surrendered to him in the month of Al Moharram, 336. The rebel Abu Yezid had defended this place with great bravery, for a considerable time, and, when it was

^a Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 220, 221. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 336.

obliged to capitulate, he endeavoured to make his escape. But, being closely pursued by a detachment of the khalif's forces, he was taken, loaded with irons, and thrown into prison; where, being dangerously wounded, a few days after the surrender of Al Catâma, he expired. After his death, Al Mansûr ordered him to be flayed, and his skin to be stuffed with hay ^b.

In the 337th year of the Hejra, Moezzo'ddawla Ahmed Ebn Bûiya made himself master of Al Mawfel; Nafero'ddawla, then the emir of that place, retiring at his approach to Nafîbîn. But, receiving advice that the emir or lord of Khorasân had invaded his territories with a very formidable force, he abandoned his new conquest, which thereupon returned to its former sovereign. About the same time, Saifo'ddawla made an irruption into the imperial provinces; but was defeated by the Greeks, who, after the action, took Mar'ash, and laid siege to Tarsus. Either this, or the preceding year, Ismael Al Mansûr, the khalif of Kairwân, sent Al Hasan Ebn Ali Ebn Abu'l Hosein Al Calbi from Africa to preside over the Moslem conquests in Sicily. Al Hasan reduced most of the Christian part of the island to the obedience of the Magrebian khalif, and governed the people committed to his care with great prudence, equity, and moderation. It appears from some writers of authority, that this emir had the investiture of Sicily granted him by Al Mansûr; and that he assumed to himself at this time, by a sort of hereditary right, the government of that island. We are informed by the authors followed by Al Makîn, that, in the course of this year, Mohammed Ebn Nafero'ddawla attacked the Greeks that made an irruption into the Moslem provinces, killed four hundred of them upon the spot, and took a great number of prisoners.

The transactions of the year 337.

Next year, being the 338th of the Hejra, Amado'ddawla Abu'l Hasan Ebn Bûiya, who had laboured under a long illness at Shîrâz, where he had fixed his residence, departed this life. An old ulcer in his kidneys, and a complication of disorders proceeding from that complaint, put a period to his days, in the Latter Jomâda. At the time of his death, he had reigned at Shîrâz sixteen years, and was about fifty-seven lunar years old. He was the eldest of the sons of Bûiya, and a prudent and magnanimous prince. The khalifs always gave him the title of emir al omra; and the khalif Al Motî Li'llah honoured

Amado'ddawla dies, and is succeeded by his nephew Adado'ddawla.

^b Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 333. D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 22.

his heir and successor Adado'ddawla, after his death, with the same title. In the last year but one of his life, perceiving his end to be at no great distance, he wrote to his brother Rucno'ddawla to send him his son Adado'ddawla Fanâkhofrû, whom he had appointed to succeed him, as he should leave no male issue. Rucno'ddawla complied with his request. Upon his nephew's arrival at Shiraz, Amado'ddawla dignified him with the title and power of *soltân* (A), placed him upon his throne, and commanded all the nobles and grandees of his court to obey him. After his uncle's decease, Adado'ddawla ascended the Persian throne; but, being despised by the army, that refused to execute his orders, his father Rucno'ddawla came from Al Ray to Shîrâz, to settle his government upon a solid and lasting foundation. The first thing Rucno'ddawla did after his arrival was, to walk bare-legged to Estakhr, to visit his brother's tomb; all the troops following him barefoot in procession. After he had remained three days at the tomb, performing his devotions, he was, with some difficulty, prevailed upon by the officers of the army to return to Shîrâz. It seems to appear from Abu'lfeda, that Rucno'ddawla succeeded his brother Amado'ddawla, in the dignity and title of emir al omra; and that Moezzo'ddawla, the youngest of the sons of Bûiya, was never really

(A) Though the word *soltân*, or *al soltân*, occurs as a title in the passage of Abu'lfeda here referred to, yet it seems not to have been directly applied to any of the eastern princes in that sense before the year of the Hejra 393: for we are informed by some good Oriental writers, that Mahmûd Gazni the son of Sabektekî, was first dignified with this title by Khalaf Ebn Ahmed, the governor of Segistân, or Sijistân, in that year. It was then, according to them, first adopted in the room of the term *emir*, which till that time had been constantly used. The word *soltân* is common to the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic languages; and denotes a king, prince, lord, or emperor. The princes of the dynasties preceding the Gaznevids, such were the Thâherian, Saffarian, Sammânian, Deylamite, &c. went amongst their subjects under the denomination of *emir*, or *al emir*; whereas the Gaznevids, Khowârazmians, Seljûkians, and the later Mohammedan potentates, were generally styled by the people they governed *soltân*, or *al soltân*. Indeed, the title of *soltân*, or *sultân*, is at this day assumed by many of the Moslem princes, as well as the Grand Signor, both in Asia and Africa (1).

(1) D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 533. 825. &c. Val. Schind. Lex. Pentaglot. p. 1873. Hanovîæ, 1612.

dignified

dignified with that title : for though he was possessed of Irāk, in which the capital of the Moslem empire was seated, and the emirs al omra consequently resided there, yet, according to this author, he was considered only first as his brother Amado'ddawla's, and afterwards as Rucno'ddawla's deputy or lieutenant in that province ^c.

In the same year, some of the principal Sicilians entered into a conspiracy against Al Hasan Ebn Ali Ebn Abu'l Hosein Al Calbi, the emir of that island ; but it was discovered, by the policy and address of the emir, when it was upon the point of being carried into execution. The ringleaders being seized, the most guilty had their hands and feet cut off, and were afterwards either hanged or impaled. After condign punishment had been inflicted upon the chiefs of the conspirators, a calm immediately ensued, and the public tranquillity in the Moslem part of the island was entirely restored. We must not forget to observe, that the khalif Al Mostacfi Bi'llah, who had been deposed in 334, died at this period in prison.

The Sicilians conspire against Al Hasan, their emir.

In the following year, being the 339th of the Hejra, the Karmatians sent back to Mecca the celebrated black stone, belonging to the temple, after detaining it in their custody twenty-two years, as has been already observed. About the same time, Saifo'ddawla penetrated into the territories of the Greek emperor, which he ravaged without control, and carried off a great number of that prince's subjects into captivity. He also at last came up with the imperial general at Al Malakât, beyond Kharfena, and attacked him with such bravery, that he put him to flight, killed thirty thousand of his men upon the spot, and took two thousand prisoners : but he was soon after himself attacked by the Greeks, in the mountainous defile of Makt'alathafâr or Makt'aladhafâr, near Al Mafsîfiya, in Al Rûm, and routed with very great slaughter ; having scarce been able, with a few of his shattered troops, to make his escape. Next day, according to Al Makîn, the imperial general put five thousand of the country people, who probably had assisted the enemy in this invasion, to the sword, and made three thousand of them slaves. The Greeks recovered all the spoil and prisoners that had fallen into the hands of Saifo'ddawla, as well as seized upon all the baggage, and military chest, of

Saifo'ddawla defeats the Greeks, and is overthrown by them in his turn.

^c Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 338. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 311, 312. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 221, 222. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 121, 122. 214.

the Moslems, whose retreat they found means to cut off, on this memorable occasion ^d.

*The principal events
of the year
340;*

In the 340th year of the Hejra, Faraj Mohaddad, surnamed Saklabi, arrived at Palermo from Africa, with a powerful fleet, and a strong body of land-forces. The African troops being joined by the Sicilian auxiliaries, under the command of Al Hasan, the emir, Saklabi set sail with them for Reggio; but, upon his arrival, found that both the inhabitants and the garrison had abandoned the place at his approach. The Moslems afterwards besieged Kaffana and Jerâja, two fortresses subject to the emperor; but could not reduce them to the obedience of the African khalif. However, according to the Cambridge Chronicon, Saklabi concluded a treaty with them, took hostages for their future good behaviour, and then returned to Sicily.

*and of the
following
year.*

Next year, being the 341st of the Hejra, Yusef Ebn Wajih, the lord or emir of Omân, being joined by a body of Karmatian troops, besieged both by sea and land the city of Basra: but Al Mohallebi, Moezzo'ddawla's wazir, having put himself at the head of the khalif's forces, in order to attack him, Ebn Wajih abandoned the siege, after he had lain only a few days before the town, and retired with precipitation. This retreat, or rather flight, occasioned such an entire dispersion of his troops, that they could never afterwards be brought into the field. The Magrebian general Saklabi, who seems to have remained in a state of inaction this year, in Sicily, took up his winter-quarters at Palermo, and left his ships at Messina; fully intending to pay the enemy a visit in Calabria, in the following spring. Abu Thâher Ismael Al Mansûr, the Fâtemite khalif of Kairwân, died in the thirty-ninth year of his age, at Al Mohdia, after he had sat upon the Magrebian throne seven years and sixteen days. He was an eloquent and magnanimous prince, and left the khalifat of Kairwân to his son Abu Tamîm Mo'ad or Ma'bad, surnamed Al Moezz Ledini'llah, the first Fâtemite khalif of Egypt. The Greeks, at this juncture, made an irruption into Mesopotamia, pillaged the city of Sarug or Saruj, anciently called Batnan, being the Batnæ of Stephanus, and the Batne of Procopius, about ten miles from Edeffa, plun-

^d Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 222. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 339. Ahmed Ebn Yusef, Poc. Not. in Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 119. D'Herbel, Biblioth. Orient. p. 40. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 312.

dered the mosques, and carried away a great number of the Moslems into captivity ^e.

In the following year, being the 342d of the Hejra, Saklabi invaded Calabria with a powerful army, and overthrew the imperial forces commanded by Meljân, Malacianus, or Malacanus, as he is called by Curopalates, who was himself taken prisoner in the action, together with several other officers of rank. The Moslem admiral, Abu Mohel, for some heinous offence, was sent by Saklabi in chains to Africa, where he was afterwards hanged. Al Hafan left the government of Sicily to his son Ahmed, and returned to Kairwân. Nothing remarkable seems to have happened this year either in the remoter eastern provinces, or on the side of Baghdâd ^f.

The Greeks are overthrown by the Moslems in Calabria.

In the 343d year of the Hejra, died Nûh or Noah Ebn Nafr Ebn Ahmed Ebn Ismael Al Sammâni, the emir of Khorasân and the Tranfoxana, after he had reigned about twelve years. His subjects honoured him with the title of Al Emîr Ar Hamîd, *the Laudable Prince*, in consequence of his uncommon merit and most excellent administration. He was succeeded by his son Abd'almâlec, the principal events of whose reign will hereafter be related at large. In the Former Rabî, Saifo'ddawla made an irruption into the imperial territories, and defeated the Greeks with exceeding great slaughter; though he himself sustained a very considerable loss. About the same time, Moezzo'ddawla sent Sabektekin, with a body of troops, to reduce Shaharzûl, Shaharzûr, or Shahrozûr, a city of Al Jebâl in the Persian Irâk; but without effect. The emperor Constantine, surnamed Porphyrogenitus, dispatched Joannes Axieratus, called by the Cambridge Chronicon Afûrbâs, into Sicily, this year, to obtain a truce of the Moslems; which being granted, the Magrebian troops under Saklabi returned to Africa.

The principal events of the year 343;

Next year, an accident happened, that occasioned an open rupture between Al Moezz and Abd'alrahmân, the khalifs of Kairwân and Andalusia. Abd'alrahmân having sent a vessel to Alexandria, this ship gave chase to, and took another sent by the emir of Sicily to Al Moezz, with an ambassador and his dispatches on board; an insult which so incensed the khalif of Kairwân, that he imme-

and of the year 344-

^e Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 341. Chronic. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiens. p. 15. Al Makîn, ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 595. & alib. ^f Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abil-dam Al Hamawi, ubi sup. Joan. Curopatat. Joan. Baptist. Carus. ubi sup. p. 101.

diately fitted out a fleet, with a body of land-forces on board, to make reprisals on the khalif of Andalusia's subjects. This fleet, which was reinforced with a Sicilian squadron, soon after entered the port of Almeria, and burnt all the ships riding at anchor, except the vessel above mentioned, which Al Hafan, the late emir of Sicily, who commanded Al Moezz's fleet, seized upon, with a number of singing girls and a very valuable cargo on board, belonging to Abd'alrahmân himself, as lawful prize. Not content with this, Al Hafan made a descent with the troops on board the combined fleet upon the coast of Granada, which he ravaged in a dreadful manner, put many of the Spanish Moslems to the sword, and then returned safe to Al Mohdia, without having sustained any considerable loss. Abd'alrahmân, having received advice of these hostilities and depredations, immediately equipped a strong squadron to cruise on the coast of Africa, and, if possible, to land a body of troops in that country: but this squadron, having been worsted in an engagement with Al Moezz's fleet, was obliged to return, without having effected any thing of consequence.

Saifo'd-dawla is defeated by the emperor's forces.

In the course of the following year, being the 345th of the Hejra, Saifo'ddawla broke into the Christian provinces, and made himself master of Tel Batrîk or Tel Patricia, a strong fortress near Malatia, Malathia, or Melitene, the capital of the Lesser Armenia. The imperial troops, under the command of Zimisces, being too weak to oppose him, retired at his approach. However, the imperial general posted a detachment of his troops in a defile on the mountains, through which Saifo'ddawla was to pass; who, upon his arrival, was surprised by the Greeks, and attacked with such fury, that he was obliged to betake himself to flight. A considerable part of his men were slain on the field of battle, and many of them taken prisoners. His military chest likewise, and all his baggage, fell into the enemies hands; and had not the darkness of the night prevented the pursuit, not one of the Moslems would have escaped. Abu'l Afhâyyer, Saifo'ddawla's wazîr, was taken prisoner by Leo, another imperial commander, and sent to Constantinople, where he died in chains. Saifo'ddawla himself, after his defeat, retired to Adana in Cilicia, and from thence to Aleppo, greatly mortified at his ill success. This year, Ammâr, or Ebn Ammâr, arrived with another Magrebian fleet on the coast of Sicily from Africa, wintered at Palermo, and advanced to the borders of Calabria, in the following spring. Basilus

filius Protospatharius, the imperial admiral, landed a body of troops at Reggio, demolished a mosque, made a descent on Sicily, reduced the city of Thermah, the Thermæ Himerenses of the ancients, and the modern Termini, and overthrew the emir with very great slaughter near Mazara ^g.

In the same year, the king of Nubia laid siege to Aswân, or Ufwân, the Syene of the ancients, a city of Al Sa'id, or the Upper Egypt, seated on the eastern bank of the Nile, and the confines of Ethiopia. The Nubian forces, meeting with no enemy to oppose them, soon made themselves masters of the place, levelled it with the ground, carried off many of its inhabitants into captivity, and put the rest to the sword. The Egyptians, receiving advice of what had happened, sent an army in pursuit of the king of Nubia; which entirely defeated him, took a great number of his men prisoners, and dispersed the rest. After this victory, they penetrated into the Nubian territories, and carried a fortress called Al Rîm by assault; with which exploit they concluded the operations of the campaign.

The king of Nubia takes Aswân, and is overthrown by the Egyptians.

In the 346th year of the Hejra, died Al Sallâr Al Marzabân, the lord or emir of Adherbijân, and left for his heir his son Al Hafan; who, however, never ascended his father's throne. For Wahshûdân, Al Marzabân's brother, having found means to sow the seeds of discord amongst his nephews, easily possessed himself of Adherbijân, and wrested from them all the government of that province.

Several eminent persons die, in the year 346.

Next year, Moezzo'ddawla Ebn Bûiya seized upon Al Mawfel; upon which, Nafero'ddawla Ebn Hamdân fled first to Nasîbîn, and afterwards to Aleppo. After the reduction of Al Mawfel, Moezzo'ddawla possessed himself of the whole province of Diyâr Rabîa, Al Jazîra, or rather Diyâr Al Jazîra, Nasîbîn, Sinjar or Senjar, Al Rahaba, Râsalâin, or Râs Al Aîn, and Al Khâbûr. But, by the conclusion of a peace with Nafero'ddawla the following year, those places reverted to their former master. This treaty was no sooner signed than Moezzo'ddawla left Al Mawfel, and returned to Baghdâd ^h.

Al Mawfel is taken by Moezzo'ddawla, and returns to its former master.

The same year, in the month of Safar, Al Moezz sent a formidable army, under the command of Abu'l Hafan Jawhar, one of his slaves, whom he had advanced to the

^g Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 229. Al Makrizi, Chronic. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiens. & Joan. Baptist. Carus. ubi sup. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 345. ^h Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 222, 223.

*Abu'l
Hasan
Jawhar
extends the
khalif of
Kairwân's
conquests in
Africa.*

dignity of wazîr, to the western extremity of Africa. Abu'l Hasan Jawhar first advanced to Tahart, which he for some time besieged, but without effect. From thence he marched, in the Latter Jomâda, to Fez, and made the proper dispositions for attacking that city. But finding that Ahmed Ebn Becr, the emir of the place, was resolved to defend it to the last extremity, he thought fit to desist. However, having traversed all the interjacent country between that capital and the Atlantic ocean, he invested Fez, and took it by storm, in the month of Ramadân, of the following year. This conquest was chiefly owing to the reinforcement Abu'l Hasan Jawhar had received from Zeir Ebn Menedz Al Sanhâji, an officer of great merit, who had been joined with Abu'l Hasan Jawhar in the command of the troops employed in this expedition.

About this time, the Greeks, under the command of Zimisces, took Sameifat, or Somafata, and Raabân, or Ra'bân, and defeated Saifo'ddawla, with very great slaughter. They also took a great number of his men, amongst whom were many of his principal officers, and one thousand seven hundred horse, prisoners. These they conducted to Constantinople, and entered that city in great triumph. Al Hasan, the former emir of Sicily, and his brother Ammâr, appeared with another fleet on the coast of Italy, and gave chase to an imperial squadron, that was not strong enough to oppose the Moslems; who, however, lost one of their ships before the close of the campaign¹.

*The prin-
cipal
transac-
tions of the
year 348.*

In the following year, being the 348th of the Hejra, Theodorus, a Greek, made an irruption into the Moslem territories, with a detachment of one thousand horse, penetrated to Manbij, and took Abu Farâs Al Harat, a near relation of Saifo'ddawla, prisoner. That prince, then hunting in the neighbourhood of Manbij, at the head of a party of seventy horse, was intercepted by the Greek detachment, and for some time defended himself with very great bravery; but, having received several wounds, and being weakened by the loss of blood, he was taken prisoner, and sent to Constantinople. Here he was detained for a certain period, and then sent back to Saifo'ddawla's court. The Magrebian fleet suffered shipwreck on the coast of Sicily, according to the Cambridge Chronicon, the 24th

¹ Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 230. Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. Chronic. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiens. et Joan. Baptist. Carus. ubi sup.

of September, the present year; having been so roughly handled by a dreadful tempest, which then arose, that not a single ship of it escaped.

In the 349th year of the Hejra, Saifo'ddawla invaded the dominions of the Greek emperor with a powerful army, took several castles and towns, laid all the country waste with fire and sword, and penetrated as far as Kharfena, or Karshena. The cattle, and other spoil he acquired in this expedition, he brought with him to that place, intending to conduct them afterwards into the Moslem territories. As he was loaded with pillage, and consequently not so fit for action, some of the people of Tarsus in his army, who knew the country perfectly well, advised him not to return by the same way that he came, lest the Greeks should cut off his retreat: but he was deaf to this salutary advice, and paid dear for his temerity. The Greeks waited for him in a defile, surprised him upon his arrival, and, after a sharp conflict, entirely defeated him; putting his whole army to the sword, except three hundred men, who, with their general, found means to make their escape. This terrible disaster not only put the enemy in possession of all the plunder that had been carried off, but likewise of all Saifo'ddawla's baggage, and his military chest. The Arab writers blame that general for his conduct at this juncture, which they attributed to the great opinion he entertained of his own superior wisdom and abilities, and the little regard he had for those of other men. But whatever was the cause of such a strange infatuated behaviour, this seems to have been one of the most important victories that the Greeks had for a considerable time obtained ^k.

*Saifo'd-
dawla is
defeated by
the Greeks.*

The same year Wahshûdân found means to get into his hands all his brother Al Marzabân's sons, as well as their mother; the latter, together with Al Hasan, and Nafr, the two eldest sons, he first threw into prison, and afterwards put to death. By which barbarous actions, committed in violation of the most solemn engagements, he fixed himself upon the throne of Adherbijân. Several other remarkable accidents likewise happened, in the course of this year. A considerable number of Egyptians and Magrebians were swept away in the night-time into the Red-sea, by a torrent that broke in suddenly upon them, when they were upon their return home from Mecca, in a certain valley, with all their baggage and camels. Two

*Other me-
morable
events of
the year
349.*

^k Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 349. Vide etiam Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 312, 313.

thousand villages, inhabited by Turks, embraced Islamism. Abu'l Hasan Al Tinati, a person of a hundred and twenty years of age, and famous for the miracles he had wrought, departed this life; as did likewise Anûjûr, Abu Hawr, or Abu Jawr, the son of Al Akhshîd, who was succeeded by his brother Ali, though Câfûr was in reality the sovereign of Egypt. Al Hasan having equipped another fleet, and in a great measure repaired the loss sustained by the late dreadful tempest, the Magrebian Moslems began again to be powerful by sea. And, lastly, the same emir took prisoner Afria, or Afrina, one of the principal commanders of the Greeks; who, nevertheless, made Ebn Baslûs, a Magrebian general, prisoner, and sent him to Constantinople, the present year¹.

*The khalif
of Andalusia
and the
emir of
Khorasân
die.*

Next year, Abd'almâlec Ebn Nûh Ebn Nafr Al Sammâni, the lord or emir of Khorasân, was killed by a fall from his horse; having been thrown against the ground with such force that he expired upon the spot. His brother Mansûr succeeded him, and was the sixth prince of the Sammânian dynasty. In the month of Rammadân, the same year, died Abd'alrahmân Al Nafr Ebn Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah, of the house of Ommiyah, the lord or emir of Andalusia, after he had swayed the sceptre about fifty years. He was seventy-eight years old at the time of his death; and, according to Abu'lfeida and Roderic of Toledo, who differ however in this point from some other authors, was the first emir of Andalusia that assumed the title of Emir Al Mumenin, that is, *Prince or Emperor of the Faithful*, in imitation of the khalifs; his predecessors having contented themselves with the simple one of emir, or that of descendant of the khalifs. Abd'alrahmân himself did not depart from the custom of his ancestors in this particular, during the first twenty-seven years of his reign; but having then received advice that the khalif of Irâk was reduced to the lowest ebb, and that the Fâtemite princes in Africa were styled Emir Al Mumenin by their subjects, he arrogated to himself the same title. However, in letters and all public instruments, as well as on the current coin, he was only styled Al Nafr, or Al Nasser, Ledini'llah that is, *the Defender of the Divine Law*. He had, at least in his younger years, a handsome face, grey eyes, and was of a fair complexion. This prince, whose mother's name was Madana, was disturbed,

¹ Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. Al Makin, ubi sup. Chron. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigiens. p. 16. Joan. Curopalat. Joan. Bapt. Caruf. ubi sup. p. 102.

accord-

According to Roderic of Toledo, with divisions in his own family; but, by his extraordinary prudence, sagacity, and resolution, he prevented them from producing any fatal effects. He was engaged at least twenty years of his long reign in wars, partly with his rebellious subjects, and partly with some of the neighbouring powers; which enabled him to extend his conquests, and give law to all his enemies. He built a fortress near Corduba, and made himself master of Septa, or Ceuta, in Africa; leaving in that city one of the grandees of his realm with the authority of an emir. He also beautified and enlarged the great mosque at Corduba, and several others, as well as finished some stately structures, executed in a very grand taste, after he had terminated all his wars. His son Al Hakem, who had ten brothers, assumed the title of Al Montaser, or Al Montaser Bi'llah, and ascended the throne of Andalusia, after his father's decease ^m.

This year, the office of kadi of Baghdâd was first exposed to sale, and bought by Abu'l Abbâs Abd'allah Ebn Al Hasan Ebn Abu'l Shawâreb for the annual sum of two hundred thousand dirhems, to be paid out of the profits of it to Moezzo'ddawla, the emir al omra. Such a flagrant instance of venality was never before heard of in the Moslem empire; but, from this period, all the principal posts in the state, according to Abulfeda, were disposed of at Baghdâd in the same manner.

The office of kadi of Baghdâd is first exposed to sale, this year.

In the following year, being the 351st of the Hejra, Nicephorus Phocas, the imperial general, penetrated into the Moslem territories with an army of sixty thousand men; and, in the month of Al Moharram, besieged Ain-Zarba, the Anazarbus of the ancients, which in a short time surrendered. Soon after he had entered the town he commanded all the inhabitants, by the public crier, to retire into the great mosque, threatening to put all those who should be found in their own houses after sun-set, to the sword. This order was obeyed by all whom the shortness of the time allowed them would permit to comply with it. Next morning the Greeks found a great number of men, women, and children without the mosque, whom they cruelly massacred. After this execution an order was issued by the Greek general, requiring every one of the Moslems confined in the mosque to depart the city before night, upon pain of being treated in the same man-

The Greeks, under the command of Nicephorus Phocas, take Ain-Zarba;

Isf. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 350. Roderic. Toletan. Hist. Arab. cap. xxx. p. 25, 26. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 9.

ner as those who neglected the former command. In consequence of this order, those poor people quitted the mosque in such a confusion and hurry, that many were pressed to death, and others, not knowing which way to take, perished on the road, being destitute of all necessities and assistance. Nor did the Greeks fail to butcher those the next day whom they found in any part of the town. However, they abandoned the place at the approach of Lent, threatening to return after the expiration of that solemn season. This account we have chiefly extracted from Abu'l-Faraj, though, according to Abu'lfeda, Ain-Zarba surrendered upon terms to the Greeks, as soon as they appeared before the town. He adds, that by virtue of the capitulation, the citizens were permitted to retire without having the least injury offered them; though he likewise admits that some few of them lost their lives on this occasionⁿ.

*but are
obliged to
raise the
siege of the
citadel of
Aleppo.*

Nicephorus, after the reduction of Ain-Zarba, marched with an army of two hundred thousand men, of which thirty thousand were curiaffiers, to Aleppo, in order to reduce that place. He was attended by four thousand mules, carrying caltrops, or instruments with four iron points, so disposed, that being cast on the ground, one of them always stood upright. These, after he had pitched his tents before the town, he threw round his camp, in order to keep off the enemies horse. Saifo'ddawla, having received advice of his approach, sent Najâ, at the head of his forces against him, and remained himself with a small body of troops in the neighbourhood of Aleppo, expecting soon to hear of a decisive action between the army commanded by Najâ and that of the Greeks. In the mean time Nicephorus having been informed of the enemy's motions, gave Najâ the slip, by taking a route different from that which he had first intended to pursue, surprised Saifo'ddawla, and then presented himself before the town. Having applied his military engines to the walls, he attacked the place with incredible fury; but was repulsed by the bravery of the besieged in every assault. After three days siege, a dissension arising between the citizens and the garrison, the soldiers who composed the latter retired from the walls into the market-place to chastise the insolence of the former; a circumstance which gave the Greeks an opportunity of forcing open the gates and en-

ⁿ *Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 351. Greg. Ab'ul-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 313, 314. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 280.*

tering the town. They put great multitudes of men and women to the sword, and carried off above ten thousand children of both sexes, together with an immense quantity of spoil. After the reduction of the city Nicephorus laid siege to the citadel, and pushed it on with such vigour, that it must inevitably have fallen into his hands, had not Dhâlem, or Thâlem, Al Akali, the governor of Damascus, for Ali Ebn Al Akhshîd, advanced with a body of ten thousand men, intended as auxiliaries to Saifo'ddawla, to its relief. Of which particular the Greeks being apprized, they retired on Wednesday, in the beginning of Dhu'lhajja, and immediately abandoned the siege, about ten days after they had taken the city by storm. In their retreat they offered not the least injury or violence to any of the people in the district of Aleppo, but ordered them to sow and till their ground as usual; telling them they would return the following year, and carry off all the fruits of the earth. Saifo'ddawla had taken post on Mount Bankûsa, or Bankowfa, before he was surprised by Nicephorus, but found himself obliged to desert that post after his defeat. His palace, called Al Daran, situated a little without the city, together with three hundred leathern bags full of silver, fourteen hundred mules, and a great number of arms, fell into the victor's hands.

In the course of the present year, the following solemn form of malediction was drawn up by the Shiites, and inscribed by Moezzo'ddawla's order, upon the doors of the mosques at Baghdâd. "May God for ever abominate and remove from himself, Moâwiyah Ebn Abu Sofîân! and him who took from Fâtema's family the territory of Fadak! and him who refused to permit Al Hafan to be buried in his grandfather Mohammed's tomb! and him who banished Abu Dhor! and him who excluded Ebn Al Abbâs from the number of those who were candidates for the khali-fat!" But this being defaced by some of the Sonnites of Baghdâd, Moezzo'ddawla, by the advice of Al Mohallebi, his wazir, substituted only the following words: "May God's curse fall upon Moâwiyah, and all those who have treated ill the family of his apostle!"

The house of Ommiyah is cursed by Moezzo'ddawla's order.

The emir of Sicily, according to the Cambridge Chronicon, advanced at the head of his forces towards Tabermîn, the ancient Tauromenium, and the Taormina, or Tavormina of the moderns, one of the strongest places in the island, towards the close of the preceding year. The same prince, with the African and Sicilian troops under his command, in the following May, besieged the city in

The emir of Sicily takes Taormina, or Tavormina, from the Greeks.

form, and being joined the first of August, or Shaaban, by his uncle Ebn Ammâr, who then arrived off that town with a powerful fleet, and a body of land-forces on board, he took it in the month of Dhu'lhajja, or December, in the present year. As Tabermîn, or Tauromenium, was thus reduced by Al Moezz's troops, it was denominated by the Magrebian Moslems Al Moezzia, which name, for a considerable time, it retained.

*The principal
actions of
the year
352.*

In the 352d year of the Hejra, which commenced Jan. 29, 963, on the 10th of Al Moharram, Moezzo'ddawla ordered all the shops, taverns, and public places of Baghdâd to be shut up; appointing that day to be observed as a solemn fast, and commanding the women to walk in the streets with dishevelled hair and tattered garments, as also to beat their faces as they went, in honour of Al Hosein, the son of Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb. This injunction greatly displeased the Sonnites of that city; but as the Shiites at this time were extremely numerous in Baghdâd, and Moezzo'ddawla himself at the head of that sect, the fast was kept in the strictest manner. This year Moezzo'ddawla expelled Nafero'ddawla from Al Mawfel and Nasîbîn, and seized upon those cities; but having soon after received a stipulated sum of money from Nafero'ddawla, and concluded a treaty with that prince, he abandoned them both, and returned to Baghdâd. In appears from some of the Christian writers that Manuel, or Emmanuel, the imperial general, took Syracuse, Palermo, Taormina or Tavormina, and other places in Sicily, from the Magrebian Moslems about this period.

*An action
between
the Mos-
lems and
the Greeks.*

Next year, being the 353d of the Hejra, the Greeks besieged Mafîsa, or Mafîsiya, in Cilicia, but without effect; for the imperial general having received advice that a numerous body of Moslems were marching from Tarsus in order to attack him, he immediately raised the siege, advanced against them with all his forces, and at last came up with them. The two armies had not long been in sight of each other before a sharp engagement happened, in which the Moslems lost five thousand men, and the Christians a greater number; but the action seems to have been by no means decisive, since Al Makîn, from whom we have extracted this account, does not even inform us to which side the victory inclined.

• Ifm. Abulfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej, 352. Chronic. Sic. Arab. Cantabrigienf. p. 16. Joan. Bapt. Caruf, ubi supra, p. 103.

The same year Najâ, Saifo'ddawla's general, invested Mayâfârîn, or Mayyâfârakîn, in Mesopotamia, with an intention to put that fortress into the hands of Moezzo'd-dawla Ebn Bûiya; but having been apprized, according to Abu'lfeda, that Abu'l Werd had penetrated into Card, or Curd, he found himself obliged to abandon the siege, and to march with all possible celerity to Khalât. Soon after his arrival he attacked Abu'l Werd, entirely defeated him, and drove him out of the province or district of Curd^p.

Najâ defeats Abu'l Werd.

At this time Al Moezz, the Fâtemite khalif of Kairwân, sent a strong squadron of ships, with a numerous body of land-forces on board, under the command of Al Hasan Ebn Ali Ebn Abu'l Hosein Al Calbi, to Sicily, and obtained a complete victory over the imperialists in that island. If we believe Abu'lfeda, ten thousand of the Christians were killed in the action; but according to Al Kadi Shahabo'ddîn Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, twenty thousand fell upon the field of battle. Amongst the spoils taken on this occasion, which were immense, there was found an Indian sword, weighing a hundred and seventy methkals, or Arabic drachms, which, according to an inscription preserved upon it, had sent the souls of many unbelievers to hell in the time of the prophet Mohammed. This sword, together with a great number of prisoners and arms of all kinds, Al Hasan sent to Al Moezz at Kairwân. Al Hasan, after this victory, retired to a stately palace he had in Sicily, where he died the following Dhu'lkaada, in the fifty-third year of his age. Abulfeda writes, that this Al Hasan sent likewise to Al Moezz a prodigious quantity of plunder, which he had amassed at the taking of Taormina^q.

Al Hasan overthrows the Greeks in Sicily.

In the following year the Greeks took the city of Mafsîfiya by storm, on Saturday the 13th of Rajeb, put a great part of the inhabitants to the sword, and carried the rest into captivity. Before the commencement of the siege the citizens were said to have amounted to two hundred thousand souls. From Mafsîfiya the imperial general marched to Tarsus, which immediately surrendered to him: the Greeks permitted the people of the place to retire to Antioch, and transplanted a colony of Christians thither.

The Greeks take Mafsîfiya and Tarsus.

^p Al Makîn, ubi supra, Jos. Sim. Asséman. Dissert. de Monophysit. Abu'lfed. in Geog. Nassir Al Tusi, in Tab. Long. Civ. ab Inf. Fort. & Latitud. ab Æquat. p. 97. edit. Oxon. 1712. ^q Al Kadi Shahabo'ddîn Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, ubi sup. Joan. Bapt. Carus. ubi supra, p. 103.

They likewise adorned the town with many new buildings, strengthened the fortifications with several additional works, and converted the mosque into a stable. After which exploits the imperial general returned to Constantinople.

Saifo'd-dawla's troops defeat Rashik and reduce Najâ.

Amongst the Moslems who had retired to Antioch, there was an officer named Rashik, who found it no difficult matter to prevail upon the people of that place to acknowledge him for their sovereign, and shake off the yoke of Saifo'ddawla. After which step he marched with a body of forces to Aleppo, in order to make an attempt upon that city; but Saifo'ddawla, who was then at Mayyâfarakîn, having received advice of Rashik's march, sent a reinforcement to Curuba, the governor of Aleppo, under the command of Bashara; who took his measures so well, that he joined Curuba, and consequently executed Saifo'ddawla's orders without the loss of a man. After this junction Curuba and Bashara attacked Rashik with such fury, that they routed his forces, and drove the Antiochians from their camp. Saifo'ddawla likewise reduced the city of Khalat, got the rebel Najâ into his hands, and immediately cut off his head.

Al Motanabbi and Al Bostî die in the year of the Hejra 354.

The 354th year of the Hejra was likewise remarkable for the death of the famous Abu'l Teyyeb Ahmed Ebn Al Hosein Ebn Al Hasan Ebn Abd'alfamad Al Kendi, of the tribe of Jôfa. He was born at Cûfa, in a street called Kenda, from whence he derived the surname of Al Kendi. His father is said to have been only a carrier of water in the city of Cûfa; which occasioned a satirical Arabian poet to write a pointed epigram upon him. He was born in the 303d year of the Hejra, and laid the foundations of his future fame at Damascus; where he first applied himself to the study of the Arabic tongue, of grammar, of philology, and of every branch of the belles lettres, with surprising success. He was one of the most excellent poets among the Arabians, there being none besides Abu Temâm who could dispute the prize with him. His poetical inspiration was so warm and exalted, that he either mistook it, or thought he could persuade others to believe it to be prophetic, and therefore pretended himself to be a prophet indeed; and thence acquired the surname of Al Motanabbi, by which he is generally known. His accomplishments were too great not to have some success; for several tribes of the Arabs of the Deserts, particularly that of Kelâb, acknowledged him to be what he asserted. But Lûlû, governor of Hems, and the adjacent district, for

for Al Akhshîd, king of Egypt in Syria, soon restrained the farther progress of this new sect, by imprisoning their prophet, and obliging him to renounce his chimerical dignity; which having done, he regained his liberty, and applied himself solely to his poetry; by which means he got very considerable riches, being in high esteem at the courts of several princes. He was first received with uncommon marks of distinction by Saïfo'ddawla, who was a great encourager of learned men, in the year of the Hejra 337, afterwards by Câfûr, in 346, and lastly by Adado'ddawla, king of Persia, in 350, from whom he obtained several large sums. Al Motanabbi lost his life, together with his son, at Al Nomania upon the Tigris, at a small distance from Baghdâd, in defending the money he had acquired, against some Arabian robbers, of the tribe of Afad, or Affad; he being then returning with it to Cûfa, his native city^q.

In the 355th year of the Hejra, a cartel, for the exchange and redemption of prisoners, was settled between the Greeks and Saïfo'ddawla; on which occasion, Abu Farâs, that prince's cousin-german, recovered his liberty. This year the Greeks made an irruption into the Moslem territories, successively invested Amid, or Ameda, Nasibîn, and Antioch; but without effect. They ravaged, however, the country, and at last returned with the pillage they had acquired at Tarsus.

The most remarkable events of the year 355.

The next year, being the 356th of the Hejra, proved fatal to several great men. Moezzo'ddawla Ebn Bûiya died of a dysentery, the 17th of the Latter Rabî, at Baghdâd. He was upon his march against Omrân Ebn Shahin, the lord of Al Bathihah, Al Batiha, or the *Mar/ly District*, bordering upon the Tigris, at the time of his death. He had acted as emir al omra almost twenty-two years, and was succeeded by his son Bakhtiyâr, surnamed Azzo'ddawla, i. e. *the Strength of the Palace, or the Court*, in the high post to which he had been advanced. With regard to Moezzo'ddawla's disposition, he is said to have been intrepid and brave; though, if we believe Al Makîn, on certain occasions he discovered some degree of malice and imprudence in his actions. However, as the same writer observes, he grew wise by experience, and, by his subsequent knowledge of men and things, corrected the errors of his younger years; so that, upon the whole, he may be

Moezzo'ddawla departs this life, in the year of the Hejra 356.

^q Ifm. Abu'lfed. ubi supra. Ebn Shohnah, D Herbel, Biblioth. Orient. art. Motanabbi, p. 638, 639.

considered as a prosperous and happy prince. At the approach of death he appeared extremely penitent, left the greatest part of his immense wealth to be disposed of in charitable uses, and released all his slaves. He was buried in the place called Bab Al Tabni, *the Straw-gate*, where the bodies of many deceased members of the tribe of Koreish lay interred. He is said to have been the first who used running footmen, or foot-posts, in order to send his brother Rucno'ddawla the quickest intelligence of every thing he intended to communicate to him. Of these Fadl and Marûsh in swiftness excelled all the rest, as each of them could run between forty and fifty parasangs in a day. One of them was considered as the Sonnite express, or courier, and the other as that of the Shiites; from which single circumstance, the violence of party, that at this time agitated the minds of the citizens of Baghdâd, in some measure appears¹.

Washmakîn is killed by a fall from his horse.

The same year Washmakîn, or Washmakîr, Ebn Zay-yâr, the brother of Mardawîj, lost his life. As he was one day hunting, his horse, being frightened by a wild-boar, threw him with such violence, that he immediately expired.

Câfûr, according to Abu'lfeda, dies this year.

On Monday, the 20th of the Former Jomâda, Câfûr, the Ethiopian slave purchased by Al Akhshîd for eighteen dinârs, who governed that prince's dominions, after his death, according to Abu'lfeda, departed this life. This Câfûr was prime minister to Anûjûr and Ali, Al Akhshîd's sons; and, after the latter of those princes death, in 355, his authority was recognized by the people of Al Hejâz, Syria, and Egypt. Indeed, neither Anûjûr or Ali enjoyed any thing but the bare title of prince, or lord, of the territories left them by their father Al Akhshîd, Câfûr being in reality, during their lives, the actual and absolute sovereign of all those countries. After his death, he was interred in the common burying-place, denominated Al Carafah, at Mefr. The Egyptian grandees, after many long debates, selected Abu'l Fawares Ahmed Ebn Ali Ebn Al Akhshîd, if Abu'lfeda may be credited, to succeed him; though Al Makîn has not scrupled to assert, that Ali Ebn Mohammed Ebn Al Akhshîd, then only eleven years of age, ascended the Egyptian throne after Câfûr. Abu'lfeda intimates, that there was a sort of interregnum in Egypt at this time for about the space of a year; as he gives us to

¹ Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 356. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 225. Ebn. Shohnah, D'Herbl. Biblioth. Orient. art. Moe'z Al-daulat. p. 584. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 314.

understand

understand that Abu'l Fawares was not publicly prayed for before the former Jomâda, 357, in the mosques at Mefr. But whatever was the name of the prince that succeeded Cáfûr, or in whatever year he was first prayed for at Mefr, he did not long enjoy the sovereignty of Egypt; that country having been soon after conquered by the forces of Al Moezz, the Fâtemite khalif of Kairwân, as will in a short time more fully appear.

On Thursday, the 24th of Safar, this year, died Saifo'd-dawla Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân, of the tribe of Taglab, at Aleppo, of a retention of urine. His remains were carried to Mayyâfârakîn, and there interred. Saifo'ddawla is said to have been the first prince of the house of Hamdân that made himself master of Aleppo, and expelled Ahmed Ebn Sa'id Al Kelabi, who was governor of the place for Al Akhfîd. This prince was remarkable for his greatness of soul, bravery, learning, liberality, love of justice, beneficence, and strict performance of all religious duties. His palace was the receptacle of poets and learned men. Nor did any of these ever leave his court without sufficient reason to praise his bounty. As he was the greatest encourager of learning of the age in which he lived, it is no wonder that such numbers of ingenious men should flock to him from all parts; and that Aleppo, where he reigned twenty-three years, should in his time have been the general seat of literature of the East. He was also himself a good poet, and we have three specimens of his poetical compositions preserved by Abu'lfeda and Al Makîn. One of these is a short copy of verses sent to his brother Nafero'ddawla, on what occasion we have not been told; and another a few verses on a favourite girl of royal extraction, with whom he was greatly enamoured, and whom he kept in a castle to prevent her from being poisoned by his other wives, who were all grown jealous of her charms. After his death his son Sharîf, surnamed Saado'ddawla, succeeded him in the sovereignty of all his extensive territories.

Saifo'd-dawla dies at Aleppo.

The same year Abu Ali Mohammed Ebn Eylîâ, or Elias, the lord of Kerman, departed this life; as did likewise Abu'l Faraj Ali Ebn Al Hosein, of the house of Ommiyah, commonly known by the surname or title of Al Kateb Al Esfahâni, i. e. *the Scribe, or Notary, born at Esfahân*. The latter of these was extremely well versed in history, and received his education at Baghdâd. Though he was a member of the house of Ommiyah, he was a great admirer of Ali and his family, and of the Shiite sect, at this time

Abu Ali Mohammed Ebn Eylîâ and Abu'l Faraj Ali Ebn Al Hosein die.

in great reputation at Baghdâd. He is said by Abu'lfeda to have been fifty years in compiling his book, entitled, *Al Kitab Al Agan, the Book of Songs*, the most excellent part of his works; a copy of which he presented to Saifo'ddawla; who perfectly knowing the value of this performance, gave him one thousand dinârs, and at the same time made an apology for offering him a sum so much inferior to the merit of so singular a production. He wrote several pieces in favour of that branch of the house of Ommiyah seated in Spain, the princes of which were styled lords of Andalusia, and even emperors of the faithful. These he sent privately to those princes, and was amply rewarded by them for such valuable presents. Of this kind were the following books: one written upon the genealogy of the family of Abd Shems, or Abd Shams; another upon the battles of the Arabs, in which one thousand and seventy brilliant actions are described; another, intitled, *Jomharat Al Nasbi, or the principal and most select Part of the genealogical Science*; and another, exhibiting the genealogy of the Banu Shaiban. His great friend and patron was Al Mohallebi, Moezzo'ddawla's wazir.

Abu Taglab confines his father Nasero'ddawla in the castle of Ardman.

Towards the close of the Former Jomâda, Abu Taglab seized upon his father Nasero'ddawla, who by his morose temper had rendered himself extremely disagreeable both to his own family and the great men of his court, and confined him in the castle of Ardman. Al Makîn relates, that Nasero'ddawla was so affected with the death of his brother Saifo'ddawla, that he became distracted thereupon; a circumstance which induced his family, who were greatly concerned for him, to desire his son Abu Taglab to secure his person, and take upon himself the government of Al Mawfel.*

Ahmed Ebn Al Hasan is recalled from Sicily.

Before the close of the present year, Ahmed Ebn Al Hasan, the emir of Sicily, received an order from Al Moezz Lidi-ni'llah, the khalif of Mohdia, to leave that island, and return to Africa. In obedience to which order Ahmed, with his wife, children, domestics, and all his substance, set sail for Mohdia, as soon as he had made the proper dispositions for his departure. He had, says Shahabo'ddin, been governor or emir, of Sicily thirteen years and eleven months, when he took his leave of the island, and appointed one of his father's slaves, that had been manumitted by him, named by Abu'lfeda Yaish, to preside over the Moslems there, till a new emir should arrive from

* Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 226. Ism. Abu'lfed, ubi sup. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 314.

Africa. Notwithstanding which assertion, we are told by Abu'lfeda, that Ahmed was not recalled from Sicily before the year of the Hejra 358; and that when he left the island, he had remained there sixteen years and nine months, in quality of emir^t.

In the following year, being the 357th of the Hejra, some disputes arose between Abu Farâs, who then resided at Hems, and Saado'ddawla, Saifo'ddawla's son; which ended in the destruction of the former. For Abu Farâs, not thinking it safe to continue at Hems, retired with great precipitation to Sadâd. Of which retreat Saado'ddawla being informed, he sent Curubah, or Curuba, his father's general, with a body of troops to that place; who soon got Abu Farâs into his hands, and put him to death. It appears from Abu'l-Faraj, that the Greeks invaded the Moslem territories, penetrated to Antioch, and possessed themselves of that city, before the conclusion of this campaign.

The principal transactions of the year 357.

In the year of the Hejra 358, Al Moezz Ledini'llah's forces, under the command of Jawhar Al Kayed, a Greek renegado and slave, seized upon Egypt. That prince, taking advantage of the civil dissensions that reigned amongst the Egyptian nobility, who could not agree in their sentiments of a proper person to succeed Câfûr, sent Jawhar with a numerous army, to annex to the territories of Kairwân that opulent region. Jawhar, meeting with no enemy to oppose him, entered Egypt, according to Abu'lfeda, the 17th of Shaabân, and marched directly to Meffr; where Abu Mohammed Abd'allah Ebn Al Hosein Al Someifâti, a celebrated preacher, prayed publicly in the old mosque for Al Moezz Ledini'llah, the Fâtemite khalif, on Friday, the 20th of the same month. As for Jawhar, the Magrebian general, he laid the foundations of Cairo, Kairo, or Al Kâhirah, in Egypt, in the month of Ramadân; and ordered both the officers and soldiers of his army to build themselves houses in the new city. He afterwards detached Jaafar Ebn Fallaj, with a strong body of troops, against Al Hafan Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Tagaj, then posted at Al Ramla, in Palestine, to oblige him to submit to the Magrebian khalif. Jaafar executed his orders with such bravery, that he overthrew Al Hafan with great slaughter, and sent him and several of his principal officers prisoners to Al Moezz; upon which, the citizens

Al Moezz's forces conquer Egypt and part of Syria.

^t Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, ubi sup. Vide etiam Joan Bapt. Carus. Saracenicarum Rer. Epit. p. 104.

of Al Ramla opened the gates of their city immediately to him, and took an oath of fidelity to the Fâtemite khalif of Kairwân and Egypt. Their example was followed by the inhabitants of Tabariyah, or Tiberias; but the people of Damascus not being disposed to recognize the authority of the African khalif, Jaafar reduced their city by force, pillaged part of it, and put a considerable number of the Damascenes to the sword. However, they soon afterwards rebelled; but were a second time subdued, and forced to take the oath of allegiance to Al Moez. After which ceremony, that prince was publicly prayed for in all the mosques of that part of Syria; and every other place of strength, that had been possessed by Al Akhshîd's family, readily submitted to him †.

Nasero'd-dawla dies.

The same year, died Nasero'ddawla Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân Al Taglabi, the prince or lord of Al Mawfel, in the castle of Cawatsh, where for some time he had been confined. This prince, according to Abu'lfeda, had three children by his wife Fâtema, the daughter of Ahmed, a Kurd; Abu Taglab, Abu'l Baracat, and Fâtema. Besides these, he had a son named Hamdân by another wife, to whom he had given the cities of Rahaba and Mâredîn, and who was a prince of great personal bravery. To him Nasero'ddawla found means to write, and to let him know the ill-treatment he had met with from his wife Fâtema, and his son Abu Taglab, who had confined him in the castle of Ardman, as has been already observed. But the letter, in which he had desired his son Hamdân to advance with a body of troops to his relief, was intercepted by Abu Taglab and Abu'l Baracat; who, from that time, used him much worse than before, and at length transferred him to the castle of Cawatsh, where he ended his days, in the Former Rabî, of the present year. This circumstance highly exasperated Hamdân, and occasioned a long and bloody war between Nasero'ddawla's three sons; in which Abu'l Baracat was cut off by Hamdân, who was himself finally stript of all his territories by Abu Taglab. That prince, after the victories he had obtained, assumed the title of Oddato'addawla Al Gadhanfer, or *the Lion the Defence of the Government*. We must not forget to remark, that Adado'ddawla, the son of Rucno'ddawla Ebn Bûiya,

† Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an Hej. 358. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 227. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 314, 315. Ebn Shohnah, Al Makrizi, Al Kazwini. Vide etiam Renaud. ubi sup.

seized

seized upon the province of Kermân, after the death of Abu Ali Mohammed Ebn Eyliâ, the preceding year^u.

Whilst the Moslems were thus at variance amongst themselves, the Greeks made an inroad into Syria, and penetrated as far as Tripoli. The castle of Arca they took by storm, and from thence advanced to Hems; which the inhabitants abandoned at their approach. They were no sooner in possession of the place, than they laid it in ashes, and then moved towards the maritime parts of the province, which they laid waste with fire and sword. After they had ravaged the country for the space of two months, and thrown down the pulpits in eighteen mosques, they retired into the imperial territories, loaded with the spoil they had acquired in this successful expedition:

*The Greeks
ravage
Syria.*

In the same year, Curuba expelled his master Saado'd-dawla from Aleppo, and set up for himself in that city. Upon this expulsion from his capital, Saado'ddawla retired first to Mayyâfârakîn, and afterwards to Hamah, where he remained for some time. About the same time, Sabûr Ebn Abur Thâher, the Karmatian, was confined by his cousin-germans, and died in prison, towards the middle of Ramadân. We are told by Al Kadi Shaha-bo'ddin Ebn Abildâm Al Hamawi, that Abu'l Kafam Ebn Al Hafan was sent by Al Moezz to Sicily, in the month of Shaabân, to preside over the Moslems of that island, in the room of his brother Amed. To which circumstance this author adds, that the latter of those emirs was made by his master admiral of the Magrebian fleet, sent this year to the coast of Egypt, to forward the operations of the land-forces; and that he died at Tripoli, soon after his arrival there. But these events have been ranked by Abu'lfeda, in the piece so often referred to, amongst the transactions of the following year^w.

*Saado'd-
dawla is
driven
from
Aleppo by
Curuba.*

Next year, being the 359th of the Hejra, the Greeks made another irruption into Syria, carried Antioch by assault, plundered the city, and put a great number of the inhabitants to the sword. From thence they marched to Aleppo, then in no posture of defence; which Curuba abandoned at their approach, and retired into the castle. Here he defended himself for some time, and at last agreed to pay the Greeks a certain annual tribute; upon which having received hostages, for the due per-

*The Greeks
make an-
other ir-
ruption into
Syria.*

^u Ifm. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. & in Chron. ad an. Hej. 357. ^w Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, ubi sup.

formance of what had been stipulated on his part, they returned into the imperial provinces, and carried off with them the pillage that had fallen into their hands. The district territory of Aleppo at this time contained the cities of Hamah, Hems, Cafar Al'Thâ, Al Maarrah, Apamea or Apamia, Shaizar, and several other towns.

*They likewise
were at attack
Malazcard, in
Armenia.*

Before the close of the present year the Greeks likewise made an incursion into Armenia, and attacked the city of Malâzcard, Malâzkhard, or Malazcarda; but with what success we have not been told. Malazcarda was a small town of Armenia, the houses of which, in the day's of Abu'lfeda, were built of black stone. It abounded then with fountains, but was almost entirely destitute of trees. It was about two or three days journey distant from Arzen, or Arzen Al Rûm, the Arzerum, or Erzerum, of the moderns; and not above one or two from Bedlis, the Betlis, or Bitlis, of the European geographers. In fine, if we believe Abu'lfeda, all the maritime parts of Syria, as well as those bordering upon the Euphrates, at this time lay open to the Greeks; who ravaged them all, even according to the Moslem historians themselves, without control. No wonder then, that this writer should consider the untimely end of the Greek emperor, Nicephorus, as a public blessing to the Moslems, who, for several years past, were not able to make head against his victorious troops.

*Some other
remarkable
occurrences
of this year.*

In the same year Abu Taglab Ebn Nafero'ddawla laid siege to Harrân, and took it by capitulation; he left a garrison there, under the command of Al Barcaidic, one of his principal officers, and then returned to Al Mawfel. About this time, Curuba likewise ordered Saado'ddawla to be publicly prayed for in the mosques of Aleppo and Hems; in the last of which places that prince held his residence. Al Moezz Ledini'llah, the Fâtemite khalif, was also publicly prayed for in the same cities, as well as at Medina; though Al Motî, the khalif of Baghdâd, was mentioned in the public prayers by Mohammed Al Mufuwi, who officiated as imâm in the district of the last of those cities. The name of the khalif of Baghdâd was, however, never omitted, during all the above mentioned troubles, in the mosques at Mecca. This year, according to Al Kâdi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildâm Al Hamawî, the Fâtemite khalif Al Moezz Ledini'llah, sent a letter to Abu'l Kafem, then presiding over the Sicilian Moslems, containing his compliments of condolence on account of his brother Ahmed Ebn Al Hasan's death, wherein he gave him the title of emir, and exhorted him, by all means possible, to extend

extend the Moslem conquests in his part of the world, by annexing to them some of the neighbouring provinces. He at the same time desired him not to take too much to heart his brother's death, and assured him, that he considered the government of the Moslem part of Sicily as much inferior to his merit.

In the course of the following year, being the 360th of the Hejra, the Karmatians assassinated Jaafar Ebn Fallaj, the Fâtemite khalif's governor of Damascus, in the open field, and afterwards seized upon that city. From thence they advanced to Al Ramla, where they were joined by all who had adhered to the family of Al Akhshîd. Thus reinforced, they marched, under the command of Al Hafsan Ebn Ahmed Ebn Baharam, their prince or chief, into Egypt, and came up with Jawhar, at the head of Al Moezz's forces, near Ain Al Shems, or Ain Al Shams, the ancient Heliopolis; upon which a fierce and bloody conflict ensued. The Karmatians, in the beginning of the action, forced the Magrebian and Egyptian troops to give way; but, not being properly supported, they were at last overthrown by Jawhar, who rallied his men with great bravery, and driven back into Syria, with prodigious loss^x.

The most memorable events of the year 360.

In the year of the Hejra 361, beginning October 24, 971, the Greeks penetrated into Mesopotamia, and ravaged the country about Edeffa and Nasîbin, together with all the interjacent tract; the Moslems abandoning their habitations, and flying in great numbers to Baghdâd. The cries and lamentations of those poor wretches reaching the ears of Bakhtiyâr, the emir al omra, he immediately went to the khalif, and demanded of him a sum of money, to enable him to put the troops in motion, in order to drive the enemy from the frontiers. But the khalif told him, that, being stript of his power, authority, and wealth, he was himself almost destitute of common necessaries, and therefore had no money to spare on the present occasion. He added, that he would rather be in the situation of a private person than that of khalif, when attended with such disagreeable circumstances. But Bakhtiyâr, who was entirely attached to his pleasures and diversions, and was even then but just returned from hunting, told him in a menacing tone, that this was all chicanery and pretext; and that it would much better become him to satisfy the

The chief transactions of the year 361.

^x Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 359. & ad an. Hej. 336. Al kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, ubi sup. Joan. Bapt. Carus. ubi sup. p. 104. Roderic. Toletan. Hist. Arab. c. xxx. p. 25, 26. Al Tarikh Al Magreb. Vide etiam D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 9.

demands of the soldiery with a good grace than by compulsion. This hint so terrified the khalif, that he immediately sold the furniture of his palace, though he could not raise by this expedient above forty thousand dirhems, (a very inconsiderable sum,) which he put into the hands of Bakhtiyâr; who squandered away the money in a shameful manner, without applying a single dirhem of it to the public service. Hence the sarcasm, at that time so current in Baghdâd, the khalif has been fined, or mulcted, by Bakhtiyâr. In the beginning of Dhu'lkaada, the Fâtemite khalif, Al Moezz Ledini'llah, set out from Al Mohdia, with his family, effects, and all his treasures, which he took care to have melted down into a sort of masses, or ingots, in the form of mill-stones, and carried on the backs of camels, for Egypt. He left behind him, as his governor of Kairwân and its dependencies, Yusef Ebn Zeir Ebn Menedz Al Sanhâji, surnamed Belkîn, who had distinguished himself in his service; and Abd'allah Ebn Yokhlef Al Catâmi, in the same capacity, at Tripoli in Africa; Abu'l Kasem Ali Ebn Al Hasan still continuing, by his appointment, emir of Sicily. Al Moezz was attended in his journey by Mohammed Ebn Hani, an Arab poet of Andalusia; who was assassinated suddenly, and by an unknown hand, at Barka. He had an excellent poetical genius, but was too fulsome in his flattery; making as it were a kind of divinity of Al Moezz, and bestowing upon him titles that were applicable to God alone. This impious adulation occasioned his being considered as a deserter of the faith, gave great offence to many of the Moslems, and was probably the cause of his violent death. About this time, a treaty of peace was concluded between Al Mansûr Ebn Nûh Al Sammâni, the prince or lord of Khorasân, and Rucno'ddawla Al Hasan Ebn Bûiya; the principal articles of which were, that Rucno'ddawla should pay Al Mansûr annually the sum of a hundred and fifty thousand dinârs; and that Al Mansûr, in consideration of this money, which was to be esteemed as a dower, should marry the daughter of Adado'ddawla, Rucno'ddawla's son. Abu Taglab Ebn Nafero'ddawla likewise made himself master of the city of Mâredîn, as well as of a large magazine of arms, and all his brother Hamdân's treasures, that were found therein, and betrayed into his hands by that prince's governor of the place^y.

^y *Ism.* Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 361. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. p. 315. Ebn Shohnah, Al Kazwini, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Moe'z Ledini'llah, p. 595. Euseb. Renaud. ubi sup. p. 353, 354.

Next year, being the 362d of the Hejra, Al Moezz arrived at Alexandria, and was met by all the principal Egyptian nobility; who received him with marks of the most perfect submission, and the most profound respect. He also entered Kairo, or Al Kâhira, the 15th of Ramadân. About the same time, the Greeks took Nasîbîn, ravaged the district of Mayyâfârakîn, and over-ran the whole province of Diyâr Rabîa. Of which hostilities, Abu Taglab Ebn Nasero'ddawla being informed, he sent his brother Hebat'allah Ebn Nasero'ddawla with a powerful army against them; who marched directly to Ahmed, where he was joined by Hazârmard, one of Abu'l Hijâ Ebn Hamdân's officers, and Abu Taglab's commandant of that place. After this junction, Hebat'allah attacked the Greeks posted in the neighbourhood of Ahmed with such fury, that he overthrew them with very great slaughter, released all the Moslem captives that had fallen into their hands, and took the imperial general himself, with a great number of his men, prisoners. The Greeks were much superior in number to the Moslems; but Hebat'allah surprising them in a confined place, where their cavalry could not act, they were easily put to the rout, and soon obliged to betake themselves to a precipitate flight. The imperial general Hebat'allah sent Abu Taglab in chains to his brother, who immediately ordered him to be thrown into prison, where he remained till the time of his death; which happened in the Latter Jomâda, of the following year. This battle was fought towards the close of Ramadân; and it entirely cleared all the Moslem territories of the Greeks, during the remainder of the campaign. Azzo'ddawla, or Bakh-tiyâr, as Abu'lfeda likewise calls him, the emir al omrà, made Mohammed Ebn Bakih, a person of mean extraction, his wazîr, before the end of the year, a circumstance which produced some ill blood between that minister and the officers who commanded both the Turkish and Deylamite troops at Baghdâd.

What happened in the Moslem territories the following year.

In the following year, Azzo'ddawla Ebn Moezzo'ddawla treated the Turkish troops that had attended him into the province of Ahwâz, where he then was, with great rigour and severity, in order to repress the insolence they had discovered on several occasions, and revive military discipline amongst them. This severity so exasperated Sabektekîn, a Turk, formerly chamberlain to Moezzo'ddawla, who refused to go with Azzo'ddawla into Ahwâz, that he rebelled against him, assembled all the Turkish and Sennite troops in Baghdâd, and made the necessary dispositions for

Al Motî abdicates the khali-fat.

preventing him from entering that capital. To these measures Sabektekîn had likewise been farther excited by Azzo'ddawla's conduct to him in particular ; the emir al omra having ordered all the cities and lands belonging to him, and which he considered as his own private property, to be confiscated. This defection produced several actions between Sabektekîn's forces and the Deylamite troops, who, with the populace of Baghdâd, still obeyed the orders of Azzo'ddawla, which ended in the defeat of the latter ; insomuch that Sabektekîn at last made himself master of Baghdâd, and plundered Azzo'ddawla's palace in that city. The metropolis being thus in his hands, he prevailed upon Al Motî, who could not interpose his authority in the present dispute, and who had been rendered in a manner incapable of government by a paralytic disorder, to abdicate the khalifat, in favour of his son Al Tay' Li'llah ; who thereupon was saluted khalif. Al Motî died at Dair Al Akûl, a little above two months after he had been deposed, in the year of the Hejra 364. He was nominal khalif, having been stript of all his power and authority by the family of Bûiya, then in possession of Persia and Irâk, twenty-nine years and five months ; being about sixty-three years of age at the time of his death. He was of an affable temper, modest in disputation, mild, gentle, sincere, charitable, and extremely devout in the performance of all religious duties^z.

S E C T. VII.

From the Advancement of Al Tay' Li'llah to the Throne of the Moslems, to the Accession of Al Kâjem Beamri'llah.

Al Tay' Li'llah ascends the Moslem throne after the abdication of Al Motî.

AL Tay' Li'llah Ebn Al Motî, whose name was either Abu'l Fadl Abd'alcarîm, or Abu Becr Abd'alcarîm, was saluted khalif, the very day on which his father Al Motî had been prevailed upon, or rather constrained, by Sabektekîn, to relinquish his nominal dignity. Immediately after his inauguration, he assigned the sublime post of emir al omra to Sabektekîn, who had been so instru-

^z Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 228, 230. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 363. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. Ebn Shohnah, Khondemir, Sharif Al Edressi, Greg. Bar-Hebræus, apud Jos. Sim. Asseman. in Bibliothec. Orient. Clementino. Vatican. tom. secund. p. 319 ut & ipse Jos. Sim. Asseman. ibid. & in Dissertat. de Monophysit.

mental in his elevation to the khalifat. He enjoyed, however, nothing more than the empty title of emperor or commander of the faithful; having been stript by the emir al omra of his power and authority, in the same manner as his immediate predecessor.

This year, the Karmatians, notwithstanding their former defeat, made a second irruption into Egypt, and penetrated to Meſr: but they were overthrown again with very great slaughter, and obliged to fly to the country from whence they came; that is, the territory of Al Katîf and Al Ahſa. As they were purſued by a body of ten thousand horſe, that kept cloſe at their heels till they reached their own frontiers, both Egypt and Syria were ſoon effectually cleared of them. After which retreat, Al Moezz ſent Thalem Ebn Mawhûb Al Okâili, one of his generals, with a large body of troops to Damafcus, to keep the ſeditious inhabitants of that city in awe; but, notwithstanding the force with which he was ſupported, the Damafcenes had ſuch an averſion to his government, that, for ſome time, he found himſelf not a little embroiled and embarrassed with them. A conſiderable part of the city was reduced to aſhes, during the commotions which at this time happened. The people of Mecca and Medina, however, prayed publicly in their moſques for Al Moez Ledini'llah, and perſiſted in their fidelity to the Fâtemite khalif^a.

The Karmatians are overthrown by Al Moezz's troops.

In the mean time, the Turks, under the command of Sabektekîn, marched to Wâſet, where Bakhtiyâr, or Azzo'ddawla, then reſided, in order to take vengeance of him for the injuries he had offered them, during the courſe of his adminiſtration. Sabektekîn carried with him both Al Motî and Al Tay', to draw the Moſlems to his ſtandard, in this expedition: but the former of thoſe princes died at Dair Al Akûl, as has been already obſerved, and his death was immediately followed by that of Sabektekîn himſelf: the remains of both were conducted to Baghdâd, and there interred. In the room of Sabektekîn, the Turks choſe Al Aſtekîn, one of their principal commanders, for their general, and continued their route to Wâſet. Sabektekîn died of a diarrhœa at Dair Al Akûl, where he had encamped, the 24th of Al Moharram, and the year of the Hejra 364, after he had been emir al omra to the khalif Al Tay' only two months and thirteen days. As for Al Aſtekîn Al Sharâbi, who ſucceeded him in the com-

The Turks form the ſiege of Wâſet.

^a Iſm. Abu'lfed. ubi ſup. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi ſup. p. 318.

mand of the Turkish troops, he had likewise, as well as Sabektekîn, been an officer under Moezzo'ddawla Ebn Bûiya, and distinguished himself on several occasions. After his election, he immediately advanced Wâset, sat down before the place, and carried on the siege of it with uncommon ardour, for the space of fifty days. As Azzo'ddawla's men had been repulsed in every sally, and worsted in every attack, and as provisions began now to fail him, this general found that he could not alone make head against Al Aftekîn; and therefore he dispatched express after express to his cousin-german Adado'ddawla in Persia, to let him know the distress he was in, and to implore his assistance; telling him, that he would much rather submit to a relation and a friend, than to a foreigner, and one that was an enemy to their family. This remonstrance made such an impression upon Adado'ddawla, that he hastened to his relief with all the forces he was master of; as will more clearly appear from our account of the principal events of the following year, amongst which these very transactions themselves have been placed by Al Makîn ^b.

*Some account of
Thâbet Ebn
Senân and
Afrihi Ebn
Adi.*

We must not forget to remark, that the Târîkh, or history, of Thâbet Ebn Senân Ebn Thâbet Ebn Korra, so celebrated over all the Moslem world, which began with the year of the Hejra 275, or, according to Abu'l-Faraj, 290, concludes with the present year. This Thâbet Ebn Senân was a very famous physician, and had the care of the hospital at Baghdâd committed to him. His history has been represented as a most excellent performance by Abu'l-Faraj; who informs us, that he mentions therein a great number of remarkable facts, not elsewhere to be found. A supplement to this noble work has been written by Helâl, his nephew, who was likewise a very eminent physician, historian, and philosopher. Thâbet Ebn Senân died in the year of the Hejra 365, if Abu'lfeda may be depended upon, or in the 363d year of the Moslem æra, if we believe Abu'l-Faraj. Afrihi Ebn Adi Ebn Hamîd Ebn Zachariâ Al Tegrîti, an eminent logician, who lived a considerable part of his time at Baghdâd, was one of his contemporaries. This learned man was often employed in transcribing books of literature. He wrote a very fine legible hand, and that with so much expedition,

^b Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 232. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. Ebn Shohnah, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. ubi sup. p. 1018, 1019.

that

that he could finish a hundred leaves in a day and a night. He left behind him several versions and explications of ancient authors, besides other works, that were held in great esteem.

In the year of the Hejra 364, Adado'ddawla, excited by the repeated solicitations of Azzo'ddawla, marched with the Persian forces into Irâk, and advanced into the neighbourhood of Wâset. Al Aftekîn, having received advice of his approach, immediately abandoned the siege, and retired with the Turkish troops to Baghdâd. Upon his arrival there, he found that city in the hands of Abu Taglab Ebn Nafero'ddawla; who having been sent for by Azzo'ddawla, to assist him against the Turks, had taken post in that metropolis, seized upon the emir al omra's palace, and obliged all ranks and degrees of men to recognize his authority: but Al Aftekîn, having brought with him the khalif Al Tay', summoned him in that prince's name, to surrender the place; which not being immediately done, the Turks attacked it sabre in hand, and carried it with inconsiderable loss. In the mean time, Adado'ddawla, having forced Al Aftekîn to raise the siege of Wâset, joined Azzo'ddawla; and, after that junction, pursued the Turks to Baghdâd. Being arrived before the town, Adado'ddawla invested that part of it situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, and Azzo'ddawla the other. The Turks finding themselves upon the point of being closely shut up, in order to avoid the calamities attending a siege, marched out of the place, and were followed by the combined army, under the command of Adado'ddawla and Azzo'ddawla, who came up with them at Dair Al Akûl; upon which a sharp and bloody engagement ensued, wherein both sides sustained an incredible loss: but at last the Turks were constrained to leave the field of battle to the victors; who thereupon became masters of the khalif's person, and afterwards triumphantly entered the city of Baghdâd. The battle was fought the fourteenth of the Former Jomâda, and the princes of the house of Bûiya soon after possessed themselves of the capital; but the khalif Al Tay' did not return to his palace before the eighth of Râjeb, when Adado'ddawla prostrated himself before him, and had the honour to kiss his hand. The Persian forces, after the action, made themselves masters of the Turkish camp, and observed an exact discipline in the city of Baghdâd; but Azzo'ddawla's troops mutinied for their pay, treated their general with great marks of disrespect, and committed many disorders. As, therefore, Azzo'ddawla

*Adado'd-
dawla pos-
sesses him-
self of
Baghdâd.*

had no money to pacify them with, Adado'ddawla advised him to resign his command, and shut himself up in his house; that he might thereby be the better enabled, with the assistance of his own troops, to bring them back to a sense of their duty: but Azzo'ddawla had no sooner dismissed the officers of his court, declared himself incapable of government, and formally renounced before proper witnesses all pretensions to the post of emir al omra than Adado'ddawla caused him and his brothers to be seized at a splendid entertainment, to which he had invited them, on the 26th of the latter Jomâda, and immediately sent to prison, in the most perfidious manner. After which treachery, in order to secure to himself the possession of the supreme power at Baghdâd, he thought fit to caress the khalif Al Tay', by pretending to an entire submission to him, by augmenting his revenue, and by supplying him not only with large sums of ready money for present use, but likewise with a sufficient quantity of such costly furniture for his palace, as was worthy the high character he sustained^c.

*But afterwards
abandons
that capital.*

But notwithstanding his pretended submission to the khalif, he did not long enjoy the power which he had so unjustly acquired: for Marzapân, or Marzabân, Azzo'ddawla's son, receiving advice at Basra, of which city he then was governor, of what had happened to his father at Baghdâd, immediately wrote to Rucno'ddawla, Adado'ddawla's father, an account of that event: which produced in him such emotions of anger and grief, that, upon the first news of it, he threw himself upon the ground in a most frantic manner; and afterwards contracted such a distemper, by an irregular abstinence and perturbation of mind, occasioned by the disagreeable news that had been imparted to him, as might have been of fatal consequence, had it not been speedily removed by Adado'ddawla's subsequent conduct. He also upbraided his son, in the sharpest terms, with his iniquitous behaviour, and threatened him with the effects of his resentment, if he did restore to Azzo'ddawla the post of which he had so unjustly deprived him. Adado'ddawla, in order to pacify his father, proposed to cede to the person injured some part of his Persian territories, as an equivalent for what he had usurped in Irâk: but this proposal was so far from being relished

^c Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 232, 233. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 364. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 318. Khondemir, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Azzeddoulat. p. 154, 155.

or approved of by Rucno'ddawla, that he was upon the point of cutting to pieces the minister who delivered it to him; by whom he sent back a message to his son, importing, that if he did not instantly comply with his commands, he would come himself with an army to Baghdâd, and reinstate Azzo'ddawla in his former post. Nor did Abu'l Fathi Ebn Al Amid, Adado'ddawla's second ambassador, meet with a more favourable reception from him; the answer given that minister, on this occasion, being extremely severe, and such as indicated his wrath to be by no means appeased. Adado'ddawla, therefore, finding that his father would be obeyed, released Azzo'ddawla without delay, put him again at the head of the khalif's councils, and then retired with his forces into Persia. However, he obliged both the khalif Al 'Tay' and Azzo'ddawla to swear, that they would never oppose either his commands, or those of his father Rucno'ddawla, before his departure from Baghdâd; which, according to Abu'l-feda, happened in the month of Shawâl, the present year ^d.

In the mean time, Al Aftekîn, after he had been driven by Adado'ddawla from Baghdâd, moved at the head of his Turks into Syria, and possessed himself of Hems. From thence he advanced to Damascus, and was received with open arms by the inhabitants of that city. He was no sooner admitted into the town than he enabled the Damascenes to expel Zaban, or Zabban, an eunuch, and Al Moezz's governor of the place; after which, they discontinued their recognition of Al Moezz's authority in the mosques, on days of divine service. That prince dying the following year, his son and successor, Al Aziz Bi'llah, sent Jawhar, his general, with a powerful army, into Syria; who laid siege to Damascus, and carried on his attacks with so much vigour, that the city must have fallen into his hands, if a body of the Karmatian troops had not hastened to its relief. At the approach of these troops, Jawhar thought fit to raise the siege, as he was not in a condition to make head against them, and at the same time to repulse the Damascenes, in the numerous sallies which they made. The Karmatians, having been joined by the Turks and Damascenes, pursued Jawhar, and came up with him first at Al Ramla, and afterwards at Ascalon, or Ashkelon; at the last of which places, they offered him battle: but Jawhar, having lost the greatest part of his men by famine, declined an engagement.

What happened to Al Aftekîn, after he was driven from Baghdâd.

^d Al Makin, Ism. Abulfed. & Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra.

However, he was reduced in a short time to the last extremity, and with great difficulty prevailed upon Al Aftekîn, who commanded the combined army, to permit him, for a large sum of money, to return into Egypt. Upon his arrival at Mefr, he persuaded Al Azîz himself to undertake an expedition against Al Aftekîn, then in possession of the best part of Syria. That prince, therefore, without delay, marched with a formidable army against the rebels, and came up with them at Al Ramla; where, after an obstinate dispute, he entirely defeated them, put a great number of them to the sword, and took most of the rest prisoners. However, Al Aftekîn himself found means to make his escape: but Al Aziz having offered a reward of one hundred thousand dinârs to any one who would deliver that general alive into his hands, Masraj Ebn Dagfal, an Arab of the tribe of Tay, his particular friend, with whom he had taken refuge, being tempted by the largeness of the reward, brought him alive to the Fâtémite khalif; who was so far from offering him any violence, that he made him a present of a very fine tent, as well as of several sumptuous mantles, or cloaks, and much household-furniture of almost inestimable value, released all the Turkish prisoners who had fought under him as their chief, and carried him to Mefr, where in great affluence he at last ended his days^e.

*Other
transac-
tions of the
present
year.*

This year, according to Al Kâdi Shahabo'ddîn Ebn Abildâm Al Hamawi, Abu'l Kasem Ebn Al Hasan, the emir of Sicily, undertook an expedition against the Christians of that island, reduced Messina, Catana, and several other fortresses of considerable strength, and ravaged the country in a dreadful manner. He likewise committed terrible depredations on the coast of Calabria, and even made incursions into the interior part of that province; after which, his troops returned home, with a great number of prisoners, and laden with spoil. These operations, however, are placed by Abu'lfeda amongst the transactions of the following year. About the same time, Rucno'ddawla Ebn Bûiya, who was now far advanced in years, assigned to his son Adado'ddawla Fârs, Arjân, and Kermân; to his son Mowayyado'ddawla Al Rây and Esfahân; and to his son Fakhro'ddawla Dainawâr and Hamadân. He also obliged them at the same time to take an oath to support one another, and to act in concert, on all emergent occasions. The khalif Al Tay', according to Al Ma-

^e *Ism. Abu'lfeda ubi supra. Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 233.*

kîn,

kîn, took to wife Sahrabân, Adado'ddawla Ebn Moezzo'd-dawla's daughter, and promised her for a dower one hundred thousand dinârs, before the close of the present year ^f.

The same year, if we believe Al Makîn, the Greeks, under the conduct of the emperor Zimisces, made an irruption into Syria, took Hems and Baalbec, and from the latter of those cities marched to Damascus: but Al Aftekîn, advancing against them with a considerable force, Zimisces turned off to Sidon, and obliged the inhabitants of that place to pay him a large sum of money; he then moved to Tripoli, and besieged that city above forty days. Here, if we credit the historian now before us, through the influence of Basilus and Constantine, he had poison administered to him; which forced him to retire, in a sick and languishing condition, to Antioch: but the people of that place refusing to admit him into the town, he cut down all their trees, and returned home; though, before he reached Constantinople, he expired, as we learn from one of the later Greek writers. After the departure of Zimisces, Antioch surrendered to a body of troops he left behind him, to continue the siege of that city; though in a short time it returned to its former masters, as appears from some of the eastern historians.

*The Greeks
make an
irruption
into Syria.*

The next year, being the 365th of the Hejra, Al Moezz Ledini'llah, the conqueror of Syria and Egypt, departed this life, either on the 11th or the 17th of the Former Rabî, after he had sat upon the throne of Kairwân twenty-three years four months and several days, and about three years upon that of Egypt. He was born at Al Mohdia, the capital of the khalifat of Kairwân, the 11th of Ramadân, in the year of the Hejra 319, and consequently died in the forty-sixth year of his age. He entertained a great opinion of the truth of astrology, and never undertook any enterprize of moment, without consulting those who pretended to have skill in that art. He has, however, been considered by most of the Moslem writers as a learned and virtuous prince. He was in particular famed for his liberality, his love of justice, and his exemplary life, as well as for the affection he bore his subjects, whom he governed with great lenity and moderation. His son Al Aziz Bi'llah, who succeeded him, was born at Al Mohdia, either the 24th of Al Moharram, in the year of

*Al Moezz
dies, and is
succeeded
by his son
Al Aziz.*

^f Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, in Hist. cui tit. Asmodf. Ism. Abul'fed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 365.

the Hejra 342, or in the 344th year of the Moslem æra; for in this point the Arab writers do not perfectly agree. Before the conclusion of the year, the people of Mecca offered up their prayers publicly to heaven for the health, welfare, and prosperity, of this prince ^g.

Abu'l Kafem, the emir of Sicily continues his depredations in Calabria.

Abu'l Kafem Ebn Al Hafan, the emir of Sicily, still continued his depredations in Calabria; destroying many towns and villages, and laying waste a considerable part of that province with fire and sword. His troops took so many head of cattle from the Calabrians, that they could not carry off all of them into Sicily; and therefore, by the emir's order, they slaughtered most of them upon the spot, called from thence, in the days of Al Kâdi Shahabo'ddîn, the *Shambles of Oxen, or Cows*. This Abu'l Kafem continued annually his devastations in this province, till the year of the Hejra 371, doing irreparable damage wherever he moved ^h.

Al Aziz proves superior to all his enemies in Egypt.

Al Azîz's affairs in Egypt were greatly embroiled this year, notwithstanding he had made Jawhar, a person of uncommon abilities, his prime minister. Several battles were fought in the neighbourhood of Mefr, or Al Fostât, and the Fâtemite khalif himself was besieged in that capital; but at last the siege was raised, and Al Azîz proved superior to all his enemies, probably by the conduct and address of Jawhar, as well as the bravery of his troops. As black was the colour most in vogue amongst the eastern khalifs of the house of Al Abbas, so white was most esteemed by the Fâtemite khalifs. This had been substituted in the room of the other amongst his subjects by Al Moezz, and was the fashionable colour through the whole course of Al Aziz's reign, as it has ever since been amongst the greatest part of the Africans and Arabs, even to this very day ⁱ.

As does likewise Rucno'ddawla Al Hafan Ebn Bûiya.

In the following year, being the 366th of the Hejra, Rucno'ddawla Al Hafan Ebn Bûiya departed this life, after he had reigned forty-four years one month and nine days, being above seventy years of age at the time of his death. He was a prince of the finest endowments, beloved by all those who had been so happy as to live under his government, and revered by the whole Moslem world,

^g Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 318. Ism. Abulfed in Chr. ad an. Hej. 365. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 233, 234. Al Makrizi, Ebn Shohnah, Euseb. Renaud. in Hiftor. Patriarchar. Alexandrinor. Jacobitar. p. 372. Parisiis, 1713. ^h Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, ubi supra. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 336. ⁱ Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 234, 235. Renaud. ubi sup.

inasmuch that his death was considered by those of the same religion with himself, who survived him, as a public loss. After his decease, the hatred Adado'ddawla his eldest son, bore Azzo'ddawla, his nephew, which in his father's life-time was not permitted to discover itself, soon began to appear. Having made the necessary preparations for an invasion of Irâk, he broke into Ahwâz, or Al Ahwâz, with a powerful army. Here Azzo'ddawla met him at the head of the khalif's forces, attended by Al Tay' himself, and Ali Ebn Abu Thâher, his wazir; but being overthrown with great slaughter, he fled to Wâset. Adado'ddawla plundered his camp, which he had abandoned in a shameful manner, and sent a large detachment to seize upon Basra, and the circumjacent tract. This purpose the Persians found it no difficult matter to effect, as Azzo'ddawla had left no troops in those parts to oppose them. The season being now far advanced, and Azzo'ddawla having shut himself up, with all the forces he could assemble, in Baghdâd, the reduction of Basra and its dependencies concluded the operations of the campaign¹.

In the course of this year the famous Sabektekîn, a Turk by nation, who had been one of Abu Ishak Ebn Alptekîn's slaves, and was afterwards general of all Nûh Ebn Manfûr's forces in Khorasân, by his master's death, became governor of Gaznah, the capital of Zâblestân; in which office he was confirmed, with great marks of distinction, by Nûh. It appears, however, from Khondemir, that he succeeded Alptekîn himself, and not his son Abu Ishak, in the government of Gaznah; that he had been originally one of Alptekîn's slaves, and never served in that capacity Abu Ishak; and that his master, discovering an assemblage of fine qualities in him, made him his heir. We are likewise informed by the Persian historian, that Sabektekîn was saluted general by the forces of the province, which were entirely at his devotion, after Alptekîn's death, in the year of the Hejra 365, and not in that we are now upon, as Abu'l-feda asserts: but however this may be, he afterwards made a surprising figure in the eastern world, carried his arms into India, constrained many of the rajahs or princes of that great region to embrace Mohammedism, and convert their Pagan temples into mosques; and annexed Casdar and Bost in Sejistân to his dominions.

*Sabektekîn
is made
governor
of Gaznah.*

¹ Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 235. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 366. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Ebn Shohnah, D'Herbel. Bibl. Orient. art. Adhad Eddoulat, p. 58.

*Other
transac-
tions of the
present
year.*

About the same time Adado'ddawla deposed Abu'l Fathi Ebn Al Amid, his father's wazîr, ordered his nose to be cut off, and deprived him of the use of one of his eyes by a red-hot iron, when he imagined himself secure, and in no danger of a disgrace. The night before this accident happened he spent in jollity with his friends, for whom he had prepared a sumptuous entertainment, was served in gold plate and glass vessels of exquisite workmanship, had provided a variety of the most costly perfumes, and saw every thing conducted with the utmost elegance and magnificence. In short, he indulged himself that night, in the gratification of his appetite, to an immoderate degree; not being then in the least apprehensive of meeting with such a reverse of fortune as that which the next day happened.

*Al Hakem
Ebn Abd'-
alrahmân
dies.*

This period is likewise distinguished by the death of Al Hakem Ebn Abd'alrahmân Al Nafr, of the house of Ommiyah, the lord of Andalusia, after he had reigned, under the title of Al Montaser, or Al Montasar, fifteen years and five months, being at the time of his death sixty-three years and seven months old. Al Hakem is said to have been extremely well versed in jurisprudence, history, and several other sciences, which enabled him to make a figure amongst the learned. His son Heshâm succeeded him under the title of Al Mowayyad Bi'llah, being then only ten years of age; so that Abu Amer Mohammed Ebn Abd'allah Al Moaferi, his hajeb or chamberlain, held the reins of administration. This Abu Amer was descended from the tribe of Meafer, settled originally in Yaman, for which reason he was denominated Al Moaferi, and assumed the title or surname of Al Mansûr. As he had raised himself entirely by his merit, the people were extremely well pleased with his elevation; though several persons of distinction aspired at the high post he so worthily filled. He was born at Thorash or Torres, and received his education at Corduba, where he made a very considerable progress in several branches of literature, and was a great encourager of learned men, who flocked to his palace from all parts, as to a most celebrated and flourishing academy. He likewise extended his favour and encouragement to all that excelled in the mechanical arts, and had rendered themselves remarkable by surpassing others in any part of useful knowledge. Whence it came to pass, that the Moslems considered his administration as a public blessing. Nor was he less famous for his bravery and military skill, having made above fifty irruptions into the territories of
the

the neighbouring Franks, many of which were attended with great success; but the most memorable of his expeditions was that in which he gained a complete victory over Garcias, the son of Sanja, or Sancho, king of the Franks, and took that prince himself prisoner in the year of the Hejra 385, nearly coincident with the 995th of Christ. It is remarkable, that the day on which this signal victory was obtained, and Garcias fell into the Moslems hands, Sa'id Ebn Al Hasfan, an Andalusian poet and philologist, sent a hart, to which he had given the name of Garcias, with a rope or cord about its neck, as a present to Al Mansûr, together with an encomiastic, or copy of verses, in praise of that hero; three, or a tristich, of which have been preserved by Abu'lfeda, who considers this event as an effect of the immediate decree of Divine Providence itself. Having once laid waste the frontiers of Castile, he shut up a body of the Franks in a narrow passage or defile, formed by the neighbouring mountains, and could easily have starved them to a surrender; but his clemency induced him to release them, when they were upon the point of perishing with hunger. For the particulars of Al Mansûr's expeditions against the Christians, or Franks, Roderic of Toledo refers his readers to his history of the Goths; wherein he says he has treated more largely and copiously of them. His glorious exploits against the Franks so endeared him to the Spanish Moslems, that they frequently offered him the crown of Corduba, which he with great uprightness and integrity constantly refused. He died in the year of the Hejra 393, according to Roderic, and was succeeded in his exalted station by his son Abd'almâlec, who received an overthrow from the Franks after he had penetrated into the kingdom of Leon, and never afterwards attempted any thing against them. However, Heshâm's subjects were well enough pleased with his administration. He departed this life in the 400th year of the Moslem æra; upon which his brother Abd'alrahmân was constituted hajeb, or chamberlain, and prime minister to Heshâm. This minister entirely abandoned himself to wine and women, and forced his master Heshâm to declare him his successor; a step which so exasperated that prince's subjects, that they assassinated him about four months and a half after he had taken upon himself the government of Andalusia.

We must not forget to observe, that in the present year Saado'ddawla Sharif Abu'l Maâli, the son of the famous Saifo'ddawla, returned to Aleppo, from whence he had been

Other remarkable events of the present year.

been driven by Curuba, one of his father's slaves. After his expulsion from Aleppo, he retired first to Mayyâfâra-kîn, afterwards to Hamah, and from thence to Hems; the last of which places he found himself obliged to abandon at the approach of the Greeks, who sacked, and in a great measure destroyed, that city. It was soon, however, restored to its pristine state by Marakthash, who had been likewise one of Saifo'ddawla's slaves, and had afterwards possessed himself of the castle of Borzayyah. This general came over with a body of troops to Saado'ddawla Sharîf Abu'l Maâli Ebn Saifo'ddawla; which proved no small accession of strength to that prince. In the mean time Bacjûr, one of Curuba's slaves, whom he had made governor of the castle of Aleppo, seized upon his master, and put him under arrest in that castle. This outrage so incensed the people of Aleppo, that they sent to Saado'ddawla, to implore his protection, and to desire him to rescue them from the tyranny of Bacjûr, who had usurped the sovereignty of their city. The first thing Saado'ddawla did after his arrival at Aleppo, was to promise Bacjûr not only an unlimited pardon and amnesty, to extend to all his adherents, but likewise the prefecture of Hems, if he would acknowledge him for his prince. With this proposal he immediately closed, and introduced Saado'ddawla, with his troops, into the castle; a step which put the place effectually into his hands. About the same time Bahastûn, the son of Washmakîn, or Washmakîr, Ebn Zayyâr, departed this life; as did also Yusef Ebn Al Hasan Al Jannâbi, the Karmatian, lord or prince of Hajr, who was born in the year of the Hejra 280. After his death the Karmatians changed the form of their government, and committed the direction of the state to six great officers, whom they dignified with the title of lords, or regents^k.

Adado'd-dawla puts Azzo'ddawla and his wazîr to death.

In the year of the Hejra 367, Adado'ddawla appeared at the head of a powerful army before the walls of Baghdâd. But before he laid siege to the town, he offered to permit Azzo'ddawla to retire to any place he should think proper to chuse, except Al Mawfel, and even to cede some part of his territories to him, provided he would immediately abandon Irâk. He also sent him a cloak, or mantle, not so much as a mark of respect, as an intimation of his being in a state of subjection to him. However, Azzo'd-

^k Ism. Abu'lfed. sup. ubi. Al Nowairi, D'Herbel. Bibl. Orient. art. Carmath & Carmathi, p. 256, 257, 258.

dawla put on this cloak, and departed out of Irâk; intending to make the best of his way towards Syria. He had no sooner left the capital than Adado'ddawla entered it, mentioned his own name in the public prayers, and ordered a drum to be beat before his palace. He also commanded Ebn Bakîh, or Ali Ebn Abu Thâher, as he is called by Al Makîn, Azzo'ddawla's wazîr, to be put to death, and his body to be affixed to a gibbet, or cross, erected for that purpose; an execution which drew a fine copy of verses, in praise of that unhappy person, from Abu'l Hafan Al Anbâri, the poet; several of which have been handed down to us both by Abu'lfeda and Al Makîn. This success obliged the khalif Al Tay' to confer the post of emir al omra upon Adado'ddawla, to give him two imperial standards, and to put both himself and his family into his hands. In the mean time, Azzo'ddawla, after his departure from Baghdâd, repaired to Al Hadîtha, where he met with Hamdân Ebn Nafero'ddawla, who was in the same forlorn condition with himself; having been stript of the district his father had assigned him, and ejected from thence, by his brother Abu Taglab. These two exiled princes, having conferred together, resolved to move at the head of a body of troops they had assembled towards Al Mawfel, and force Abu Taglab to restore the places he had so unjustly taken from his brother Hamdân. But Abu Taglab, having been apprized of their hostile intentions, offered to join Azzo'ddawla with all his forces, and march with him directly to Baghdâd, in order to drive from thence Adado'ddawla, and restore him to his former post, if he would deliver up to him his brother Hamdân. With this proposal Azzo'ddawla immediately closed, and sent Hamdân to Abu Taglab in chains; upon which, that prince joined him with an army of twenty thousand men. After this junction, Azzo'ddawla and Abu Taglab began their march for Baghdâd; but were met by Adado'ddawla, who brought with him the khalif Al Tay', in the neighbourhood of Tecrît. After several movements, wherein the generals on both sides endeavoured to shew their military skill, a general action ensued, the 18th of Shawâl, at a place called Cafr Al Jaffi, or *the Castle of Chalk*, which ended in the defeat of Azzo'ddawla and Abu Taglab. The former of those commanders was taken prisoner in the action, and afterwards put to death by Adado'ddawla's order; but the latter made his escape to Mayâfârakîn, from whence he was driven to Bedlis, by Abu'l Wafi, who had been sent in pursuit of him by Adado'ddawla. Not thinking himself
safe

safe here, he fled into the Christian territories; where he was soon after attacked by a party of the khalif's forces, then in quest of him. But here he proved superior to his enemies, routed them, and then advanced to Hifn Ziyâd, or *the Castle of Ziyâd*, called in the days of Abu'l-fedâ Khort Bart, i. e. *Quarta Parthica*, from the fourth Parthian legion quartered there in the time of the Romans. From Hifn Ziyâd Abu Taglab retired to Ahmed, where he for some time remained. After Azzo'ddawla's death, his head was cut off, and carried to Adado'ddawla; who is said to have shed tears, at the sight of it. Azzo'ddawla was thirty-six years old, when he came to his untimely end; and had then exercised the function of emir al omra eleven years and some months, according to Al Makîn. He was a prince of a very robust body, sound understanding, and extremely brave; insomuch that, if we believe the last mentioned writer, he could take a bull by his legs, and throw him on his back upon the ground by main force, without ropes, or any kind of assistance. Nor was he afraid to encounter lions in the chace. Upon Bahastûn's death, Fânûs, another of Washmakîn's sons, ascended the throne of Jorjân and Tabrestân. The former of those princes is called Hashûl by Al Makîn¹.

*Other
events
that hap-
pened in
the present
year.*

In the same year, Bardas Phocas, whom Basilus had recalled from exile, and put at the head of his forces, was overthrown, in the month of Dhu'lkaada, by Bardas Sclerus, the usurper, who had caused himself to be proclaimed emperor in Mesopotamia. Great numbers of men fell on both sides in this battle; which was fought at Amorium. After the action, Sclerus sent Abd'allah Al Montaser, one of his officers, to Antioch, to preside over the people of that city. But Abd'allah was, soon after his arrival, prevailed upon, by the address of Agabius, a certain bishop, who had for some time resided at Aleppo, to desert Sclerus, and declare for the emperor. Antioch afterwards submitted to that prince, and Agabius was promoted to the patriarchate of that city, as the people of it had before unanimously desired. Sclerus having received advice of what had happened at Antioch, dispatched thither one Bahrâm, with a body of troops, to bring back the citizens to a sense of their duty. But they refusing to admit him

¹ Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 235, 236. Ism. Abu'l-fed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 367. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 318, 319. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Adhad Eddoulat, p. 58, et art. Azzeddoulat, p. 154, 155.

into

into the town, he besieged it for some time, plundered the neighbouring district, and carried off with him a great number of cattle. In the mean time, Sclerus sent an ambassador, with very valuable presents, to Adado'd-dawla at Baghdâd, to request his assistance against the emperor; who thereupon promised him a body of his best troops, to enable him to oppose the imperial forces. This year, the famous Ephræm Syrus, called by the Arabs Efrâhâm Al Sorayai Ebn Zara'a, was constituted patriarch of the Jacobites at Alexandria, and remained in that see three years and six months. He was supposed to have been carried off by poison, through the wickedness of Abu'l Sarûr, a Christian of consequence, who had a post in the dîwân, because he had several times reproved, and at last excommunicated him, for having many concubines, and neglecting his wife: for the perpetration of which horrid fact, he had one of his hands cut off, and soon after died, or rather, as we would willingly understand Al Makîn, was put to death; for such punishment only could have been deemed adequate to so heinous a crime. This patriarch was of a most excellent disposition: he gave liberally to the poor, and to his own church; abolished all simoniacal exactions; and was extremely pious, regular, and devout, in the performance of religious duties. Sewîrus or Severus, Ebn Al Makfa', bishop of Al Ashmûnîn, was one of his contemporaries.

The famous Mohammed Ebn Abd'alrahmân, commonly called Ebn Cariah, the kadi of Al Sendiyah, and other places in the neighbourhood of Baghdâd died this year. Al Kâdi Ebn Cariah was a man of exceeding quick parts, and the wonder of the age. He could instantly resolve all questions, and decide all juridical cases, without the least hesitation. He spoke with the utmost fluency and propriety; his style being always copious, elegant, and pure. The principal men of the age were his admirers, and took great pleasure in his repartees. They frequently proposed, in writing, ridiculous questions, which drew from him immediate answers, penned without study or meditation, which excited the mirth and laughter of all that saw them. Al Mohallebi, the wazîr, who was extremely intimate with him, procured several persons to draw up ludicrous questions, and propose imaginary cases to him.

*Mohammed
Ebn Abd-
alrahmân,
the kadi of
Al Sendi-
yah, dies.*

The next year, being the 368th of the Hejra, Abu'l Wafi, Adado'ddawla's general, took Mayyâfârakîn, by capitulation. Of which event advice having been brought to Abu Taglab, he fled from Amed, where he then resided,

*Adado'd-
dawla
seizes upon
the terri-
tories of the
house of
Hamdân.*

sided, to Al Rahaba, upon the Euphrates, and from thence to Damascus, over which Cassam presided, for Al Azzî Bi'llah, the Fâtémite khalif of Egypt. The country then lying open to him, and no enemy appearing to oppose him, Adado'ddawla easily made himself master of Diyâr Becr, Diyâr Modar, and all the territories of the house of Hamdân; after which conquests he returned in triumph to Baghdâd. In the mean time, Cassam drove Abu Taglab from Damascus by force of arms; who thereupon retired to Tabariyah, or Tiberias^m.

Jawhar is forced to raise the siege of Damascus, and retire into Egypt.

In the same year, Al Azîz Bi'llah sent Jawhar with an army to drive Al Aftekîn Al Sharâbi from Damascus. Jawhar, in pursuance of his orders, invested that city; but, at the end of two months, he was obliged to desist, at the approach of a body of Karmatian troops, under the command of Al Hafan or Al Hakem Ebn Ahmed, that marched with the utmost expedition, in order to force him to raise the siege. Al Hafan and Al Aftekîn, after the junction of their forces, pursued Jawhar, first to Tabariyah, or Tiberias, and afterwards to Al Ramla; at the last of which towns Al Aftekîn permitted Jawhar to resume his march, or rather his flight, for Egypt, on condition that he passed under Al Aftekîn's sword and Al Hafan's lance, which were hung over one of the gates. To this disgrace, Jawhar, who was reduced to the last extremity, found himself obliged to submit. Jawhar no sooner arrived at Mefr, than he advised Al Azîz himself to undertake an expedition against the combined army of Turks, Karmatians, and Damascenes, under the conduct of Al Aftekîn and Al Hafan Ebn Ahmed; who thereupon advanced to Al Ramla, engaged the enemy near that place, and defeated them with very great slaughter. Al Aftekîn himself escaped out of the battle; but he was soon after taken, and brought to Al Azîz; who carried him into Egypt, made him his hajeb, or chamberlain, and treated him with uncommon marks of distinction. However, he was soon after poisoned, through envy, by Al Azîz's wazîr, who was immediately thrown into prison, by his master's order, and for some time detained. But Al Azîz, not being able to keep the machine of government in motion, to his own satisfaction, without the assistance of this minister, he was afterwards released, and restored to his former dignity. This relation, extracted from Al Makîn, differs considerably, both with regard to time and several

^m Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 236. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 368. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 319.

other

other circumstances, from the account of the same events transmitted by Abu'lfeida. It likewise differs in one remarkable particular from what has been advanced by another good writer; who asserts, that Al Hakem or Al Hasan Ebn Ahmed, the Karmatian general, died at Al Ramla, in the year of the Hejra 366, as has been already observed. However, as an insertion of these different narratives will, as we apprehend, greatly contribute to the illustration of the Moslem history, in the present point, we hope our readers will at least excuse what has been recommended to their perusal, from Al Makîn, in this placeⁿ.

Adado'ddawla having engaged to support Bardas Sclerus, who had been saluted emperor by the army in Mesopotamia, a body of troops was ordered to his assistance from Baghdâd. But before these troops could arrive, he was routed by Bardas Phocas, the imperial general, in a great battle, fought on Sunday, the 21st of Shaabân, this year, in the plains of Pancalea, and obliged to fly, with a small body of horse, to Mayyâfârakîn. Soon after his arrival, he was secured, by a private order the governor had received from Adado'ddawla, who afterwards disowned it, and sent him, with his son Romanus, and three hundred horse, who made their escape out of the battle with him, to Baghdâd. Upon his arrival at the metropolis, he was put in the possession of a house that had been fitted up for him, and was allowed to divert himself in the isle of Madida as often as he chose, though he could be considered in no other light than that of a state-prisoner, as he was so closely confined, that no person, without permission, could have any conversation with him. However, Adado'ddawla, in order to make his confinement sit a little more easy, promised to send him to the frontiers with such an army as should soon enable him to re-establish his fortune. In the mean time, that prince dispatched a minister to the imperial court, with an offer to deliver up Sclerus into their hands, if they would restore all the fortresses their troops had lately taken from the Moslems; threatening, at the same time, that if this overture was rejected, he would assist Sclerus, both with his forces and his treasures, and even enable him to penetrate into the very heart of the empire. That court, intimidated with this menace, sent Nicephorus to Baghdâd, to conclude a treaty with Adado'ddawla, upon his own terms; of which circumstance Sclerus being informed, he insinuated to the emir al omra, that the Greek mi-

The battle of Pancalea is fought, this year.

ⁿ Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 237. Al Makrizi, Euseb. Renaud. ubi sup. p. 372, 373.

nister intended to poison him. This intimation made such an impression upon Adado'ddawla, that he ordered Nicephorus to be seized, and imprisoned. All his attendants were treated in the same manner. The presents brought by the Greek ambassador, either for the khalif, or the emir al omra, or both, were also secured. Al Makîn assures us, that Nicephorus and his retinue were confined, and remained in chains eight years.

Other transactions of the present year.

Al Azîz Bi'llah having married a Christian lady, of the Melchite sect, made one of her brothers, named Jeremiah, patriarch of Jerusalem; and the other, who was called Arsenius, patriarch of the Melchites at Kairo, or Al Kâhirah, and Mesr. As the Fâtemite khalif had a daughter by this lady, both she and her brothers had a considerable ascendant over him; and therefore Arsenius easily obtained a grant of the great church of the Jacobites at Mesr, called afterwards by the Melchites the Church of the Patriarch. The khalif Al Tay' commanded Adado'ddawla's name to be mentioned, for the first time, in the public prayers, on Friday the 26th of Shaabân, in the present year; and to be repeated every third Friday afterwards, in the mosques of Baghdâd. He also commanded drums to be beat before his palace, during the time of the five prayers. Neither of which compliments had ever been paid to any of his predecessors. As Adado'ddawla was the sovereign of Persia, and his army was chiefly composed of the troops of that country, the khalif likewise dignified him with the Persian title Shâhensha (K), or Shâhinshâ, *the great King*, or *the King of Kings*; which was assumed by the ancient Persian monarchs, even before the days of Alexander the Great. Nor was any Moslem prince ever honoured with this lofty title before Adado'ddawla, to whom it was from this time constantly applied in the pulpits, and probably other public places, of all the cities and towns within the jurisdiction of the kha-

(K) The word *shâb*, according to the sentiments of Khoja Afdhalo'ddin, is of the same import with *padishâb*, a term in the Bastanian tongue, which is a dialect of the ancient Persian, and has, if we believe that author, the four following significations. 1. It denotes any thing that is *the most eminent and excellent in its kind*. 2.

The origin, first cause, or root, of every thing. 3. *A king, prince, or lord.* 4. *A bridegroom, or son-in-law.* With respect to the word *pad*, the first part of *Padishâh*, it properly denotes a *keeper, guardian, or protector*, as we learn from some of the writers followed by M. D'Herbelot.

lif,

lif, or rather of his prime minister, the emir al omra. It is worthy observation, that Adado'ddawla is called Chofroes, and said to have granted three thousand Roman, or Greek, captives their liberty, for the eminent services they had done him against the rebellious Persians, i. e. the forces commanded by Azzo'ddawla and Abu Taglab, or the subjects of the house of Hamdân, who were neighbours to the Persians^o.

In the following year, being the 369th of the Hejra, Abu Taglab went from Tabariyah or Tiberias, to Al Ramla. In the district of this city, Dagfal Ebn Mofraj, or, as he is called by Al Makîn, Mofraj Ebn Da'kal, an Arab of the tribe of Tay, and Fadl, who commanded a body of troops sent by Al Azîz against the forces of Abu Taglab out of Egypt, had seated themselves. The former of these captains, according to Al Makîn, had possessed himself of Al Ramla, and the neighbouring territory by force of arms; and the other, being afraid of Abu Taglab, had joined Dagfal Ebn Mofraj with all the troops under his command. After this junction, the generals of the combined forces attacked Abu Taglab, whose little army did not consist of above seven hundred men, routed him, and took him prisoner. As Dagfal Ebn Mofraj, into whose hands Abu Taglab fell, imagining that Fadl would demand his prisoner of him, and send him to Al Azîz at Mefr, where he might meet with as favourable a reception as Al Asteîkîn had, in similar circumstances, received before, he put him to the sword, and afterwards cut off his head. Fadl caused the body to be burnt; but the head he took care to have conveyed to Al Azîz, the Fâtemite khalif in Egypt.

In the course of the same year, Adado'ddawla wrote to his brothers Fakhro'ddawla and Mowayyado'ddawla, demanding their submission to him. Mowayyado'ddawla readily complied with what was required of him in this letter; but Fakhro'ddawla answered his brother in the style of an equal, and a sovereign, who considered himself as entirely independent on any other prince. This spirited behaviour so incensed Adado'ddawla, that he immediately assembled a numerous army, and marched towards Hamadân, where Fakhro'ddawla had fixed his residence; who being terrified with what had happened to Azzado'ddawla or Bakhtiyâr, abandoned the place at his approach, and fled to Shams Al Ma'ali Kâbûs, the son of Washmakîn or

*Dagfal
Ebn Mof-
raj puts
Abu Tag-
lab to the
sword.*

*Adado'd-
dawla
drives his
brother
Fakhro'd-
dawla
from Al
Ray and
Hamadân.*

^o Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 236. 237. 247. Al Makrizi, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 769, 770. Khondemir, Joan. Curopalat. in Basil.

Washmakîr, the prince or lord of Jorjân, who treated him with the highest marks of distinction, and received him with greater cordiality than even his most sanguine hopes could have prompted him to expect. In the mean time, Adado'ddawla, finding no enemy to oppose him, seized upon Hamadân and Al Ray, with their dependencies, and all the interjacent country. He also reduced the district of Hasnûyah, the Curd, in this expedition: but, in the midst of the uninterrupted success that now attended his arms, he was seized with a fit of an epilepsy, which deprived him of his memory in such manner, that he could scarce recollect any thing that had ever happened to him. However, he concealed both these disastrous events as much as possible. Before the end of the campaign, he likewise harassed the Hakkarite Curds, settled in the prefecture of Al Mawfel, compelled most of them to descend from the hilly tract they inhabited, in order to pay him homage in that city, and obliged them to put into his hands all their castles and places of strength. After his return, he repaired the city of Baghdâd, a great part of which had been demolished in the continual wars and disputes that had happened between the different princes, or emirs, who had dismembered the khalifat; rebuilt the mosques and other public edifices which had been destroyed, and supported with pensions many imâms, learned men, and such infirm persons as generally live in the mosques; in which actions he expended vast sums of money. He also cleansed and sunk, or deepened, several rivers, which had in a manner disappeared; reducing them to their former channels, or beds. About this time, Addado'ddawla gave his daughter in marriage to Al 'Tay' Li'llah, that his family might supply the Moslems with future khalifs. A quarrel happened between the Moslems and Magians, inhabiting the city of Shîrâz; on which occasion, the latter had their houses plundered, and were very ill treated. Adado'ddawla sent an officer to inquire into the cause of this tumult, and to punish the guilty; but the Magians were so far from meeting with any redress for the injuries that had been offered them, and the losses they had sustained, that they were reprimanded for their temerity and presumption, in daring to contend with the Moslems^v.

In the course of this year, died Omrân Ebn Shahîn, lord of Al Batîha, or the marshy district bordering upon the

^v Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 319, 320. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hejr. 369. D'Herbel, Biblioth. Orient. art Fakhr Aldaoulat, p. 329.

Tigris, in the neighbourhood of Wâset. He was born in the city of Al Jamedâ, which he was obliged to quit in his earlier years, on account of some enormous crimes that he had committed. As the fear of punishment had driven him from Al Jamedâ, so it impelled him to take refuge in the fens, or marshes, formed by the overflowings of the Tigris. Here, for some time, he lived in the ditches, or dikes, amongst the reeds; feeding upon the fish he took, and aquatic birds that were continually hovering about him. In the mean time, he gradually formed a considerable body of men out of the fishermen, robbers, and other persons in the same desperate circumstances with himself, that daily resorted to him. This situation enabled him to plunder and harass the inhabitants of the adjacent territory; so that he soon became the terror of the whole neighbourhood. As he had erected several castles or forts as places of refuge, on the hills, with which the fens or marshes were intermixed, and placed garrisons in them, he at last grew formidable to the khalif, or rather the emir al omra, himself. Moezzo'ddawla, being determined to reduce him, sent several bodies of troops against him, in the year of the Hejra 338, and some of the following years; but without effect. At last, he resolved to make the utmost efforts to extirpate the whole gang of robbers that obeyed the orders of this chief, who had possessed himself of a district of very considerable extent, and projected an expedition against them, in the year of the Hejra 356; but died upon his march, as has been already observed. Nor could his son and successor Azzo'ddawla or Bakhtiyâr either expel Omrân from the territory he had seized, or get him into his hands. In fine, after this robber had eluded all the attempts of several khalifs, and other powerful princes, to subdue him, for the space of near forty years, he died suddenly in the month of Al Moharram, and left the principality he had erected to Al Hafan, his son. Soon after his accession, Al Hafan submitted to Adado'ddawla, who had taken post on his frontiers with a strong detachment of the khalif's forces, recognized the authority of Al Tay', and agreed to pay an annual tribute for the province he governed.

In the 370th year of the Hejra, nothing very remarkable seems to have happened; except we should admit, that the khalif Al Tay' was married in it, as our readers will find suggested by Al Makîn. However, Al Ahdab Al Mozawwer, i. e. *the Gibbous, or Crook-backed Falsifier*, so denominated from the art in which he excelled, died at

Omrân Ebn Al Shahîn, the lord of Al Basîha, Al Houssein Ebn Zacariâ, and Thâbet Ebn Ibrahim, die this year.

The principal transactions of the year 370.

this period. This man was the most ingenious forger of writings, and imitator of hands, that the age in which he lived produced. So dexterous was he at this sort of work, that the person whose hand he counterfeited could not entertain the least doubt but the writing was his own. Adado'ddawla very well knew what use to make of so surprising a person as this. Whenever he wanted to set any of the neighbouring princes at variance, he caused such letters to be drawn up as were the most likely to sow jealousies and dissensions amongst them, and then ordered Al Ahdab Al Mozawwer to transcribe them in different hands, resembling those of the potentates he intended thereby either to render suspicious of one another's designs, or directly to inflame them; an expedient which generally produced the desired effect.

Adado'ddawla drives Kâbus Ebn Washmakîn from Jorjân and Tabrestân.

Next year, Shams Al Ma'âli Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn resolved to enter into a war with Adado'ddawla and Mowayyado'ddawla, in order to recover the territories that had been taken from Fakhro'ddawla by his brother Adado'ddawla, two years before. Adado'ddawla having received advice of Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn's military preparations, and hostile intentions towards him, sent his brother Mowayyado'ddawla the khalif Al Tay's instrument of investiture of Jorjân and Tabrestân, which countries Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn at that time governed. He also immediately raised a numerous army, in conjunction with his brother Mowayyado'ddawla, marched to the frontiers of Jorjân and Tabrestân, defeated the forces commanded by Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn and Fakhro'ddawla, and seized upon Kâbûs's kingdom⁹.

Other memorable events that happened this year.

About the same time, Adado'ddawla ordered the kadi Al Mohsen Ebn Ali Al Tanukhi, one of the followers of Abu Hanîfa, to be imprisoned, for venting his rage and fury against Al Shâfeî, in the most virulent and outrageous manner. He likewise set at liberty Abu Ishak Ibrahim, a Sabian, whom he had confined in the year of the Hejra 367, for discovering to his master Bakhtiyâr the result of Adado'ddawla's councils, and the secrets of his administration, and at the same time pointing out what measures it would be proper for him to pursue, in consequence of the discoveries he had made. This year, Al Kâdi Abu Becr Mohammed Ebn Thayyab Al Ashâri, commonly known by the name of Ebn Al Bakelâni, or *the Son of the*

⁹ Al Makîn. ubi sup. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 371. Khondemir, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, in Nighiarist. D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 329. 330.

Gardener, or Seller of Beans, was dispatched to Constantinople, with Adado'ddawla's answer to the emperor Basilius's last letter. Being admitted to an audience, he was ordered to prostrate himself before the emperor; which prostration he refusing to make, the next time he was brought into Basilius's presence, he was conducted to a gate, or entrance, through which he could not pass without incurvation, or rather without stooping down to the very ground. The kadi discovering the design of the imperial court in this artifice, went through the passage backwards, and then turned himself in an erect posture towards the emperor. Abu'l Kasem Ebn Al Hasan, the emir of Sicily, was killed in an action that happened between him and the Franks, in the month of Al Moharram, of this year. This Abu'l Kasem, who governed the Moslem conquests in Sicily twelve years five months and several days, had the title of Al Shâhid, *the Confessor, or Witness of the Truth*, conferred upon him, and was afterwards reputed a martyr, by the Moslems of that island. His son Jaber, a prince of a very vicious and dissolute life, and totally unfit for government, succeeded him; though he was not confirmed in the office of emir by Al Azîz, the Fâtemite khalif of Egypt, but on the contrary dismissed from that post in the following year. For the particulars of the wonderful conversion of Wafa Ebn Reja from Islamism to Christianity, which happened about this time, when he is said to have been miraculously transported through the air by St. Mercury, from one of the solitudes of Al Hejâz, in the neighbourhood of Mecca, to the church of that saint at Mefr, we must refer our curious readers to M. Renaudot, who has extracted a very large and copious account of that memorable event from some of the most authentic oriental writers^r.

In the following year, being the 372d of the Hejra, Al Azîz Bi'llah, the Fâtemite khalif of Egypt, sent an army, under the command of Bektekîn, his general, into Syria, against Mofraj Ebn Al Jarrah, who had assumed the sovereignty in Palestine, and collected a very considerable body of troops. However, Bektekîn, having brought him to a general action, entirely defeated him, put most of his men to the sword, and ravaged all the country he had subdued in a most dreadful manner. After the defeat of Mofraj,

*Bektekîn
defeats
Mofraj in
Palestine.*

^r Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. & in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 336. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 320. Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, in lib. cui tit. Asmodf. ubi sup. Euseb. Renaud. Patriarchar. Alexandrinor. Jacobitar. p. 374—380.

he

he marched to Damascus, and obliged Cassam, the governor of the place, to surrender that city. Having appeased the commotions, which for several years had disturbed the repose of the inhabitants of that town, and re-established the public tranquillity, he returned with his army to Mefr; having sent Cassam thither before, to bring to the khalif Al Azîz intelligence of the success that had attended his troops in this expedition.

Jaafar Ebn Mohammed is appointed by Al Azîz the emir of Sicily.

The same year, according to Al Kâdi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildâm Al Hamawi, or the following year, if we believe Abu'Iseda, the khalif Al Azîz sent Jaafar Ebn Mohammed Ebn Al Hafan, one of his greatest favourites, to Sicily, in quality of emir. This appointment gave great disgust to Jaber, who had rendered himself extremely disagreeable to the Moslems of that island, by his infamous conduct. Nor was Jaafar much less mortified at his being obliged to leave a court, where he almost made the principal figure, in order to take possession of a post that by no means suited his inclination. However, he was torn from the bosom of his most indulgent master, and obliged to accept of the government of Sicily, by the intrigues of Abu Calas, who beheld him with an envious eye. He considered him as the most formidable rival he had, in the khalif's affections; and therefore resolved to leave no means unattempted to remove him both from the person and councils of that prince^s.

Adado'ddawla's death and character.

This year, on the 8th of Shawâl, died Adado'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla Al Hafan Ebn Bûiya, at Baghdâd. He was worn out by reiterated attacks of the epilepsy, though not forty-eight years old at the time of his death, and at last carried off by one of those fits. His remains were conducted to Mashad Ali, the place where Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb is supposed by the Moslems to have been inhumed, and there interred. He presided over Baghdâd, Irâk, Kermân, Fârs, Ammân, Khûzistan, Al Mawfel, Diyâr Becr, Harran, and Manbij, with the title of emir al omra, about five years and a half. He was a prince of great magnanimity, unparalleled bravery, an excellent understanding, consummate prudence, uncommon gravity, great sagacity in council, a happy dexterity in hitting upon lucky expedients on the most emergent occasions, and was extremely well versed in all the arts of government. He had also a tolerable share of learning, at least a good

^s Ism. Abulfed. ad ann. Hej. 336. Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, ubi supra. Vide etiam Joan. Baptist. Carus. Saracenicar. Rer. Epitom. p. 105.

taste for the literature then in vogue amongst the Arabs, and was besides an encourager of learned men. He was prosperous in his undertakings, and had a mind capable of forming the most unbounded projects. To men of virtue and probity he was liberal and munificent when they stood in need of his assistance, and had always his attention fixed upon the ultimate issue of things: but with all these fine qualities, he was a prince of insatiable ambition, as appeared from the whole tenor of his actions, which sometimes led him into very unjustifiable and iniquitous points of conduct. He had a taste for poetry, and wrote some good verses himself, as may be inferred from two or three specimens preserved by Abu'lfeida and Al Makîn. In one of these, however, he seemed to arrogate to himself the power of controlling the Deity, and even of reversing the divine decrees. For which presumption he has been deservedly censured by two of the Arab historians, who have observed, that he never was either easy or happy, or even in his senses, after that blasphemous production appeared. In the most active and flourishing scenes of his life, he patronized those who had rendered themselves famous for their skill in any branch of literature: on which account learned men flocked to his court from all parts, at least of the Moslem world, and dedicated their compositions to him. Amongst these performances may be ranked the Kitâb Al Idhai, or *Dilucidation*, a system of grammar; the Kitâb Al Hojjatti fi'l Karati, a book demonstrating which of the various readings in the controverted passages of the Koran are preferable to the others; Al Maleki, or *the Royal Book*, treating of the art of physic; and Al Taji, containing the history of the Deylamite princes; besides several other pieces of considerable reputation. The author of the two first books above mentioned was Abu Ali Al Hosein Al Fârî; of the third, Ali Ebn Al Abbâs, a Magian, commonly called Hali, or the *Abbot*; and of the fourth, which was extremely curious, Ebn Helâl Al Sabi, or the Sabian, which denomination he received from the religion he professed. When Adadoddawla was at the point of death, he is reported to have said, with a faltering tongue, "What have all my riches and prosperity availed me? My power and authority are now at an end." Which words, according to the same historians, he continued repeating till he expired. After his death the officers of the army, and the grandees of the court of Baghdâd, pitched upon his son Abu Câlîjâr Al Farâ Al Marzabân for his successor, took the oath of allegiance

giance to him, and gave him the title or surname of Samfâmo'ddawla, that is, the *Sabre*, or *Scymitar of the State*. The khalif Al Tay' confirmed all that had been done by the military and nobles on this occasion, and made the new emir al omra a visit, in order to condole with him on his father's death. Sharfo'ddawla Abu'l Fawâres, another of Adado'ddawla's sons, had been sent some time before by his father to take possession of the province of Kermân. This prince having received advice of Adado'ddawla's decease, seized upon Fârs, and ordered his own name to be mentioned instead of Samfâmo'ddawla's, and gave to each of his brothers, Abu'l Hosein Ahmed and Abu Thâher Firûz Shâh, on whom he intended to confer the government of Fârs, a sumptuous mantle, to do them honour, in all the mosques of that country. Before the arrival of these princes Sharfo'ddawla Abu'l Fawâres Shirzîk possessed the city of Shîrâz, at that time the capital of Fârs. The remains of Adado'ddawla, according to Al Makîn, were deposited first in the imperial castle or palace at Baghdâd. His death was, however, if we credit that writer, for reasons of state, during a short interval, concealed^t.

Fakhro'ddawla takes possession of all the dominions of Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn.

In the 373d year of the Hejra, Mowayyado'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla Al Hasan Ebn Bûiya died in Jorjân, either of a squinancy, or an inflammation in his bowels; being, at the time of his death, about forty-three years of age. Soon after this event, in the month of Ramadân, the officers of the army Mowayyado'ddawla had levied, unanimously invited Fakhro'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla Al Hasan Ebn Bûiya to come and take possession not only of Hamadân and Al Ray, with their districts and dependencies, of which Adado'ddawla had before deprived him, but likewise of all the territories from whence Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn Ebn Zayyâr had been driven by that prince. So that Fakhro'ddawla became possessed of very extensive dominions without the least effusion of Moslem blood. Nor was it long before the khalif Al Tay' sent him from Baghdâd the instrument of the investiture of those dominions, drawn up in form, and attended with several royal mantles, expressive of the sovereignty in which, by those presents, he confirmed him. After his accession he conti-

^t Al Makîn. ubi sup. p. 238, 239. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 372. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 320, 321. Khonde-mir, Yahya Ebn Abd'ollatif Al Kazwini, in Lobb Al Tawarîkh, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abdaljaafar Al Kazwini in Nighiariist. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 58—60, & alib. pass.

nued Abu'l Kafem Al Sâheb Ebn Ayâd, Abbâd, or Ebâd, in the office of wazîr, to which he had been advanced by Mowwayado'ddawla his brother. Fakhro'ddawla entered Jorjân, the third of Ramadân, and was met by Abu'l Kafem Al Sâheb, the military men, and all the principal persons that had composed his predecessor's court, who formally created him king of that country. He cultivated a good understanding, and lived in perfect friendship with Samfâmo'ddawla, the emir al omra at Baghdad^u.

About the same time the body of Adado'ddawla was carried from the imperial palace at Baghdad to Cûfa, and from thence removed to Mashad Ali, where it was interred. The khalif Al Tay' himself inaugurated Samfâmo'ddawla, and put the imperial robes upon him, as we learn from Al Makîn. Not long after Samfâmo'ddawla's elevation to the post of emir al omra, Bad Al Cordi Al Hamîdi made himself master of Al Mawfel; and having received a farther accession of strength, he meditated the reduction of Baghdâd itself, and the expulsion of the Deylamites from that metropolis. Samfâmo'ddawla, therefore, finding his power and authority struck at by Bad, assembled a powerful army, marched at the head of it against him, and entirely defeated him, in the month of Safar of the following year; after which battle Al Mawfel immediately surrendered to the victor without attempting to make any defence. In the year of the Hejra 373, Bacjûr, who some time before had seized upon his master Curuba, the lord of Aleppo, and caused himself to be proclaimed sovereign of that city, but afterwards delivered the place into the hands of Abu'l Ma'âli Sharîf Saado'ddawla, upon his having been appointed prefect of Hems, where he resided till the present year, obtained of Al Azîz Bi'llah, the Fâtemite khalif of Egypt, the government of Damascus. Bacjûr no sooner entered that city, than Bektekîn, or Beçtekîn, the former governor, by Al Azîz's command, returned to Meſr; but Bacjûr, notwithstanding he had address enough to insinuate himself into the favour of the khalif of Egypt, proved one of the most bloody and oppressive tyrants that ever presided over the Damascenes^w.

In the same year Abu'l Faraj Mohammed Ebn Omrân Ebn Shahîn, who had destroyed his brother Al Hafan in order to seize the principality of Al Batîha, was assassinated.

Samfâmo'ddawla succeeds his father Adado'ddawla.

Al Modhaffer seizes upon the principality of Al Batîha.

^u Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 373. 'Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 240. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 321. D Herbel. Bibliothec. Orient. art. Fakr Al Daoulat, p. 329. ^w Ism. Abu'lfed. & Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra.

ed in his turn by the leading men of that district; who, on account of his notorious incapacity, as well as of his lewd and dissolute life, unanimously conspired against him. After his violent death, they substituted in his room Abu'l Ma'âli, the son of Al Hasan Ebn Omrân Ebn Shahîn, an infant, and appointed Al Modhaffer Ebn Ali, the hajeb or chamberlain, who had been at the head of Omrân Ebn Shahîn's court, to take upon him the administration; but in a short time this Al Modhaffer seized upon the principality for himself, and banished the young prince and his mother to Wâfet. This event put a period to the dominion of the family of Shahîn in those parts; which, from the first appearance of Omrân Ebn Shahîn in Al Batiha, a little before he erected that district into a principality, continued above forty years.

The castle of Ibrahim is taken by a detachment of Armenian troops.

In the course of this year Al Azîz Bi'llah, the khalif of Egypt, being informed that Yakûb Ebn Yusef, his wazîr, Al Fadl Ebn Saleh, and his brothers, had amassed great treasures, he ordered them all to be confined in separate prisons, and the money they had acquired to be carried to the imperial palace. This seizure excited a commotion in the city of Mefr, wherein the populace plundered the market-places, and committed other disorders, which were not without some difficulty appeased. However, about two months afterwards the khalif commanded them all to be released, and the money that had been taken from them to be restored. He also sent the wazîr the present, which, on account of his office, had usually been made him. This year, likewise, a detachment of Armenian troops took a fortress in the territory of Al Ray, called the castle of Ibrahim, by the assistance and contrivance of a woman of the same nation, who had been detained in a state of captivity there. This fortress the Armenians had no sooner made themselves masters of than they put it into the hands of the Greeks; for which they were amply rewarded by the emperor Basilius, who placed a strong garrison in it, supplied it with all kinds of provisions, and erected a magazine of arms and military stores^x.

The principal occurrences of the year 374.

Next year, being the 374th of the Hejra, Abu Tharîf Olyân Ebn Thamal Al Khafâgi took under his protection the city of Cûfa, and was the first emir of that city of the house of Thamal. About the same time, according to Al Makîn, the khalif Al Tay' granted Fakhro'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla, or Rocno'ddawla, the investiture of all

^x Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 247, 248.

the dominions he had taken possession of, the preceding year, and sent him the instrument of this investiture, with an imperial mantle, from Baghdâd.

In the following year, being the 375th of the Hejra, the Karmatians marched, under the conduct of their six leaders, or supreme magistrates, whom they had dignified with the title of Lords, or Regents, to Cûfa, and besieged that city. The inhabitants, for some time, defended themselves with sufficient bravery; but the place was at last carried by assault, and totally pillaged. However, the city of Baghdâd being alarmed at the approach of these plunderers, Samsâmô'ddawla sent an army against them, which defeated them with very great slaughter. This victory so effectually broke and dispersed them, that the khalif's subjects in Irâk were never afterwards much terrified by them. Amongst the memorable events of this year, one has been mentioned by Ebn Al Atshir, which is too wonderful to be passed over in silence. This author relates, that a sheep, bigger than an elephant, of an uncommon form, and a prodigious height, came out of the sea on the coast of Omân, ascended a hill in the neighbouring country, and from thence, with an exceeding loud voice, pronounced distinctly the two following words, *cad caroba*, i. e. *he has approached*; and, after repeating them thrice, returned into the sea. The same thing, continues this writer, happened the two next days; and then the monster disappeared, and was never afterwards seen. Jaafar Ebn Mohammed Ebn Al Hasân, the emir of Sicily, died in the year of the Hejra 375, and was succeeded in the post of emir of Sicily by his brother Abd'allah; who presided over the Moslem part of that island till the year of the Hejra 378.

The Karmatians take and pillage Cûfa, but are driven from thence by the khalif's troops.

At this period Sharfo'ddawla Abu'l Fowâres Shirzik, the eldest of Adado'ddawla's sons, marched with a powerful army from Al Ahwâz to Wâset; which immediately surrendered to him. This prince was possessed of Esfahân, Al Ray, Shîrâz, the cities of Deylam, with their dependencies, and several other tracts. Before he invaded Irâk, he wrote to his brother Abu'l Hasân Ebn Adado'ddawla, who occupied most of the cities of Fârs, to join him with all the troops he could assemble, and attend him in this expedition: but Abu'l Hasân, not being disposed to act against his brother Samsâmô'ddawla refused to enter into this war; upon which Sharfo'ddawla marched against him at the head of all his forces, defeated, and took him prisoner. He then seized upon Al Ahwâz, and from thence advanced to Wâset; the inhabitants of which place, being

Sharfo'ddawla obliges the khalif to make him emir al omra.

incapable

incapable of making any defence, opened their gates at his approach. The city of Basra likewise submitted to him. He then sent a letter to the khalif Al Tay', at Baghdâd; insisting upon the post of emir al omra, and the deposition of his brother Samfâmo'ddawla; with which demand the khalif, who was not able to oppose him, found himself obliged to comply. He, therefore, immediately dispatched the imperial mantle, the instrument confirming him in the possession of the office he demanded, and a sum of money, which he probably wanted, in order to pay his troops. Not content with these concessions, he required the khalif to deliver up his brother Samfâmo'ddawla into his hands. This request being likewise granted, he at first treated that prince, who had been in vain advised by the nobility of Baghdâd to retire either to Al Mawfel, or any other place where Sharfo'ddawla had no power, with some respect, and promised him not only his life, but likewise the secure possession of all his effects. Notwithstanding which promises, he soon after ordered him to be put under an arrest. He then decamped with his forces, consisting of twenty thousand Deylamites and three thousand Turks, from Wâset, and marched directly to Baghdâd; which he entered, according to Al Makîn, in the month of Ramadân, and the year of the Hejra 375. After his arrival at Baghdâd, Sharfo'ddawla sent his brother Samfâmo'ddawla to a castle in Fârs, where he ordered him to be closely confined. The latter of those princes, according to the best eastern historians, presided over the khalifat of Baghdâd between three and four years.

*The Greeks
make an in-
cursion into
Mesopota-
mia.*

Saado'ddawla Ebn Saifo'ddawla, the lord, or prince of Aleppo, having refused to pay the tribute which the emperor Basilius had for some years extorted from him, this last sent an army, under the command of Bardas Phocas, against him. Bardas, in pursuance of his orders, made an incursion into Mesopotamia, took the city of Dârâ, and carried all the inhabitants into captivity. Saado'ddawla, receiving advice of this invasion, advanced with a body of troops to the convent, or monastery of Simeon, in the territory of Antioch; which he carried by storm, after three days siege, put most of the monks to the sword, and took a great number of Christians, who had made their escape out of the neighbouring district into this convent; all of whom he carried with him to Aleppo. Basilius, being in-

y Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 240, 241. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 376. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi supra, p. 321, 322. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Samfâmo'ddoulat, p. 754.

formed

formed of what had happened to the monastery of Simeon, wrote to Bardas, then investing Afâmiyah, or Apamia, and commanded him to raise the siege of that city. In obedience to which command he decamped from before the place, and retired into the imperial territories.

Next year, being the 376th of the Hejra, a treaty of peace was concluded between the emperor Basilius and Saado'ddawla Ebn Saifo'ddawla; the principal article of which was, that the latter of those princes should pay the former an annual tribute of four hundred thousand dirhems. In the mean time Bardas Sclerus, having been set at liberty by the emir al omra at Baghdâd, to the general dissatisfaction of the Moslems, entered Malatia, in the month of Shawâl, seized upon the imperial governor, stripped him of all his horses, arms, furniture, and money, and caused himself to be proclaimed emperor. Being afterwards joined by a body of Okailite and Namerite Arabs, and having received a reinforcement from Nabâr Al Cordi, or the Curd, the lord of Diyâr Becr, under the command of Abu Ali, his brother, he began to be again formidable to Basilius.

A treaty of peace is concluded between the emperor Basilius and Saado'ddawla.

In the 377th year of the Hejra, Sclerus possessed himself of a very considerable extent of territory, in the imperial provinces, bordering upon the Moslem frontiers, and there caused himself to be acknowledged emperor. The emperor Basilius, being in great want of money, was obliged to have recourse to the king of the Russians, for his assistance against the rebel Bardas Phocas. Being assisted by the Russian king with a powerful army, he worsted Bardas Phocas, both by sea and land, drove him out of all the countries he had subdued, put him to death, the third of Al Moharram, 379, and ordered his head to be carried to Constantinople, and publicly exposed in that city.

The principal events of the year 377.

In the following year, Al Azîz Bi'llah, the Fâtemite khalif of Egypt, sent Monir, the eunuch, with an army, to drive Bacjûr from the prefecture of Damascus, and to succeed him in the government of that city. Bacjûr, having received advice of Monir's approach, waited for him at Dârâ, a village in the neighbourhood of Damascus, and engaged him; but after a vigorous action, he was routed by Monir, and obliged to fly into the city. Soon after this battle, a treaty was concluded between them; by virtue of which, Bacjûr was permitted to retire from Damascus to Al Rakka, and Monir took immediate possession of the former of those cities. Bacjûr, upon his arrival at Al Rakka, caused himself to be proclaimed sovereign in

and of the year 378.

that city. Before the close of this year, Ebn Ayâd, Ebâd, or Abbâd, surnamed Al Sâheb, or the *Companion*, made Fakhro'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla a present of a gold medal, weighing one thousand methkals, or Arabic drachms. Abu'lfeda writes, that this medal was given to Fakro'ddawla, in the month of Al Moharram; and that it was adorned with some Arabic verses, intended by the donor as a compliment upon that prince ².

*Sharfo'd-
dawla
dies.*

Next year being the 379th of the Hejra, Sharfo'ddawla sent Mohammed Al Shîrâzi into Persia, to deprive his brother Samsâmo'ddawla, who was confined in a castle, of his sight. In the mean time, Sharfo'ddawla himself was attacked by a dropsy; which carried him off either on the first or second day of the Latter Jomâda, in the present year. Soon after his decease, Mohammed Al Shîrâzi arrived in Persia, and deprived Samsâmo'ddawla of the use of his eyes, in the prison wherein he was detained. Sharfo'ddawla died at Baghdâd, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, after he had continued in the post of emir al omra about two years and eight months. His remains were conducted to Cûfa, and interred at Mashad Ali, near those of his father. His brother Abu Nafr Bahao'ddawla Ebn Adado'ddawla, called by some writers Khafhadz, or Khafkhadz, succeeded him in the office of emir al omra; in which he was confirmed by the khalif Al Tay', a proper instrument having been drawn up for that purpose. As soon as the news of Sharfo'ddawla's death reached the castle where Samsâmo'ddawla, his brother Abu Thâher, and Fûlâd, or Fûâd, were confined, those princes were all released, and made the best of their way to Shîrâz. Samsâmo'ddawla was put into the immediate possession of Persia, or Fârs, by a body of the Deylamite troops. In the mean time, Bahao'ddawla having gotten Abu Ali Ebn Sharfo'ddawla, his nephew into his hands, most barbarously put him to death. About the same period, Mohammed Ebn Ahmed Al Abbâs Al Salami, a famous Athârian dialectical doctor, surnamed Al Nakkash, departed this life; but in what part of the world this accident happened, we have not been certainly informed. Abd'allah, the emir of Sicily, who was succeeded by his son Abu'l Fatuh Yusef Ebn Abd'allah, an excellent governor, if we credit Abu'lfeda, died, in the year of the Hejra 379; though, according to Al Kâdi Shahabo'ddîn Ebn

² Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 241. 251.

Abildâm Al Hamawi, that emir expired, the preceding year ^a.

Not long after Bahao'ddawla had taken upon him the government and direction of the khalifat of Baghdâd, a dispute arose between the Deylamite and Turkish troops in that capital. This continued five days; and, as both sides had recourse to arms, was attended with considerable effusion of blood. Nor could Bahao'ddawla, by any means he could devise, appease this commotion; so that he found himself obliged, during the interval, to shut himself up in his palace. However, the soldiers on both sides shewing themselves averse to an accommodation, the emir al omra, at the end of twelve days, joined the Turks against his countrymen, the Deylamites; a step which forced them to submit to such terms of pacification as he thought fit to prescribe. From this period, therefore, says Abu'lfeda, the power of the Turks grew every day more formidable, and that of the Deylamites, at least within the precincts of Baghdâd, daily declined.

A dispute arises between the Turkish and Deylamite troops in Baghdâd.

The same year, a dispute likewise happened between Abu'l Abbâs Ahmed Ebn Al Emîr Ishak Ebn Al Moktader, who was afterwards khalif, under the title or surname of Al Kâder Bi'llah, and his sister, about the division of the patrimony their father had left them. The lady, on this occasion, accused her brother to the khalif, then just recovered from a fit of sickness, of a design to depose him, and substitute himself in his room. This scheme, she said, he had intended to attempt, in hopes of being favoured in the execution, by the illness that he (the khalif) had for some time laboured under. In consequence of this information, the khalif sent a party of his guards to apprehend Abu'l Abbâs, and bring him immediately before him. But Abu'l Abbâs having received timely notice of what was in agitation against him, fled to Mohadhdhebo'ddawla, the prince of Al Bathihah, or Al Batîha, as we find this province denominated by Abu'l-Faraj; who received him with uncommon marks of respect, and afforded him a secure retreat in a part of the world that was almost inaccessible ^b.

Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Al Moktader flies into Al Bathihah.

^a Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 379. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 241. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 322. Khondemir, Ebn Shohnah, Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, ubi sup. Vide etiam D'Herbel. Bibl. Orient. art. Scharfaldoular, p. 777, 778, & alib. ^b Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 121.

*Other
events,
that hap-
pened this
year.*

It was likewise in the course of this year, Abu Thâher Ibrahim and Abd'allah Al Hofein, the brothers of Abu Taglab, who had been expelled the territory of Al Mawfel by Adado'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla Ebn Bûiya, possessed themselves of that city, and all the district belonging to it. They had served in the armies of Adado'ddawla, Sharfo'ddawla, and Bahao'ddawla, with great honour and reputation; infomuch that the last of those emirs permitted them to return to Al Mawfel, and recover a country which had been governed by their father and brother, and erected into a principality by one of their family. Upon their arrival, the governor of the place, for one of the princes of the house of Bûiya, pretended to oppose them; but the inhabitants being all in their interest, he was soon obliged to retire, and abandon the town, together with the whole extensive tract appertaining to it. In the month of Rajeb, Sclerus submitted to the emperor Basilius, who received him with uncommon civility, entertained him at his table, and declared him great steward of his household; having been introduced to that prince by his brother Constantine, according to Al Makîn. On Saturday, the 27th of Dhu'l-hajja, the preceding year, there was a most terrible storm in Egypt, attended with thunder and lightning, and such darkness as had never been known. It did not cease till towards midnight, nor did the darkness abate till the morning began to appear; when the hemisphere exhibited a phenomenon resembling a pillar of fire, which communicated an unusual red colour both to the heavens and the earth. The atmosphere was likewise loaded with a sort of dust, which prevented respiration, and proved extremely noxious to all kinds of animals, till the fourth hour of the day, when the sun discovered himself, disguised by an unnatural colour. With this colour he rose every morning till Thursday, the second of Al Moharram, 379. A comet also appeared in the western part of the hemisphere, on Sunday, the 20th of the Latter Rabî, and was seen by the people of Egypt above twenty nights successively^c.

*The Okai-
lite Arabs
make them-
selves
masters of
Al Marw-
sel.*

In the 380th year of the Hejra, Bâd, the prince of Di-yâr Beer, advanced with a body of Curds to Al Mawfel, in order to expel Abu Thâher Ibrahim and Abu Abd'allah Al Hofein, who had made themselves masters of that city. This motion brought on a general action between those

^c Ifm. Abulfed. ubi sup. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 252, 253, 254. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 322, 323.

princes

princes and Bâd; wherein the latter, attempting to leap from the back of one horse to that of another, fell to the ground, and was killed by a foldier that knew him, having been abandoned by his own men, who were so pushed by the enemy, that they could not remount him. Abu Thâher and Abu Abd'allah, having, by this happy event, gained a complete victory, ordered Bâd's head to be cut off, and his body to be affixed to a gibbet, opposite the royal palace, in Al Mawfel. But this spectacle giving great offence to the people of that city, who considered Bâd as one who had distinguished himself in the wars he had waged with the enemies of Islamism, it was taken down, and interred in a decent manner. After Bâd's defeat, Abu Ali Ebn Merwân, his sister's son, repaired to the castle of Caifa, where Bâd's wife and family then resided, with all possible expedition, was admitted into the place, and gave them a particular account of the disaster that had happened at Al Mawfel. He soon after prevailed upon his uncle's widow to marry him; and, by that step, occupied, in a short time, not only the castle of Caifa, but likewise all the other fortresses in Diyâr Becr that had belonged to Bâd. Strengthened by this accession of power, he carried on the war, begun by his uncle, with great success, against Abu Thâher Ibrahim and Abu Abd'allah Al Hosein, the princes of Al Mawfel, and wrested from them several considerable places. He then went to Mesr, put himself under the protection of Al Azîz, and was made by that khalif governor of Aleppo, and its dependencies. From this time he resided alternately in Syria or Shâm, and Diyâr Becr, till the people of Ahmed, with Sheikh Abd'al Barri, at their head, conspired against him; when, having received advice of their intended revolt, he repaired to that city, and was assassinated in one of the gates by Ebn Dimnah, or Ebn Damna, an inhabitant of the place. This event enabled Sheikh Abd'al Barri to cause himself to be declared sovereign or prince of Amed; he having long aspired at the supreme dignity, and been supported by a pretty powerful faction. However, it was not long before he was likewise dispatched by Ebn Damna, who had married his daughter, at an entertainment which the assassin had prepared for him. In the mean time, Momahedo'd-dawla Ebn Merwân, who, after his brother Abu Ali's death, had seized upon Mayyâfârakîn, and several other towns, over which Abu Ali had formerly presided, governed his subjects with great lenity and moderation, and maintained himself on the throne he had ascended till the

year of the Hejra 402, when he was cut off by Sharwah, one of the officers of his guards. Abu Nafr Ahmed Ebn Merwân, Abu Ali's only surviving brother, after that tragical event, was taken out of the prison, where he had been by his brothers confined, on account of a portentous dream, and found means to possess himself of Arzan-Al-Rûm, or Erzerum, and gradually to secure almost the whole province of Diyâr Becr; though Sharwah had seized upon the greatest part of Momahedo'ddawla's treasure, and several provinces that had recognized the authority of that prince. The dream here alluded to has been related by Abu'l-feda, in the following terms: Abu Ali thought, in his sleep, that he carried the sun in his bosom; and that this was afterwards snatched from him by Abu Nafr; a circumstance which so terrified him, that he immediately commanded his brother to be confined, and detained him in prison during the remainder of his reign. Nor did Momahedo'ddawla afterwards release him, being equally terrified with Abu Ali by the said dream; which Abu'l-feda asserts to have been verified by Abu Nafr's ascending the throne, in the year of the Hejra 402. Old Merwân, the father of these princes, who was blind, is said to have ended his days at his son Abu Ali's tomb, in a religious manner. Abu Nafr, according to Abu'l-feda, ruled the Moslems of Diyâr Becr, with singular felicity, fifty-one years. After the defeat Bâd, the Curd, had received, Abu'l Dzowad Mohammed Ebn Al Mofayyeb, the emir of the Okailite Arabs, descended from Jaafar, the first prince and founder of that dynasty, marched with an army to Al Mawfel, vanquished Abu Thâher Ibrahim in battle, and put him, together with all his family, as well as many of his officers, and a great number of his soldiers, to the sword. This action gave the finishing stroke to the dominion of the house of Hamdân at Al Mawfel, and substituted in its room that of the Okailite Arabs^e.

Ebn Calas's death and character.

In the same year Yakûb Ebn Yusef Ebn Calas, or Cales, Al Azîz's wazir, died, in the month of Dhu'l-hajja, at Mesr. He was originally a Jew, but embraced Islamism, in the days of Câfûr. He has been represented as a man of a fertile genius, and thoroughly skilled in all the arts of government. After the death of Câfûr, who employed him on several occasions, he went to Mohdia, and was the person who invited Al Moezz to undertake the conquest

^e Ism. Abu'l-fed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 380. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 323.

of Egypt. The first post Al Moezz conferred upon Yakûb, after his reduction of Egypt, was that of principal collector, or rather receiver-general, of the tribute; in which he remained till that prince advanced him to the office of wazîr. Al Azîz himself visited him in his last illness, just before his death; and said the usual prayers over him, at the time of his interment. Nor was he unworthy, as the same author remarks, of the high regard shewn him, and the sorrow expressed for his loss, by that prince ^f.

In the following year, being the 381st of the Hejra, the khalif Al Tay' was deposed by Bahao'ddawla, the emir al omra, in the following manner. That minister, coveting the riches of this khalif, sent an officer, to desire leave to make him a visit in the imperial palace. The khalif, suspecting no ill design, set apart a solemn festival, in order to do him the greater honour, for his reception. When the day appointed came, Bahao'ddawla mounted his horse, and went to the palace, where he was received by the khalif, sitting upon his throne. As soon as the emir al omra entered the khalif's apartment, or rather the great saloon, where ambassadors had their audience, he prostrated himself before him, and afterwards sat down in a seat which had been prepared for him; upon which, a great number of people rushed indiscriminately into the room. Things being thus put into confusion, one of the Deylamite soldiers, that attended Bahao'ddawla on this occasion, approached the khalif, seemingly with an intention to kiss his hand; but having seized it, he dragged him from his throne. The prince, being thus treated, implored God to assist him, and to punish the injury that had been offered him; no one, in the mean time, discovering the least disposition to interpose in his favour. Having now lost all his authority, and none of his subjects retaining any veneration for his person, he was carried to Bahao'ddawla's palace, where he was forced to abdicate the khalifat, in a formal manner, before the kadi of Baghdâd, and other proper witnesses, that had assembled for that purpose. After his abdication, Abu'l Abbâs Ahmed Ebn Al Emir Ishak Ebn Al Moktâder was chosen, under the title of Al Kâder Bi'llah, the 19th of Shaabân, to succeed him. It appears from Al Makîn, that a party of the Deylamite troops wrapped the khalif up first in the tapestry of his

*The khalif
Al Tay' is
deposed.*

^f Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 253. Al Makrizi, Euseb. Renaud. Histor. Patriarch. Alexandrinor. Jacobitar. p. 367. Paris. 1713.

apartment, then hurried him with the utmost precipitation and violence to the place above mentioned, and lastly plundered his palace. This khalif sat upon the throne of Baghdâd seventeen years eight months and a few days, if Abu'lfeda may be depended upon; or seventeen years nine months and six days, if we follow Al Makîn. He survived his abdication about twelve years, and died in the year of the Hejra 393; being about seventy-six lunar years of age at the time of his death. The funeral service over him was performed by his successor Al Kâder. With regard to his person, he had a red face, and was of a fair complexion. In his disposition he is said to have been liberal, and a prince of great honour. But as he had little or no authority through the whole course of his reign, perhaps his true character was not known. We are told that the famous Sharif Al Râdi was in the imperial palace when the khalif was treated by the Deylamites in such an ignominious manner; but that, fearing to be murdered, he made his escape; after which event, he composed a tristich of Arabic verses on the melancholy occasion, preserved by Abu'lfeda. Al Kâder was, at the time of his election, with Mohadhdhebo'ddawla in Al Batîha, whither he had retired for safety, in the year of the Hejra 379. He made his public entry into Baghdâd, where he was inaugurated in form, and received the oath of allegiance from the grandees of that city, the 12th of Ramadân. Next day he was prayed for, according to custom, in the mosques of that metropolis. After the deposition, or abdication and imprisonment, of Al Tay', Bahao'ddawla became master of his treasures, and of all the rich furniture carried out of his palace by the insolent Deylamites^g.

*Bacjûr is
defeated by
Saado'd-
dawla,
who dis-
possesses
him of Al
Ramla.*

In the course of the same year Bacjûr, who had erected a sort of principality at Al Ramla, as has been remarked above, undertook an expedition against Saado'ddawla Ebn Saifo'ddawla, the prince of Aleppo, with a body of troops he had raised for that purpose. But Saado'ddawla, after a sharp engagement, entirely defeated him, put a great number of his men to the sword, and made him prisoner. Bacjûr, having thus fallen into his enemies hands, was brought to Saado'ddawla in chains, who immediately ordered him to be put to death: a just reward for the perfidy he had been guilty of to Saifo'ddawla, his master and

^g Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 381. Al Makin, ubi sup. 243, 244. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi supra, p. 324. Ebn Shohnah, Kondemir, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Thâi Bi'llah, p. 1018. Euseb. Renaud. ubi sup. p. 381.

benefactor,

benefactor. After the victory he had obtained, Saado'd-dawla advanced to Al Ramla at the head of his troops, and made the necessary dispositions for the siege of that city. But Bacjûr's family, finding he was resolved to carry the town, offered to surrender it, provided he would permit them to pass in safety to some other place, with all the money and effects Bacjûr had acquired. With this proposal he immediately complied, and signed such a capitulation as they required. But his troops were no sooner in possession of the town than, in contempt of public faith, he violated the treaty, seized the persons of Bacjûr's children, and stripped them of every thing valuable that they had brought out with them. However, the flagrant injustice and iniquity he committed on this occasion did not remain long unpunished; for, upon his arrival at Aleppo, he was seized with a palsy, which deprived him of the use of his right side. The physician who was sent for, after he had asked him some questions, according to custom, relative to his disorder, bid him stretch out his hand. Upon which, with some difficulty, he directed his left hand towards him. But the doctor telling him it was his right hand he meant, he replied, "The violation of the treaty I signed with my right hand has deprived me of the use of that part." A plain implication, that he was sensible of the heinousness of his crime, and considered this stroke of the palsy as a punishment inflicted upon him by heaven. As the whole nervous system was destroyed by this shock, he lived but three days after the attack. During that interval, he settled his affairs, and committed the care of his family, particularly of his son Abu'l Fadayel, then a child, who succeeded him, to Lûlû Al Kharâji, one of his manumitted slaves, on whom he had conferred many singular favours ^b.

Al Azîz Bi'llah, the Fâtémite khalif of Egypt, having received advice of Saado'ddawla's death, sent a formidable army to reduce Aleppo, and annex that place, with its dependencies, to his other dominions in Syria. Lûlû, finding himself pressed by the Egyptians, who carried on the siege with the utmost vigour, solicited the Greek emperor to assist him; who thereupon ordered a body of his forces to advance to his relief. Manjûbekîn, who commanded the khalif of Egypt's troops, being informed of their approach, immediately raised the siege of Aleppo,

The khalif of Egypt's forces besiege Aleppo, but are forced to raise the siege at the approach of the Greeks.

^b Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 241, 242. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 332. Ebn Shohnah. Not. MS. ad Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. apud Joan. Swintonum, A. M. Oxoniens.

and

and advanced at the head of his forces to give them battle. The two armies soon came in sight of each other, and a general action ensued. After a sharp and obstinate engagement, the Greeks were routed with very great slaughter; a great number of their men having been killed upon the spot. The Egyptians having thus obtained a complete victory, Manjûbekîn returned to the siege of Aleppo; which, for some time, he pushed on with uncommon ardour, and not without a prospect of success. But finding the place would probably defend itself much longer than he at first imagined, and that provisions began to fail, he dispatched a courier to Mesr, to inform the khalif of the state of his affairs in Syria, and to desire his permission to retire from before Aleppo, which he did not then find himself in a condition to reduce. He did not even wait for the khalif's answer; but, in a short time after the courier's departure, raised the siege. As soon as Al Azîz had read his general's letter, he fell into a great rage; and was much more incensed, when, by the arrival of a fresh courier, he understood, that Manjûbekîn had abandoned the siege. He therefore sent him a very severe letter, with orders to attack the place again, and not to leave it till he had obliged it to surrender. Manjûbekîn, therefore, again invested Aleppo, and continued the siege of that important fortress thirteen months; during which time, Lûlû defended it with incredible bravery, and killed the besiegers a great number of men. The Egyptians being at last apprized, that a very numerous army of Greeks, marching to the succour of the town, were within a few parasangs of their camp, raised the siege, and fled with the utmost precipitation. Lûlû and Abu'l Fadayel, his master, or rather pupil, came out of the city to meet their deliverers; whom they loaded with all the choice and valuable things that Aleppo produced, treated them with the highest marks of distinction and esteem, and conducted them into the town with all the demonstrations of joy that could be expected on so happy an occasion¹.

*Other
transac-
tions and
contingen-
cies of the
year 381.*

The Greeks having thus forced the Egyptians to abandon the siege of Aleppo, afterwards marched to Hems, took and plundered that city, put many of the inhabitants to the sword, and carried great numbers into captivity. Shaizar, to which they next advanced, shared the same fate. From thence they marched to Tripoli, which they besieged above forty days, but without effect. Finally,

¹ Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 242, 243. Al Makrizi, Euseb. Renaud. ubi sup. p. 372, 373.

they

they retired into the imperial territories with a very considerable booty. Manjûbekîn made the best of his way to Damascus, and declared himself independent; of which revolt, Al Azîz being informed, he led an army against him, in order to bring him back to a sense of his duty. But being taken sick on his march at Belbais, he found himself obliged to halt. Here he nominated his son Al Hakem to succeed him, and committed him to the care of Arjûân, a minister of great abilities and integrity, in whom he could entirely confide; his illness increasing to such a degree, that his life was for some time despaired of by the physicians who attended him. However, he recovered, and lived several years afterwards. On the 17th of Al Moharram, so dreadful an earthquake happened at Damascus, that a thousand houses were destroyed in that city, by the violence of its shocks. By the fall of these houses, a great number of people were destroyed. One of the villages in the neighbourhood of Baalbec was entirely demolished. Nor did all the agitations of the earth, consequential to these concussions, cease before Friday the 14th of Safar, as we learn from Al Makîn. During this public calamity, the people in many places were so alarmed, that they quit-
ted their habitations, and fled from the cities into the open fields ^k.

The new khalif, Abu'l Abbâs Ahmed Ebn Al Emîr Ishak Ebn Al Moktader Ebn Al Mo'taded, was created and proclaimed Emîr Al Mumenîn, or *Emperor of the Faithful*, under the title of Al Kâder Bi'llah, the 19th of Shaabân. However, he was not inaugurated before the 11th or 12th of Ramadân. At the time of his elevation to the Moslem throne, he was with Mohadhdhebo'ddawla, the prince of Al Batîha, or Al Bathîhah, who had taken him under his protection. He married Sekîna, Bahao'ddawla's daughter and assigned her a dower of one hundred thousand dinârs. When the courier arrived with intelligence of his being elected khalif, he found him relating a dream of the preceding night, which clearly portended his future greatness. With regard to the territory denominated by the Arabs Al Batîha or Al Bathîhah, it was a marshy district, according to Abu'lfeda, in the neighbourhood of the fens formed by the stagnation of the Tigris, and called the marshes or effusions of Wâfet, as being only about seven parasangs below that city.

Al Kâder Bi'llah is elevated to the Moslem throne.

^k Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 242, 243. 253, 254. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 381. & in Descript. Syr. Alb. Schult. Ind. Geographic. in Vit. Salad. Lugduni Batavorum, 1732.

*The Greeks
make an
irruption
into Arme-
nia.*

Next year, being the 382d of the Hejra, the Greeks, under the conduct of Basilus, made an irruption into Armenia, and besieged the cities of Khalât, or Akhlât, Malâzkerd, Malâzjerd, or Malâzjerda, and Arjîs, or Arjîsh; hostilities which threw Abu Ali Al Hasan Ebn Merwân, the Moslem governor of that province, into such a panic, that he concluded a truce, or cessation of arms, with the emperor, for ten years, upon the best terms he could procure.

*An insur-
rection at
Baghdâd.*

At the same time there was an insurrection at Baghdâd; the people of that metropolis, as well as the troops in garrison, being greatly incensed against Bahao'ddawla, the emir al omra, for suffering himself to be entirely governed by Ebn Al Moallam, a person of an indifferent character. Bahao'ddawla, therefore, finding that he could not stem the torrent of sedition, which ran so strongly against him, without sacrificing his favourite, immediately delivered up Ebn Al Moallam into the hands of the soldiery, who instantly killed him; by which means the tumult was easily appeased.

*The terri-
tories of
Nûh Ebn
Mansûr
At Sam-
mâni are
invaded by
Bagra
Khân.*

In the following year, Bagra Khân, as he is called by Abu'lfeda, who was possessed of Kâshgar, Balâfâgûn, and all the vast tract extending to the confines of China, invaded the territories of Nûh Ebn Mansûr Al Sammâni, the lord or sovereign of Khorasân and Mawara'nahr. Bagra, who was excited to this expedition by Abu Ali and Faekh, two rebel brothers, who joined him with a considerable body of troops, vanquished the Sammânian forces, took Samarkand and Bokhâra, the latter of which cities was then the metropolis of Mawara'nahr, and drove Nûh over the Oxus. That prince retiring to Amol Al Shat, or Amol upon the River, that is, Amol upon the Jihûn, or the Oxus, soon assembled his shattered forces, and dispatched orders to Abu Ali Ebn Simjûr to advance with the troops he commanded in Khorasân; hoping, by the assistance of such a reinforcement, to force Bagra Khân to abandon the conquests he had made. But Ebn Simjûr was so far from obeying those orders, that he persisted in his attachment to Bagra Khân; who nevertheless soon delivered Nûh from all future apprehensions of such a formidable competitor. For that prince, falling sick at Bokhâra, was advised by his physicians to return to Turkestan; which he attempted to perform, but died upon the road. Abu'lfeda represents Bagra Khân as a pious and religious prince; and tells us, that in all his edicts and public instruments, he styled himself the servant of the apostle of God. After his

his death, Nûh repossessed himself of Samarkand, Bokhâra, and all the other places, in his territories, which had been reduced by Bagra Khân; though he was not yet able to extinguish the rebellion, headed by Ebn Simjûr and Faëkh.

In the year of the Hejra 384, the rebel brothers, Abu Ali Ebn Simjûr and Faëkh, persisting in their revolt, and having raised numerous forces to support themselves, Nûh found himself obliged to apply to Sabektekîn, the lord or prince of Gaznîn, then returned in triumph from India, one of his most experienced generals, for assistance. In order to induce him to advance with the greater expedition to his relief, he appointed him governor of Khorasân, in the room of Ebn Simjûr. In consequence of this appointment, Sabektekîn, with his son Mahmûd, advanced at the head of all his forces from Gazna, Gaznah, or Gaznîn, into Khorasân; and afterwards joined the Sammânian army, commanded by Nûh, at Bokhâra. This junction being effected, the combined army marched directly against the rebels, who waited for them in the province of Herât, where they found them encamped. After several movements, a fierce conflict ensued, which ended in the defeat of Ebn Simjûr and Faëkh; whose camp was forced, and a great part of their men put to the sword. This victory, which was complete, and gained chiefly by the conduct of Sabektekîn, and the bravery of his troops, re-established Nûh's affairs; who thereupon appointed Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn to preside over the province of Khorasân, and then returned to Bokhâra. He also made Mahmûd, at his father Sabektekîn's request, commander in chief of all his forces; then Mahmûd went to Naifâbûr, or Nîfâbûr, and Sabektekîn to Gaznîn. Ebn Simjûr and Faëkh, who had fled to Nîfâbûr after the late defeat, having received advice, that Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn was advancing towards them, abandoned the city in which they had taken refuge at his approach. However, they soon found means to assemble another body of troops, with which they obliged Mahmûd to retire. But, being reinforced by his father Sabektekîn, he again defeated them; upon which, Ebn Simjûr submitted to Nûh, and Faëkh fled to Ilekkhân. The city of Gazna, Gaznah, or Gaznîn, for it went by all those names, was an emporium and fortress of Zâblestân, near the confines of India, as plainly appears from the eastern geographers¹.

Nûh and Sabektekîn defeat the rebels Ebn Simjûr and Faëkh, in the province of Herât.

¹ Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 384. Mirkhond, apud Teixeir. p. 255, &c. D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 679. Nassir Al Tusi & Ulugh Beik, ubi sup. Abu'lfed. in Geogr. Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 109, 110.

Ebn Simjûr is obliged to submit to Nûh.

Next year, being the 385th of the Hejra, Abu Ali Ebn Simjûr returned into Khorasân, and obliged Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn, afterwards denominated Mahmud Gazni, to abandon that province. But Mahmûd, having been joined by his father Sabektekîn, with a large body of troops, went in quest of the rebels, and engaged Ebn Simjûr at Tûs, with such bravery, that he put him to flight, killed a great number of his men upon the spot, and dispersed the rest in such a manner that they could never afterwards be rallied. This victory entirely ruined Ebn Simjûr's affairs; so that he found himself constrained to submit to Nûh. Having been pardoned by that prince, he immediately repaired to Bokhâra; where, with several of his accomplices, he no sooner arrived, than they were all, though in open violation of public faith, put under arrest by Nûh, and detained in prison, by his order. Nor did Ebn Simjûr ever recover his liberty till he was released by death.

Faëkh is made governor of Samarkand.

In the same year, Faëkh, called Faik by D'Herbelot, meditated an irruption, in conjunction with Ilek Khân, into either Khorasân or Mawarâ'nahr; of which design Nûh receiving advice, he ordered Sabektekîn to attend him, and Mahmûd to join him with all the forces he could assemble, between Kâsh and Nakhshab, in the neighbourhood of Samarkand. But a treaty was at last concluded between Faëkh and Nûh; whereby the former was constituted by the latter governor of Samarkand, and all its dependencies; by which the troubles, which had so long subsisted between them were entirely appeased.

Abu'l Kasem Al Sâheb, Fakhro'ddawla's wazîr, dies.

This year, died, in the city of Al Ray, Abu'l Kasem Ebn Ayâd, Ebâd, or Abbâd, surnamed Al Sâheb, or *the Companion*, Fakhro'ddawla's wazîr, and was buried at Esfahân. He was a person of a most amiable disposition, consummate abilities, great munificence, deep erudition, and at the same time thoroughly versed in all the arts of government; for which reason, he has been styled by Abu'lfeda the phoenix of his age. He was the first wazîr who bore the title, or appellation of Al Sâheb, or *the companion*, and had a larger library than any of the Moslems that ever lived before him. Being in a private station, he contracted an intimacy with Ebn Al Amîd, and from thence was called Sâheb Ebn Amîd, *the Companion of Ebn Al Amîd*; which title, after his elevation to the high post he so worthily filled, was contracted, and he retained only the former part of it, Al Sâheb. He was first wazîr to Mowayyado'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla, and, after his death, to Fakhro'ddawla, his brother, who always held him

in great esteem. During his last illness, the latter of those princes visited him in person, and desired to receive from his mouth some advice, for the better regulation of his future conduct. Upon which, this wise minister addressed himself to his master in the following terms: "You see, that thanks be to God, I have introduced good order into every part of your dominions; all your subjects have had justice rendered them, and your finances are in the most excellent order. If, therefore, you would reap the glory of my administration, take care to act uniformly upon the plan that I have laid down; since, if, by any deviation from it, after my death, your affairs should be embarrassed, and disorders should slip into the state, the people would not fail to ascribe all the happiness they enjoyed, during my ministry, to me; and consequently you would not be believed to have contributed any thing towards it." These words made a deep impression, for the present, upon Fakhro'ddawla's mind; but, nevertheless, his favourites and domestics, soon after the wazîr's decease, governed with absolute authority, so that the face of affairs was entirely changed. Instead of lenity and justice, nothing was to be seen but violence and oppression; and the finances, which had been so well regulated before, were in a short time most shamefully dissipated. Such an infamous administration could not fail of exciting great murmurings amongst Fakhro'ddawla's subjects; who now, in conformity to his prediction, regretted the wazîr, and praised his prudence more and more every day. This excellent minister, so celebrated in history for his transcendent merit, is said by Abu'lfeida to have written the following books, which bore a very great character in the Moslem world: *Al Mohith*, a philological piece, concerning the genius and foundation of the Arabic tongue; *Al Cafi*, a treatise upon the art and method of writing letters, particularly those sent in the name of a prince to any other potentate or great man; *Al Kitâb Al Imâmâtî*, i. e. *the Book treating of the Office of Imam*, which expatiates upon the virtues of Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, as well as those of Abu Becr, Omar, and Othmân, who preceded him in the khalifat, and proves all those to have been true and lawful imâms. A fourth piece, which contains a brief exposition of the office and duty of a wazîr. He also penned several elegant poetical compositions, of which at present we cannot give our readers any particular account. A specimen of his poetical productions has been preserved by Al Makîn.

*Al Azîz
Bi'llah's
death and
character.*

In the following year, being the 386th of the Hejra, Al Azîz Bi'llah, the Fâtemite khalif of Egypt, died in the bath at Belbais, or Belbîs. At the time of his death he was meditating an expedition against the Greeks; being then forty-two years eight months and fourteen days old, according to Al Makîn. He succeeded his father Al Moezz Ledini'llah, in the 365th year of the Moslem æra, as has been already observed, and was then about twenty-one years old, having been born at Mohdia, or Al Mohdia, in the year of the Hejra 344. His secretary of state was a Christian, named Isa; and his treasurer in Syria a Jew, called Manasseh. The Christians and the Jews being supported and protected by these men, says Abu'l-feda, insulted the Moslems; a circumstance which induced the people of Mesr to make a paper figure in the shape of a woman, and to place it in the road through which Al Azîz was to pass, with a libel in one of its hands to the following effect: "We conjure you by him who has enabled Isa to render the Christians insolent and powerful, and Manasseh the Jews, and who by you has humbled the Moslems, (i. e. God), to tell us when an end shall be put to the afflictions we endure." Which libel, continues the Arab historian, notwithstanding the asperity of expression visible in it, the khalif was so far from being offended, that he immediately dismissed Isa, who had the greatest ascendant over him, and stripped him of all the wealth he had acquired. This prince has been represented by the Moslem writers as a person of a most excellent disposition, a prudent ruler, and a great lover of his people; whom he governed with uncommon justice, lenity, and moderation, twenty-one years six months and seventeen days, according to Al Makîn. His goodness and clemency to his subjects were scarce to be paralleled; of which we have been informed of the following very remarkable instance by Abu'l-Faraj. A certain satirical poet having once written a scurrilous libel in verse upon the wazîr and the secretary of state, in which the khalif himself came in for a share of the abuse, the wazîr carried his complaints to Al Azîz, and demanded to have the author of those verses punished; but the khalif having read them, made him this answer, "As I bear with you part of the injury offered, so I desire that you would take part with me of the merit of the pardon I shall grant him for the offence." He was succeeded by his son Abu Ali Al Mansûr, then only eleven years old, who was proclaimed khalif on Tuesday the 28th of Ramadan of the present year; but Al Azîz, before his death, appointed

appointed Arjûan, one of his white eunuchs, in whose capacity and fidelity to his son he could absolutely confide, to take upon him the government of all his extensive dominions, during the minority of Al Mansûr^m.

We are informed by Al Kâdi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildâm Al Hamawi, that soon after Al Azîz's death, the Sicilian Moslems were governed by two persons, who were members of the same family; viz. Al Hasan Ebn Ammâr, the Fâtemite khalif's wazîr, and Yusef Ebn Abd'allah, who had acted amongst those Moslems several years in the capacity of emir. The same author likewise relates, that the latter of these great men lost the use of his left side by a stroke of the palsy, and that, upon this unexpected event, Yusef Ebn Abd'allah appointed his son Jaafar to occupy the post he had filled. He adds, that Jaafar was confirmed in the possession of that office by the khalif of Egypt, who dignified him with a new title on this occasion; and that he continued therein till the year of the Hejra 409, when he was deposed, and his brother Ahmed appointed to preside over the Sicilian Moslems in his roomⁿ.

What happened in Sicily this year.

In the 387th year of the Hejra Badis Ebn Mansûr Ebn Yusef Ebn Zeir Al Sanhâji, the emir of Libya, sent his uncle Hammad, Hamed, or Hamet, the son of Yusef Ebn Zeir Al Sanhâji, to preside over the city of Ashir, the Assurus, or Assuras, probably, of the ancients, with the district appertaining to it. Hamed having amassed great treasures, and greatly extended his frontiers by the addition of several neighbouring districts, afterwards renounced his allegiance to Badis Ebn Mansûr, his nephew. This defection occasioned an intestine war in that part of Africa. As Hamed's power and grandeur commenced when he entered upon the government of Ashir, the beginning of the dynasty of the Hammadites, or Hamedites, in the provinces of Bajâyah, or Bûjiah, of which we shall speak hereafter, is placed by Abu'lfeda in the present year. Badis Ebn Mansûr, though he arrogated to himself the sovereignty of the African provinces he governed, was considered only as a viceroy, or at most as a tributary and dependent prince, by Abu Ali Mansûr,

The beginning of the dynasty of the Hamedites in Africa.

^m Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 254, 255. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 386. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 332. Khondemir, Al Makrizi, Ebn Shohnah, Abu Abd'allah Mohammed, in Târîkh. Mesr, Renaud. ubi sup. p. 372. ⁿ Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi, in lib. cui tit. Asmodf. ubi sup.

the Fâtemite khalif of Egypt, who assumed the title of Al Hâkem Beamri'llah, after he had ascended the Egyptian throne °.

Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn possessor himself of Jorjân and Tabrestân.

It appears from Al Makîn, that Fânûs Ebn Washmakîn, or Wasmakîn, this year, possessed himself of the provinces of Jorjân and Tabrestân; but by what means he became master of such extensive territories, we have not been told by that author.

Fakhro'd-dawla dies, and is succeeded by his son.

In the month of Shawâl, if we believe Abu'lfeda, Fakhro'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla Ebn Bûiya departed this life at the castle of Tabarak; and immediately after his death, the grandees of Al Ray and its territory, elected his son, Abu Tâleb Rostam Majdo'ddawla Ebn Fakhro'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla Ebn Bûiya, then only four years old, to succeed him: but the provinces of Jorjân and Tabrestân, which Fakhro'ddawla likewise governed, were seized by Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn, who had formerly presided over them, as has been already observed. The khalif, Al Kâder Bi'llah, confirmed the election of the inhabitants of Al Ray, sent Rostam an imperial robe from Baghdâd, and gave him the title or surname of Majdo'ddawla, which he ever afterwards retained. The young prince being incapable of taking upon himself the government of his dominions on account of his tender age, his mother Seyda placed herself at the head of the administration, at the desire of the grandees, and with the approbation of the khalif of Baghdâd.

Sabektekîn likewise dies the present year;

This year died also the famous Sabektekîn, of whom we have already had occasion to speak. During the latter part of his life he resided at Balkh; but having long laboured under a chronical distemper, of which he could not be cured, in order to try whether a change of air would not relieve him, he undertook a journey to Gazna; but as he was very weak when he left Balkh, he died upon the road, in the month of Shaabân, and was carried to Gazna, where his remains were interred. He was a prince of great probity and justice, and governed his subjects with prudence, equity, and moderation, almost twenty years. A little before his death he nominated his younger son, Ismael Ebn Sabektekîn, to succeed him. Ismael was scarce settled on the throne when he received a letter from Mahmûd, his elder brother; who acquainted

° Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 387. Shaw's Travels, &c. p. 89, 198. Oxford, 1738. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 255. Al Makrizi, Greg. Abu'lfaraj, ubi sup. p. 332. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Hakem Bemrillah, p. 411.

him, that as his father could have no other reason for excluding him from the succession, which by right of primogeniture undoubtedly belonged to him, than because he was at a great distance from him when his end approached, so he insisted upon his ceding the territories that had been ravished from him, and the government of which he (Ismael) had so unjustly usurped: but Ismael disregarding this letter, Mahmûd, who was then at Nîfâbûr, raised a powerful army, and advanced into the neighbourhood of Gazna, in order to dethrone his brother, who being terrified at his approach, and overthrown in a general action, found himself obliged to retire to the castle of Gazna, and at last to submit to the victor upon the terms he was pleased to prescribe. In short, about seven months after Sabektekîn's death, if Abu'lfeda may be credited, Mahmûd mounted his father's throne, though he treated Ismael with uncommon marks of distinction and esteem.

In the same year Nûh Ebn Mansûr Al Sammâni, the lord or emir of Khorasân and Mawarâ'nahr, and the seventh prince of the Sammânian dynasty, died at Bokhâra. His title, as we are informed by Abu'lfeda, was Al Emir Al Râdi, that is, *the Accepted, Agreeable, or Well-beloved Prince*. His son, Abu'l Hâreth Mansûr Ebn Nûh, assumed the government of Khorasân and Mawarâ'nahr after his decease ^P.

*as does also
Nûh Al
Mansûr
Al Sammâ-
ni, at Bok-
hâra;*

Before the close of this year Mâmûn Ebn Mohammed, the lord or sovereign of Khowârazm, also died, according to Abu'l-Faraj. This Mâmûn was the first prince or king of Khowârazm, mentioned in the Moslem history as independent on the khalif; though probably some one of the khalif's governors of that province before his time had thrown off his allegiance. The country seems to have been lost to the khalif, at least for a considerable number of years before Nâmûn expired; his son Ali, according to the aforefaid author, succeeded him by hereditary right, and the crown being then consequently settled in his family.

*and Mâ-
mûn Ebn
Mohammed
the lord of
Khowâ-
razm.*

The next year, being the 388th of the Hejra, Samfâmoddawla Abu Câlijâr, Ebn Adado'ddawla was killed at Ahwâz, in an action that happened between him and Abu'l Kafem, the son of Azzo'ddawla, who had been put to death by Adado'ddawla, Samfâmo'ddawla's father; of which tragical event the following particulars have been related by Al Makîn. After Samfâmo'ddawla was released from prison, several of the fortresses of Deylam

*Samfâ-
mo'ddawla
is cut off by
Abu'l Ka-
sem.*

^P Ism. Abulfed. ubi supra. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 333.

were put into his hands; and Abu Nafr, one of Fîrûz's relations, and Abu'l Kafem, Azzo'ddawla's son, who had been imprisoned with him, having found means to corrupt the jailor with a sum of money, were permitted to escape. They were no sooner released than they began to raise forces, and in a short time assembled a very considerable number of troops. What became of Abu Nafr we have not been told by our author; but he says, Abu'l Kafem marched to Arjân, a city in the province of Fârs, then subject to Samfamo'ddawla, which that prince's governor of the place delivered up to him. Samfamo'ddawla having received advice of what had happened, was struck with terror, and retired with great precipitation to Shîraz, in order to take refuge in the citadel; but the governor refusing to admit him, he found himself obliged to retreat with three hundred men to Ahwâz, where Abu'l Kafem Ebn Azzo'ddawla soon arrived. They had not long been in sight of each other before an action ensued; which ended in the defeat of Samfamo'ddawla, who was himself killed upon the spot. His head being afterwards cut off, and brought to Abu'l Kafem, that prince, upon seeing it, said, "This is a doctrine which your father has taught me;" meaning, that as Adado'ddawla had put to death his father Azzo'ddawla, so he had now served that emir's son, Samfamo'ddawla, in the same manner.

Yusef Ebn Abd'allah finding himself incapable of acting at the head of the administration in Sicily, appointed his son Jaafar to preside over the Moslems of that island; and by his great influence at the Egyptian court, obtained of the Fâtemite khalif an instrument, drawn up for that purpose, confirming him in the possession of the honourable post in which he had already been placed. Al Hakem, the khalif of Egypt, was not satisfied with barely sending Jaafar, at his father's request, the aforesaid instrument to Sicily: he likewise dignified him, in order to procure him the greater respect from the people he was to govern, with the title or surname of Tajo'ddawla, or *the Crown of the Court*; but this emir afterwards discovered himself, by his enormous cruelty and most iniquitous administration, to be altogether unworthy of the high honour which he now attained.

The following year, being the 389th of the Hejra, proved fatal to the Sammânian dynasty, settled in Khorâsân and Mawarâ'nahr. The commanders of the forces in these provinces, together with Bekturun and Fayek, or Baktuzun and Faekh, conspired against Abu'l Hâreth
Manfûr

Manfûr Ebn Nûh, the sovereign of those countries, drove him from the throne, and by Baktuzun's order, with a red-hot iron put out his eyes, after he had reigned, according to the Persian Chronicon, one year and seven months. Abu'lfeda observes, that Baktuzun, whom he calls Bekturun, was guilty of the blackest perfidy and ingratitude on this occasion; as he had been loaded with favours by, and owed his advancement to, the princes of the Sammânian family. After the conspirators had, in so cruel a manner, deprived Manfûr Ebn Nûh of his regal authority, they appointed Abd'almâlec Ebn Nûh, his brother, to succeed him. Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn having received advice of what had happened to Abu'l Hareth Manfûr Ebn Nûh, first expostulated in a letter with Baktuzun and Faëkh, the principal of the conspirators, for their cruelty and ingratitude to that prince, and afterwards marched with an army against them. Those traitors, being informed of his approach, collected all their forces, and gave them battle; but, after a sharp and bloody engagement, they were defeated with very great slaughter, and obliged to fly to the extremity of Khorasân. This victory put Mahmûd in possession of all that province; so that Baktuzun and Faëkh abandoned Khorasân, and retired with the utmost precipitation to Bokhâra. Here, however, for some time they remained; and, as they carried Abd'almâlec with them, they began to raise forces in that prince's name: but before they could assemble a sufficient body of troops, in order to dispute a second time with Mahmûd the possession of Khorasân, Faëkh died at Bokhâra; an event which proved a great mortification to the rebels, and even entirely frustrated their designs⁹.

The 389th year of the Hejra proves fatal to the Sammânian dynasty settled in Khorasân and Mawarâ'lnahr.

In the mean time, Ilel Khân, taking advantage of these troubles, advanced at the head of a powerful army to Bokhâra, under the pretext of assisting Abd'almâlec, then residing in that city. Baktuzun, and the other commanders, who had taken the young king under their protection, giving credit to his words, went to meet him, when he was at a small distance from the town; but, in open violation of his promise, the khan ordered them all to be seized, and put under arrest. After having taken this step, he entered Bokhâra, the 10th of Dhu'lkaada, secured the per-

Ilel Khân takes Bokhâra.

⁹ Hm. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 389. & ad ann. Hej. 393. Mirkhond, apud Teixeir. p. 259, 260. 285. &c. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Ilel Khân, p. 490 & alib. pass. Al Makîn, ubi sup. p. 256. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj, ubi sup. p. 338.

sons both of Abd'almâlec Ebn Nûh, and his predecessor Abu'l Hâreth Mansûr Ebn Nûh, and sent them to prison, where they remained to the time of their death. Thus ended the dynasty of the Sammânians, whose territories, according to Ebn Shohnah, comprehended Khorasân, Bokhâra, and a considerable part of Persia. The princes who composed this dynasty have been represented both by that author and Abu'lfeda as good men, and lovers of justice. Some of the eastern writers relate, that Abd'almâlec, in a fright, concealed himself, with an intent to make his escape; but that Ilek Khân having taken Bokhâra, he was discovered, and sent to Uskand or Dizghend, a city of Turkestan, by that prince, where he died in confinement^r.

The principal transactions of the year 390.

In the 390th year of the Hejra, Abu Ibrahim Montefer or Montâfer Ebn Nûh, who had been confined, with Abd'almâlec Ebn Nûh Abu'l Hâreth Mansûr Ebn Nûh, and Abu Yakûb Ebn Nûh, his brothers, two uncles, and others of the royal family, by Ilek Khân, escaped from prison, by the assistance of a female slave, and made the best of his way to Khowârazm. Here, crowds resorting to him, he soon raised a numerous army; which he sent, under the command of Arslân Balu, to Bokhâra. This movement brought on a general action between his forces and those of Ilek Khân, which ended in the defeat of the latter. Ilek Khân's general, Jaafar Takîn, was taken prisoner in this action; but what afterwards became of him we have not been told. After this victory, Arslân Balu routed another of Ilek's armies, commanded by Takîn Khân, the governor of Samarkand; upon which, Abu Ibrahim Montefer returned to Bokhâra: but Ilek Khân marching with a very formidable army against him, both he and Arslân Balu passed the Jihûn, and fled to Nisâbûr, where they remained till the commencement of the following year.

Several great men die in the year of the Hejra 391.

The 391st of the Hejra, answering to the Christian æra 1000, was rendered remarkable by the death of several great men. Abu'l Fadayel Ebn Saifo'ddawla Ebn Abd'allah Ebn Hamdân, the prince of Aleppo, died about the middle of Safar. He was poisoned, as some have imagined, by a girl who had frequent access to him; but others maintain, that Lûlû, his prime minister, who governed the territory of Aleppo with absolute power, was the author

^r Ibidem ibid. Nassir Al Tusi & Ulugh Beik, ubi sup. Ebn Shohnah, Khondemir, Lebtarikh, &c.

of his death. Abu'l Fadâyel reigned nine years and some months; leaving behind him two sons, Abu'l Hasân Ali and Abu'l Ma'âli Sharîf, who succeeded him in the sovereignty of Aleppo: but they were both soon expelled by Lûlû Al Kharâji; who had placed himself and his son, Mansûr, at the head of the administration. The two young princes, after their expulsion from Aleppo, fled into Egypt; but what fate they experienced in that country, or in what part of it they resided, we have not been told. About the same time, Abu Nafr Ebn Azzo'ddawla was assassinated by one of his domestics, in the province of Kermân, after he had been engaged with Bahao'ddawla, the sâheb or lord of Irâk, in a long and bloody war. The assassin had no sooner dispatched him than he cut off his head, and brought it to Mowaffek, Bahao'ddawla's general; upon which, all the territories that had been possessed by Abu Nafr fell into the victor's hands. Hofamo'ddawla Al Mokalled Ebn Al Mofayyeb, the second of the Okailite emirs of Al Mawfel, was likewise murdered, this year, at Al Anbâr, by some of his Turkish slaves. His son, Karwâsh, mounted the throne of Al Mawfel, after his father's violent death; but we have not been favoured with many remarkable particulars relating to him by the eastern writers. Abu Abd'allah Al Hosein Ebn Al Hejâj, a poet celebrated for his inimitable humour, also departed this life, at Al Nil, a town seated upon the Euphrates, between Baghdâd and Cûfa, before the close of the present year. Al Nil, according to Abu'lfeda, was built by the famous Al Hejâj; who gave it the name it afterwards retained, because he formed there a river out of the Euphrates, adorned with towns and villages on both its banks, in the same manner as the Nile. Al Hosein Ebn Al Hejâj, notwithstanding he sometimes affected to act the part of a buffoon, was trusted, if we believe the last mentioned author, with a public office at Baghdâd.

Either this or the following year, Abu Ibrahim Montefer, called Ibrahim by M. D'Herbelot, the only surviving prince of the Sammânian family, who was in a condition to take the field, seems to have made an irruption with a powerful army into Mawarâ'nahr. This expedition he was enabled to undertake, by the assistance of the Turkmâns; who, with a considerable body, reinforced his troops. However, he was opposed by Ilel Khân, at the head of all his forces; who encamped at a small distance from him. The Turkmâns, finding the enemy not in the least apprehensive of such a visit, attacked Ilel's camp in the

*Montefer
makes an
irruption
into Ma-
warâ'l-
nahr.*

night, forced it, put a great number of his men to the sword, and obliged the rest to betake themselves to a precipitate flight. After which victory they returned to their hords, with the better part of the booty they had acquired. Abu Ibrahim, perceiving himself deserted by the flower of his troops, passed the Jihûn, which was then frozen, upon the ice. The Turkmâns had no sooner joined their hords than they began to repent that they had not brought away all the plunder that had fallen into their hands. They, therefore, in consequence of a resolution that had been taken, advanced to the Jihûn, in order to pursue Abu Ibrahim, who had carried off the remainder of the spoil; but finding the river thawed, they were incapable of executing their design. About this time, according to some writers, Mahmûd Gazni, after he had concluded a treaty of peace with him, married the daughter of Ilel Khân^s.

*Mahmûd
Gazni pe-
netrates in-
to Indostân.*

Next year, being the 392d of the Hejra, Mahmûd Gazni, after he had secured the repose of his own dominions, penetrated into Indostân, called by the Arabs Hind, took Gebal, one of the most powerful kings of that vast region, twice prisoner, and as often released him. This repeated misfortune, according to the custom of the country, rendered him incapable of government. He was therefore obliged, in conformity to the usual practice in all similar cases, to put the crown upon the head of his son, and to throw himself into the flames, where he immediately expired. Mahmûd returned to Gazna, with all the valuable spoil, and the immense riches, he had acquired in this successful expedition.

*Other
events that
happened
this year.*

This year a bloody war was likewise carried on between Karwâsh Ebn Al Mokalled Ebn Al Mofayyeb, the Okailite emir of Al Mawfel, and Bahao'ddawla, the lord of Irâk; in which the former of those princes at first proved victorious, but was afterwards defeated in his turn.

*Mahmûd
Gazni re-
duces to
reason
Khalaf Ebn
Ahmed, the
governor of
Sejstân.*

In the following year, being the 393d of the Hejra, Mahmûd marched with an army into Sejstân, in order to reduce Khalaf Ebn Ahmed, the governor of that province to reason; who had fortified the castle of That, as though he had an intention to defend it against any power that might attempt to disturb him: but being informed of Mahmûd's approach, he was so terrified, that he went out to meet him, delivered the keys of the fortress into his hands, and acknowledged him for his sultan. This title,

^s Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 256. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 391. Khondemir, Lebtarikh, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Bahaeddoulat, p. 169, 170.

which,

which, according to some of the writers followed by M. D'Herbelot, had never before been applied to any Moslem prince, so pleased Mahmûd, that he ever afterwards retained it, and not only forgave Khalaf his defection, but likewise re-established him in his government : but making an ill use of his master's clemency, he rebelled a second time, and sent for assistance to Ilel Khân. This conduct so irritated the sultân, that he marched at the head of a large body of troops, with the utmost celerity, against him, surpris'd, and sent him prisoner to a castle in Jorjân ; where, as some authors relate, he remained in confinement to the time of his death. It appears from Abu'l-feda, that this khalif acquired great reputation by the learning he possess'd, and published a voluminous commentary upon the Koran ^c.

In the 393d year of the Hejra, Abu Amer Mohammed, who had governed Andalusia, under the title, or surname of Al Mansûr, twenty-seven years, departed this life. He was prime minister to Al Mowayyad, or Al Mowayyed, of the house of Ommiyah, who had assumed the title of khalif, and presided over the Moslems of Spain. That monarch was, however, only a nominal prince ; all the power being in reality exercised by Al Mansûr, who ruled with unlimited power. Abu Amer was succeeded by his son, Abu Merwân Abd'almâlec, who occupied the post of prime minister, took the title of Al Modhaffer, i. e. the *Conqueror*, or the *Victorious*, and followed his father's example, in making irruptions into the Christian territories, as well as in every other point of his conduct. He remained in his illustrious employment about seven years, and died in the 400th year of the Moslem æra. After him succeeded Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Mansûr, his brother, who was placed at the head of the administration, under the title of Al Nafr, i. e. the *Avenger*, *Helper*, or *Defender*. As he was incapable of government, and addicted to all kinds of debauchery, he did not hold the reins of the Moslem empire in Spain much above four months. Whilst he sat at the helm, Mohammed Ebn Heshâm, who styled himself Al Mohdi, or the *Director*, one of the khalif's relations, deposed Al Mowayyad, put Abd'alrahmân to death, and then ordered his body to be affixed to a gibbet erected for that purpose. This is the account of Abd'alrahmân Ebn Al Mansûr's tragical exit, given by Abu'l-feda ; though

Abu Amer Mohammed, the prime minister of the khalif of Andalusia, dies.

^c Ifm. Abu'l-fed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 393. Khondemir, D'Herbel, ubi supra.

Roderic of Toledo intimates, that he was destroyed by the people of Corduba, who had suffered severely from the wickedness and iniquity of his administration, as has been already observed ^d.

*Other
events that
happened
this year.*

Al Hakem, the Fâtemite khalif of Egypt and Syria, appointed Abu Mohammed Al Aswad, or the *Black*, to preside over the people of Damascus, before the close of the present year. Abu Mohammed, soon after his arrival at that capital, began to harass and oppress the Sunnites in such a manner as gave great offence to many of the Damascenes. A Magrebian soldier, in particular, of that sect, he ordered to be publicly whipped; the crier proclaiming at the same time, that this would henceforth be the reward of those who paid any regard to the memory of Abu Becr and Omar. After which punishment, the Magrebian was banished the city.

*Montefer
over-
throws
Ilek Khân,
and is af-
terwards
defeated by
him.*

In the 394th year of the Hejra, Ilek Khân, having received advice, that Montefer had taken Bokhâra, began his march for the district belonging to that city; but was intercepted by Montefer in the territory of Samarkand, and routed with very great slaughter. As the latter of these princes was greatly animated by success, some time before, having defeated Abu Jaafar, then upon his march from Merû, and Abu Nafr, two Moslem commanders, who attempted to oppose him, he behaved with unusual bravery on this occasion, forced Ilek Khân's camp, and possessed himself of all his baggage and military chest: but one of Montefer's generals afterwards deserting to the enemy with four thousand men, and Ilek Khân being reinforced with a strong body of troops, the face of affairs received a sudden and total alteration in that part of the world: for Montefer, being thus abandoned by one of his principal officers, and deserted by his auxiliaries, was not able to make head against Ilek Khân; and therefore fled with precipitation. What became of him afterwards, we shall see in our relation of the transactions of the following year.

*Ebn Wafel
seizes upon
Al Batîha.*

Mohadhdhebo'ddawla, the king, or prince, of Al Batîha, sent an army, under the command of Ebn Wafel, a general on whom he had heaped numerous favours, and whom he had raised from the lowest state to the post of commander in chief of all his forces, to attack Sirâf and Basra. Having reduced both those cities, and enriched himself with the spoils and immense wealth found in them,

^d Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi supra, & ad ann. Hej. 366. Roderic. Toletan. Hist. Arab. c. xxxi. cap. 26, 27.

Ebn Wafel declared himself independent, drove his master out of Al Batîha, and obliged him to fly for refuge to Baghdâd : but the reception he experienced was such as manifested the blackest ingratitude in Al Kâder that any man could be guilty of : for notwithstanding that prince had treated this wretch in the most hospitable and generous manner, and had in a great measure put his treasures and kingdom itself into his hands, when he was threatened with immediate death by Al 'Tay', and forced to seek for an asylum in Al Batîha ; Al Kâder, at this time, expelled him the city of Baghdâd, and drove him, as it were, into the very jaws of destruction. A more flagrant instance of ingratitude than this is perhaps not to be found in history^e.

In the same year, Bahao'ddawla conferred upon Al Sharîf Abu Ahmed Al Mûsawi, the father of Al Sharîf Al Râdi, the office of Nakib, or chief of Ali's descendants and followers, in Irâk ; as also the post of supreme kadi and imâm, with the title Dhi'l Manakeb, or a *Man of most illustrious Virtues*, in that province. Ebn Shaïdan, Bahao'ddawla's principal secretary, having drawn up the proper instruments to be signed by the khalif, in order to his being confirmed in the aforesaid employments by the authority of that prince, brought them to the palace : when he appeared with them, Al Kâder signed all those instruments, excepting that only which was to constitute him supreme kadi and imâm : but he refused setting his hand to this paper ; not thinking it proper that a Shiite should be invested with so great a degree of authority, as such an important post must necessarily confer^f.

*Al Sharîf
Abu Ahmed
Al Mûsawi
is appointed
to pre-
side over
Ali's de-
scendants
in Irâk.*

In the following year, being the 395th of the Hejra, Abu Ibrahim Montefer, finding it impracticable to pass the Jihûn, retired, with a few of his adherents, to Bokhâra. Upon his arrival, the governor promised to assist him ; but being closely pursued by Ilel Khân's general, to whom most of his men had gone over in disgust, he abandoned that city, and fled into Khorasân. He had not been long in that province, when Ebn Bek, one of Mahmûd Gazni's commanders, sent an officer, called Maruyh, in search of him ; who took him out of a poor house, or cottage, where he lay concealed, which he forced in the night, and put him to death. This cruelty so incensed Mahmûd Gazni, though an enemy, that he ordered Maruyh to be executed. In consequence of which order, according to

*Abu Ibra-
him Mon-
tefer is cut
off by Ma-
ruih, one
of soltân
Mahmûd's
officers.*

^e Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 394. & ad ann. Hej. 379. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, 332. ^f Ism. Abul'fed. in Chron. add ann. Hej. 394.

Mirkhond, he expired in exquisite torture, under the executioner's hands. After the death of Montefer, we hear no more of the Sammânian family in the East; that unfortunate prince, who, after he had been hunted from province to province for six years, met with the above mentioned fate, being the last of the Sammânian dynasty. Upon the ruins of this dynasty was erected that of Gazni; the foundations of which had been laid by Sabektekîn, Mahmûd Yamîno'ddawla's father §.

Mohadhdhebo'ddawla is reinstated in the government of Al Batîha.

In the course of this year, Abu'l Abbas Ebn Wafel being gone to Basra, the people of Al Batîha renounced their allegiance to him; upon which, Bahao'ddawla sent Amîd Al Joyûshi, his governor of Irâk, with an army to support them in their revolt. Al Joyûshi, having driven Ebn Wafel's lieutenant out of the territory of Al Batîha, in pursuance of the orders he had received, reinstated Mohadhdhebo'ddawla in the government of that country. That prince, upon his arrival amongst them, was received by his subjects with the loudest acclamations, and with all other possible demonstrations of joy. He agreed to pay Bahao'ddawla an annual tribute of fifty thousand dinârs, for the important service he had done him on this occasion.

Mahmûd Gazni reduces the city of Bahadiyah;

About the same time Yamîno'ddawla Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn, commonly called Mahmûd Gazni, reduced the city of Bahadiyah, a strong fortress, situated near the confines of the kingdom of Moltân, or Mûltân. The province or kingdom of Moltân was properly a part of that great region called by the Arabs Sind, or Sindia, which was bounded on the north by the province of Kermân, or rather that of Macrân, and the deserts of Sejîstân, and on all other sides by Hind, or India.

and invades India.

Next year, being the 396th of the Hejra, Mahmûd Gazni entered India on the side of Hebath and Moltân; which he easily subdued, and then advanced at the head of his forces against Bida, or Bidaw, an Indian prince, who had taken refuge in a strong fortress called Câlijâr, where he hoped to defend himself. However, Mahmûd besieged him, and at last forced him to submit to such terms of peace as he was pleased to prescribe. The principal of these was, that Bidaw should become tributary to him. In the mean time Ilel Khân, taking advantage of Mahmûd's absence on the Indian expedition, sent Sipashî Takîn, and Jaafar Takîn, two of his generals, with two

§ Mirkhond, apud Teixeira, ubi sub. Ebn Shohnah, Lebtarikh. Khondemir, Ism. Abu'lfed. alique Scriptor. Orient. pass.

armies,

armies, to attack at the same time two different parts of the province of Khorasân. Of which intention Arslân Jazeb, who commanded for sultân Mahmûd in Herât, having received advice, he immediately dispatched a courier to his master in India, to inform him that his dominions were upon the point of being invaded by the forces of Ilekkhân. Mahmûd immediately began to move towards his own frontiers, and at last, by forced marches, came up with the Turkish generals, who had made an irruption into Khorasân; but his name being grown terrible by the extensive conquests he had made, they retired at his approach, and, after a feeble resistance, were obliged to abandon the province. Ilekkhân, finding his forces thus shamefully repulsed by Mahmûd, and forced to repass the Jihûn with ignominy and disgrace, applied to Kader Khân, of Ketau Kotan, or Katay, for assistance.

Accordingly Kader Khân joined Ilekkhân with a body of fifty thousand horse, collected in Ketau Kotan, Turkestan, and Mawarâ'nahr. After this junction the combined army passed the Jihûn, and presented itself before the city of Balkh. Sultân Mahmûd, finding himself upon the point of being attacked by such a formidable army, had recourse to God, the arbiter of events; to whom he prayed most fervently for his assistance against so great a number of infidels as then appeared in the field. Having thus recommended himself to the divine protection, he mounted his white elephant, and drew up his troops in order of battle. Then he charged the Turks with great bravery, but being borne down by numbers, his forces were obliged to give ground. Finding himself in the most imminent danger, and animated in a manner by despair, Mahmûd rushed into the thickest of the enemy, and cutting his way through them, came up to Ilekkhân, whom his elephant unhorfed, and tossed up in the air with his trunk. The enraged beast trod under foot the greatest part of the Turks who were fighting round him, entirely changed the fortune of the day, and wrested the victory out of the enemy's hands; for the sultân's men resumed their courage, returned with fresh vigour to the charge, and made so great a slaughter of the Turks, that only a small number, who threw themselves headlong into the Jihûn, and swam over that river, escaped. This bloody battle was fought on a spot of ground about four parasangs from the city of Balkh, in the year of the Hejra 397. Some authors, however, make it to have happened about ten years later; though we are inclined to follow Mirkhond, who places it in the year

*Mahmûd
Gazni
overthrows
Ilekkhân.*

we

we are now treating. The same year Mahmûd returned into India, and chastised one of the Indian rajahs for renouncing Islamism, which he had before embraced ^h.

Bahao'd-dawla puts Ebn Wafel to death.

This year Bahao'ddawla sent a body of troops to drive Abu'l Abbâs Ebn Wafel, who had been expelled from Al Batîha, in the 395th year of the Moslem æra, from Basra; a service which they performed with very little loss, and took Ebn Wafel himself prisoner. Bahao'ddawla having seized the rebel, ordered him to be executed at Wâset. His head was cut off, and carried to Bahao'ddawla, who then resided at Ahwâz; by whose order it was fixed upon the point of a spear, and exposed to public view in every street of that city ⁱ.

A rebellion in Egypt.

About the same time, a person, descended from Heshâm Ebn Abd'almâlec, one of the khalifs of the house of Ommiyah, took up arms against Al Hâkem, the Fâtemite khalif, in Egypt. As this man at first carried water about in bottles, as a common porter, he was nicknamed Abu Racwah, or *the Father of the Bottle*. He set up for a reformer, preached to the people in the streets, highways, and other public places, and by his pretended sanctity gained a great number of followers. He first possessed himself of Barka, and afterwards, having vanquished one of the khalif's generals that engaged him, reduced to his obedience all the country of Al Sa'id, or the Upper Egypt. By which acquisition of territory, as well as power, he became so formidable, that Al Hâkem found it necessary to employ the forces of the whole Fâtemite empire against him. Having, therefore, raised a powerful army in Egypt, and sent orders to his troops in Syria to advance into the neighbourhood of Meſr, he at last attacked the rebels with such intrepidity, that after a very obstinate and bloody dispute, they were routed with great slaughter. Most of them were cut to pieces in the action, and the rest so dispersed, that not the faintest traces of this rebellion were afterwards to be seen. Abu Racwah himself, whose true name was Al Walîd, and who had assumed the title of Al Nâyer Beamri'llah, was taken prisoner, after he had disturbed the public repose several months, and brought before Al Hâkem, who commanded him to be executed in his presence. His head being cut off, and exposed to public

^h Mirkhond, apud Teixier. ubi sup. p. 278, 279. D'Herbelot, ubi sup. p. 533. 535. ⁱ Ism, Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 397.

view in all the streets of Meſr, was, together with the body, affixed to a gibbet^k.

In the following year, being the 398th year of the Hejra, Yamîno'ddawla Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn penetrated again into India, where his arms were attended with extraordinary ſucceſs. Ilel Khân, likewiſe, after the loſs he had ſuſtained in the battle fought laſt year, near the city of Balkh, retired into Mawarâ'nahr, where he arrived towards the beginning of the preſent year.

Soltân Mahmûd penetrates again into India.

In the 399th year of the Hejra Abu Ali Ebn Thamal Al Khafagi, who had formerly been appointed by Al Hâkem, the Fâtemite khalif of Syria and Egypt, the governor of Rahaba, was killed. The preſecture of Rahaba, after Al Khafagi's diſmiſſion, was conferred upon Sâleh Ebn Mardâs Al Kelâbi, dignified by Abu'lfeda with the title of prince of Aleppo, though he did not attain to the ſovereignty of that city before the year of the Hejra 414. In the month of Dhu'lhajja died Lûlû Al Kharâji, who had been entrusted by Saado'ddawla with the government of Aleppo during the minority of his ſon; and Manſûr Abu-naſr, Lûlû's ſon, who aſſumed the title or ſurname of Mortadiô'ddawla, preſided over the people of that city, after his father's death.

The moſt memorable tranſactions of the year 399.

Next year, being the 400th of the Hejra, a ſurpriſing revolution happened in Andaluſia; of which Abulſeda, whoſe authority in this point is of great weight, has preſerved the following particulars. Mohammed Ebn Heſhâm Ebn Abd'aljabbar Ebn Al Naſr, of the houſe of Ommiyah, depending upon the favour of the people of Corduba, ſeized upon the perſon of the khalif Al Mowayyad, and immediately ordered him to be confined in the Latter Jomâda of the preceding year. He then cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed khalif, under the title of Al Modhi, or *the Director*, and obliged the people of Corduba to take an oath of fidelity to him; but the uſurped authority he acquired on this occaſion was of very ſhort continuance: for Solimân Ebn Al Hâkem Ebn Solimân Ebn Al Naſr, having vanquiſhed him in battle, forced the khalifat from him, in the beginning of the month of Shawâl of the preſent year. However, Al Mohdi returning with an army to Corduba, expelled his competitor on the 15th of the ſame month; but the officers of the army being diſpleaſed with his conduct, ſoon after depoſed him, took Al Mo-

A revolution happens in Spain.

^k Al Makin, ubi ſup. p. 256. Al Makrizi, Iſm. Abu'lfed. ubi ſup. & in Deſcript. Diyâr Meſr. Vide etiam Golii Not. ad Alfragan. p. 100, 101.

wayyad out of prison, and replaced him upon the Andalusian throne. Al Mowayyad was no sooner reinstated in the government of his dominions, than he commanded Al Mohdi to be brought before him, and put to death in his presence. He then made Wadheh, one of Abu Amer's slaves, his prime minister; though he afterwards, being disgusted at his administration, caused him likewise to be cut off. From this time the khalifat of Andalusia was rent by civil dissensions; the different factions harassing one another in the most terrible manner. In the mean time Solimân, who had lately been driven from Corduba, found means to conciliate the affections of the African Moslems, crossed the sea with a powerful army, and returned to that city; which, after having sustained a siege, was carried by assault, and Al Mowayyad dispossessed of the citadel, in the month of Shawâl, and the year of the Hejra 403. On the 15th of the same month, Solimân compelled the citizens of Corduba to take again the oath of allegiance to him. He also assumed the title or surname of Al Motta'in Bi'llah, which he retained as long as he sat upon the Andalusian throne. As for Al Mowayyad he was never afterwards either seen or heard of^m.

Roderic of Toledo's account of this revolution.

It may not be improper to observe, that the account of this revolution preserved by Roderic of Toledo differs from the foregoing relation, extracted from Abu'lfeda, in several particulars. According to that author, Mohammed Ebn Heshâm, or Al Mohdi, with twelve of his accomplices, rebelled against the khalif Heshâm, or Al Mowayyad, and seized upon the city of Corduba, after the violent death of Abd'alrahmân, who had succeeded his brother Abd'almâlec in the office of hâjeb. Being master of the khalif's person, he caused him to be privately confined in a house belonging to one of his friends, killed a Christian extremely like him, and pretended that he was dead. The grandees and principal courtiers, being then desired to view the corpse, really took it to be that of Heshâm; and it was soon after interred, with great funeral pomp. Mohammed, now thinking himself secure, began to oppress his subjects, and to insult their wives in such a manner as absolutely alienated their affections from him. This conduct excited Heshâm, with several others, to enter into a conspiracy against him. In pursuance, therefore, of the plan that had been formed, the conspirators destroyed

^m Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 400. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 451.

many

many of Mohammed's friends, burnt some of the gates of Corduba, and made an attempt to dethrone the tyrant. However, Al Mohdi rendered abortive their design, killed several of them, and took a great number of prisoners. Having thus extinguished the rebellion, he ordered Heshâm to be executed, together with many others, who had been the most active in the late revolt. This success, however, did not prevent some of the African Moslems, then in Spain, from casting their eyes upon Solimân, the khalif Heshâm's nephew, whom they chose for their prince; though Maruhan, or Merwân, his cousin-german, had likewise a considerable party amongst them. Solimân, being informed that Merwân's friends had made him a present of a horse and a sword, in token of their attachment, and promised to proclaim him khalif, if he could find an opportunity of taking off his relation Soliman, he ordered several of the ringleaders to be beheaded, loaded Merwân with irons, and with a large sum of money procured the assistance of count Sancho of Castile. In the mean time, Al Mohdi, having received advice of the treaty concluded between Sancho and Solimân, raised an army in the neighbourhood of Medina Celi, which he ordered to advance to Corduba; but being defeated by the confederates, with the loss of thirty-six thousand men, and forced to abandon to the victors part of his capital, he found himself obliged to bring the khalif Al Heshâm, or Al Mowayyad, who was thought to have been dead, out of the place where he had been concealed. This step he took that he might prevail upon the people, when he saw his own affairs in a desperate situation, to submit to their natural prince rather than to Solimân. But every one being now struck with terror, no regard was paid to his solicitations; so that he was constrained to fly to Toledo, with Mohammed Al Toleiteli, one of his most intimate friends, and Solimân possessed himself of Corduba, where he reigned about seven months. However, distrusting the fidelity of the citizens, he kept the Christian forces for some time in Andalusia, and formed a camp of his troops at a small distance from the city. Al Mohdi, on the other hand, soon after his flight to Toledo, by the activity of Al Amri, his hajeb, assembled a very numerous body of troops, which was reinforced by Armengandus and Veremudus, or Veremundus, two Christian officers of distinction, who were extremely serviceable to him. Solimân, having been apprized of the preparations that were making to attack him, endeavoured to engage the people of Corduba to support him; but

they being disaffected to his cause, excused themselves upon frivolous pretexts from taking the field. As he had, therefore, dismissed the Christian forces, commanded by count Sancho of Castile, he had only the Barbarians, or African Moslems, to depend upon. Nevertheless, he advanced to a place, called by Roderic, Accauatal Bacar, about ten leagues from Corduba; where his competitor, Al Mohdi, at the head of his army, likewise soon appeared. A battle immediately ensued, in which the African Moslems attacked the enemy with such bravery, that they forced them to give ground, and put several thousands to the sword; but Al Mohdi rallying his men, they resumed their courage, charged the Barbarians with fresh vigour, and, chiefly by the valour of the Christian troops, gained a complete victory. Solimân himself fled first to Azafra, and afterwards to Citana; upon which, the people of Corduba entered the former of those places, massacred all the inhabitants, as well as the Africans that fell in their way, completely plundered the town, and carried off with them the golden lamps out of the great mosque, together with many other valuable effects, that the Africans, or Barbarians, had deposited there. This decisive action placed the crown once more upon Al Mohdi's head; though that prince, or rather usurper, was in a very short time driven again from the throne. For, not being able to protect his subjects against the violences of the Barbarians, who continued still in Andalusia, and committed dreadful devastations, and the people of Corduba having conceived an invincible aversion to his government; some Arabs and eunuchs conspired against him, and, under the direction of Al Amri, his hajib, and Hambar, one of the principal eunuchs, seized upon him in his palace. Then Heshâm, or Al Mowayyad, re-ascended the throne; who, having commanded Al Mohdi to be brought before him, and upbraided him with his treasonable conduct, ordered his head to be cut off, and his body to be thrown from the walls into one of the streets of the city. The head was afterwards carried upon the top of a lance through the metropolis, and the body buried in a corner of the mosque. Solimân, however, who still had the crown in view, found means to get the head into his hands; which he sent to Obeid'allah, Al Mohdi's son, then at Toledo, where he was held in great esteem. Heshâm, not being able to repress the insolence of the Barbarians, who still ravaged the country without control, and kept the city of Corduba itself, where all kinds of provisions began to fail,

in

in a manner blocked up, there were great murmurings in that capital; insomuch that several of the citizens formed a design to restore Solimân to the throne. But in order to prevent this scheme from taking effect, and to hinder any assistance from coming to Solimân from that quarter, Heshâm concluded an offensive and defensive treaty with count Sancho of Castile; who managed this point with uncommon dexterity and address, and procured of Heshâm, as a reward for the assistance he was to afford him, the cession of six fortresses, which had formerly been taken from the Christians by Al Mansûr. After the conclusion of this treaty, the citizens of Toledo, with Obeid'allah Ebn Mohammed Al Mohdi at their head, revolted against the khalif. But Heshâm possessed himself of the city, beheaded Obeid'allah, and extinguished the rebellion, without any considerable effusion of Moslem blood. This success did not hinder Al Amri, the hajeb, from entering into some intrigues with Solimân, in order to elevate him to the khalifat of Andalusia; but several of the letters he had received from Solimân having been intercepted, Heshâm instantly commanded his head to be cut off, and exposed to public view in every part of the city, to deter others from such treasonable practices for the future. Notwithstanding which example, as Solimân's adherents, the African Moslems, continued their ravages in the country about Corduba, Seville, and Calatrava, wasting it with fire and sword, insomuch that a very extensive tract was almost entirely depopulated, the people entertained thoughts of deposing Heshâm, and calling Solimân, whom they considered as the only person capable of protecting them, to the crown. That prince, therefore, having fixed Al Mondar, the governor of Saragossa, and other officers of rank, in his interest, and been joined by a great number of Moslems, who crowded to him from all parts, advanced with a formidable army to the gates of Corduba, and summoned the city to surrender. But finding the garrison and inhabitants resolved to defend it to the last extremity, he invested the place in form, and carried on his attacks with the utmost vigour; the besieged opposing him with equal bravery, and making several successful sallies. However, one of the gates being at last betrayed into Solimân's hands, he entered the town without opposition, burnt many of the houses and public buildings, destroyed an infinite number of the citizens, and gave the place up to his troops to be plundered for three successive days. The people who survived the carnage immediately submitted. As for He-

shâm, he was led out of the city, and permitted to retire into Africa, where he probably ended his days. This last revolution must have happened, according to Roderic, either in, or after, the year of the Hejra 404; though Abu'lfeda, whose authority in this point is perhaps more to be depended upon, has placed it amongst the memorable events of the preceding year ⁿ.

*Soltân
Mahmûd
defeats
Bal, an In-
dian prince,
and con-
cludes a
peace with
the emperor
of Indostân.*

In the course of the present year, soltân Mahmûd pushed his conquests in India, and defeated Bal Ebn Andbal, who was esteemed one of the richest and most powerful kings of Indostân. He also reduced the fortress of Behesim, and found therein immense treasures, which had been amassed by Bal, in gold, silver, and precious stones. The king of kings, or emperor of Indostân, sent to demand peace of the soltân; which he granted, on condition that he should send him fifty elephants, with a proper number of Indians to manage and take care of them, and pay him a very large annual tribute. The peace between these two potentates being ratified, the commerce of their subjects was re-established, and the caravans, or karwans, took their usual routes. Ilel Khân having been informed, some time after his arrival in Mawarâ'nahr, that his brother Togân or Dogân Khân, who had been with him in the battle fought near Balkh, had made an apology to Mahmûd for his former conduct, he led an army against him, in order to punish his supposed disaffection. But, by the intervention of Mahmûd himself, a rupture was prevented, and a good understanding between the two brothers, perfectly restored ^o.

*Ilek Khân
marches
against his
brother
Togân
Khân.*

In the following year, being the 401st of the Moslem æra, Ilel Khân, notwithstanding the late pacification, upon some fresh disgust, marched, with an army from Samarkand, against his brother, Togân Khân. Having advanced to Urkand, a city of Mawarâ'nahr, he was obliged to halt; a deep snow, which at that time fell, having rendered the roads impassable, so that he could neither proceed farther, nor return to the place from whence he came.

*Bahao'd-
dawla
obliges
Karwâsh
to pray for
Al Kâder.*

About this period, Karwâsh Ebn Al Mokalled Ebn Al Mofayyab, the emir of the Okailite Arabs, issued an edict, commanding his subjects at Al Mawfel, Al Anbâr, Al Madâyen, Al Cûfa, and the other cities under his jurif-

ⁿ Roderic. Toletan. Hist. Arab. cap. xxxiii.—xl. p. 27—32. Ism. Abu'lfed ubi sup. ^o Khondemir, Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. ubi sup. p. 281. Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Mahmoud fils de Sebeçteghin, p. 533.

dition,

dition, to pray in their respective mosques for Al Hâkem Beamri'llah, the khalif of Egypt. The beginning of the prayer used on this occasion was conceived in the following terms: "Praise be given to God, by whose divine light the thick darkness of tyranny and injustice is dispelled, by whose greatness the foundations of an idol (or idolatry) are overturned, and by whose power the sun moves from east to west, &c." But this edict did not long remain in force. For, Bahao'ddawla, who was then at Arjân, ordered Amîd Al Joyûshi, his general, to march directly with all the forces he could assemble against the emir of Al Mawfel; which so intimidated Karwâsh, that he implored pardon for his crime, rescinded the edict that gave so much offence, and commanded his subjects to pray as formerly, for the khalif Al Kâder Bi'llah.

In the course of this year, Abu'l Ganayem Mohammed Ebn Mazjad, being amongst the Dobaisite Arabs, to whom he was related, in Khûzestân, happened to kill one of the principal men of that tribe; upon which, he found himself obliged to fly to Abu'l Hafan Ebn Mazjad, the emir of the Mazjadite Arabs, his brother. This accident kindled a war between the two tribes, which proved fatal to the two brothers. For, the Mazjadite Arabs having met with a defeat, Abu'l Ganayem fell upon the field of battle, and Abu'l Hafan betook himself to a precipitate flight.

A war between the Dobaisite and Mazjadite Arabs.

Amîd Al Joyûshi Abu Ali Ebn Istad or Istath Hormuz, who had been constituted by Bahao'ddawla the emir of Irâk, died before the close of the present year. He extirpated the gang of robbers, and quelled all the seditious spirits that had for some time infested and disturbed the repose of the city of Baghdâd. After his death, Bahao'ddawla appointed Abu Gâleb Fakhr Al Molk to command in that capital, and throughout the whole district.

Amîd Al Joyûshi, Bahao'ddawla's general dies

Soltân Mahmûd attacked Mohammed Ebn Suri, prince or king of the country of Gaur, or, according to Teixeira, Guzarate, and took him prisoner before the close of the present year. The soltân found upon this prince some poison, which he kept concealed in a ring, and with which he delivered himself from his captivity, by putting an end to his days. Soon after this expedition, Mahmûd penetrated into Gurjestân or Georgia, expelled the shah, or king, of that country, and subdued all his dominions. Some authors relate, that Altun Tash, one of Mahmûd's generals, defeated Shâh Shâr, the king of Gurjestân, and sent him prisoner to the soltân; who gave him his liberty and re-established him in his kingdom, on condition that

Soltân Mahmûd extends his conquests.

he should always remain a good and faithful vassal. But, continue those authors, having afterwards revolted against the sultan, being again defeated, and taken prisoner a second time, he was, by Mahmûd's order, scourged like a common slave that had made his escape, and confined in a castle to the day of his death. It has been observed by Khondemir, that he was the last of the kings of Gurjestân who assumed the title of shah; and that this was applied to all the princes of that dynasty, in the same manner as Cæsar was to the Roman emperors, and czar to the sovereigns of Muscovy, or Russia. Perhaps both shah and czar were deduced from the word Cæsar, as being titles of much the same import, and only corruptions of that name^p.

Al Kâder publishes a manifesto against the khalifs of Egypt.

In the year of the Hejra 402, the khalif Al Kâder Bî'llah published a manifesto, or declaration, against the khalifs of Egypt, wherein they were asserted to be guilty of manifest falsehood and imposture, when they pretended to deduce their origin from Ali and Fâtema, the daughter of Mohammed; and, in consequence of that pretension, assumed the honourable appellation of Fâtémities. This declaration was subscribed by many of Ali's genuine descendants, by many kadis, and by a considerable number of other learned men; one of whom was Abd'allah Ebn Al Nooman, a celebrated fakih of the Shiites, held amongst them in great esteem. The purport of it was to the following effect: "These are the sentiments and assertions of the persons whose names are hereunto subscribed, and who are worthy of credit in every particular. They affirm, that Al Moezz, the son of Ismael, the son of Abd'alrahmân, the son of Sa'îd, deduced his origin from Dîfân Ebn Sa'îd, the common father of the Dîfânites, and the author of the sect going under that name. They likewise assert, that Mansûr, who now pretends to reign in Egypt, under the title of Al Hâkem, is an impostor, sprung up on a sudden, out of meanness and obscurity, like a mushroom, in that country, upon whose head may all God's plagues and curses fall! and that, as he is the grandson of the aforesaid Al Moezz, he is also descended from Abd'alrahmân, the son of Sa'îd, to whom may God never permit any prosperous event to happen, and from the same ancestors, who were the refuse of mankind, the scandal of human nature, the pests and nuisances of society, the worst of filth, utterly unworthy of the noble family from

^p Mirkhond, apud Teixeira, p. 280. ut et ipse Teixeira, ibid. Khondemir, D'Herbel ubi sup. & alib. pass.

whence

whence they pretend to be derived. And may God damn to all eternity the aforesaid reprobates and rebels, and may they, moreover, be for ever pursued by the curses and imprecations of all lovers of piety and truth! The aforesaid worthy persons farther affirm, that the lineage of these usurpers has no manner of affinity with, nor bears any relation to the family of Ali Ebn Abu Tâleb, to whom may God be always propitious! and that their ostentation, by which they arrogate to themselves the splendor of that most illustrious house, is mere vanity, a downright falsehood and lie. They also pronounce this son of the earth (Al Hâkem,) who lately sprung up in Egypt, and boasts so much of himself and all the members of his mean, sordid, and beggarly family, infidels, villains, Sadducees, and atheists, who have renounced Islamism, which they formerly professed, allow marriages within the prohibited degrees, permit the use of wine, treat the prophets and holy men in a contemptuous manner, and attribute divinity to themselves⁹.”

This most bitter and virulent manifesto seems to have been occasioned by Karwâsh Ebn Al Mokalled's conduct, when he ordered his subjects to pray in their mosques for Al Hâkem the preceding year. Both Al Kâder and Bahao'ddawla reproved him for the edict he then issued, which enjoined this in pretty severe terms; though, after the rescission of that edict, when his penitence fully appeared, Al Kâder sent him some rich presents, valued at thirty thousand dinârs, according to Al Makîn¹.

What probably occasioned this declaration.

Next year, being the 403d of the Hejra, Kâbûs Ebn Washmakîn, surnamed Shams Al Ma'âli, the king of Jorjân and Mazanderân, was cut off by his subjects, in a manner scarce to be paralleled in history. This prince, though adorned with many and great virtues, and in general a good governor, was rather too strict in his discipline, and too severe in his punishments, seldom pardoning even the slightest faults; which severity rendered him extremely unpopular. The officers of the army, in particular, having felt the effects of his severity more than others, had an utter aversion to him. They, therefore, sent for Manûjahar, his son, then in Jarjân, and told him, that they would place him upon the throne, if he would con-

Kâbûs's death and character.

⁹ Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 402. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 257. Khondemir, Ebn Shonah, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abu' al-Jafar Al Kazwini. in Nighia-ist D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 225. & alib. ¹ Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 401. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj & Al Makin, ubi sup.

sent to the deposition of his father ; but that if he refused this offer, they must look out elsewhere for another soltân. Being, therefore, in a manner compelled to comply with their demands, they proclaimed and acknowledged him soltân of Jorjân and Mazanderân, and took the oath of allegiance to him. After which step he went to the city of Bastâm, whither his father had been sent by the rebels under a strong guard ; prostrated himself before him, and having promised in the strongest terms perpetual obedience, offered to march against the rebels that had deposed him, in order to bring them to condign punishment, if he thought proper to lay his commands upon him, and to make the utmost efforts to constrain his disaffected subjects once more to recognize his authority. But Kâbûs, satisfied with his son's duty, wisely answered him : " I have fixed in this place the term of my public actions, and of my public life ; and I now voluntarily resign all my power and authority into your hands." He was then confined in the castle of Gefasenk, where he spent the remainder of his days in solitude, the service of God, and pious meditations. Being conducted to the place of his confinement by a party of the rebels, he asked one of them, " What could induce them to depose him ?" He answered, " Your extreme severity obliged us to take that resolution." Kâbûs instantly replied, " That is a false pretext, for I have been reduced to the melancholy condition I at present am in by my aversion to the effusion of human blood, and by sparing the lives of five or six of you in particular." His enemies, apprehending that some time or other he might take vengeance on them for their disobedience, hired certain persons, according to Ebn Sîna, to poison him in prison. But, if we believe Abu'lfeda and Abu'l-Faraj, who both agree in this particular, the conspirators, after they had in vain attempted to prevail upon Manûjahar to concur with them, went to the castle of Gefasenk, which they entered by force, plundered his apartment, and stripped him of all the cloaths he had, which were proper for the season, it being then the midst of winter ; so that he miserably perished with cold. Kâbûs was in his time a prince of the highest reputation, and possessed an assemblage of the finest qualities. He had a noble and elevated mind, was wise and eloquent, understood astronomy, had made a considerable progress in other sciences, was perfectly conversant in all the arts of government, and had the character of an excellent poet. He wrote a most beautiful hand, left several
elegant

elegant letters and copies of verses behind him, and was well acquainted with every branch of polite literature. He greatly caressed the celebrated Ebn Sînâ, or, as we corruptly name him, Avicenna, and made him many valuable presents. Such marks of distinction that incomparable physician and philosopher merited, by curing his nephew of a most violent amorous passion, that had like to have proved fatal to him. Kâbûs mounted the throne, after the death of his elder brother Yanshîn, or Yenshîn, who succeeded his father Washmakîr, or Washmakîn, either in the year of the Hejra 366 or 367. He recovered his territories, of which he had been deprived, after Fakhro'd-dawla's decease, and left the city of Nîfâbûr, the place of his retreat, in order to take possession of them, in the year 388. He afterwards annexed to his dominions the provinces of Ghilân and Tabreslân, and for some time made a very considerable figure. Al Bîrûni, a celebrated author, dedicated to him an historical work, intituled, *Athar Al Bekiah*, which was much esteemed. Some of the eastern writers pretend, that Washmakîn, Kâbûs father, was descended from Raash, an ancient governor of Ghilân, who presided over the people of that province, when Kay Khosrû, the second prince of the Kayanian dynasty, sat upon the Persian throne^s.

In the course of the same year, Ilek Khân, the king of Turkestan, as he is styled by some of the Oriental writers, likewise departed this life. If we credit Abu'l-feda, he was an upright and a religious prince, had a thirst after knowledge, and was an encourager of learned men. He died at home, in peace; and, notwithstanding the unfavourable sentiments he had formerly entertained of his fidelity to him, was succeeded in the sovereignty of his dominions by his brother, Togân Khân^t.

Bahao'ddawla Abu Nafr Khashad, or Khashath, Ebn Adado'ddawla Ebn Rucno'ddawla Ebn Bûiya died also the sixteenth of the Latter Jomâda, of the present year. He was carried off by a fit of the epilepsy, a distemper that proved fatal to Adado'ddawla, his father, in the 372d-year of the Hejra, as has been already observed. He ended his days at Arjân, a city of Fârs, where he had re-

*Ilek Khân
dies i.*

*as also
Bahao'd-
dawla.*

^s Ism. Abu'l-fed. in Chron. ad ann Hej. 403. Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi sup. p. 334. Khondemir, Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 276, 277. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Cabus, p. 223. & art. Manougeher. p. 551. ^t Ism. Abu'l-fed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej 403. Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. ubi sup. p. 281. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 535.

sided during the latter part of his life, before he had completed the forty-third year of his age. He presided over the people of Irâk about twenty-four-years, and was succeeded in the government, or rather sovereignty, of that province by Soltâno'ddawla Abu Shajā', his son. The khalif Al Kâder confirmed Abu Shajā', in the high post he had taken possession of, by an instrument drawn up in form for that purpose, and sent him from Baghdâd. Bahao'ddawla desired in his last moments to be buried near the sepulchres of Ali and his son Al Hosein, in order to demonstrate by this disposition his attachment to the sect of those imâms. He left several children behind him, besides Abu Shajā', his eldest son. That young prince, soon after his accession, transferred the seat of his empire to Shîrâz^u.

*Soltân
Mahmûd
makes an-
other ir-
ruption into
India in the
year 404.*

Yamino'ddawla Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn was still victorious in Indostân, nothing there being able to stand before him. In the year of the Hejra 404, he made another irruption into that country, ravaged it in a dreadful manner, defeated all the Indian troops sent to oppose him, and then returned in triumph to Gazna, loaded with spoil. This year, the Khaffajite Arabs likewise pillaged and committed many disorders in Al Sawâd Al Cûfa; but a detachment of the khalif's troops soon put many of them to the sword, and entirely dispersed the rest.

*Morta-
dio'ddawla
Ebn Lûlû,
is over-
thrown by
Sâleh Ebn
Mardâs.*

In the following year, being the 405th of the Hejra, Mortaddio'ddawla Abu Nafr Mansûr Ebn Lûlû, the sâheb, or prince, of Aleppo, marched against the Arabs of the tribe of Kelâb, commanded by Sâleh Ebn Mardâs Ebn Abu Edris Ebn Nafr Ebn Jamîl; having left Al Fatah, one of his officers, to command in the citadel, during his absence. Sâleh having defeated Mansûr, and taken him prisoner, afterwards released him, upon his delivering up into his hands a great part of his wealth and the rich furniture of his palace; Mansûr retired into Al Rûm, or the territories of the Greek emperor. In the mean time, Fatah, having received advice of Mansûr's defeat, assumed sovereign power at Aleppo; and in order to secure the possession of that city, put himself under the protection of Al Hâkem, the khalif of Egypt, to whom he agreed to pay an annual tribute. This revolt Fatah had been meditating for some time; but could not find a proper opportunity of carrying his design into execution before the

^u Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 237. Khondemir, Lebtarikh.
present

present year. Al Hâkem, not willing to trust the government of Aleppo with a person who had been guilty of infidelity to his former master, conferred upon him the lieutenancy of Tyre and Sidon, and sent another person to succeed him in his former post ^w.

At this juncture, a sanguinary war was waged between Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Mazjad Al Afadi, the chief or emir of the Mazjadite Arabs, and Modar, Al Hafan, Naban, and Tarad, who commanded the Dobaisite Arabs; in which Abu'l Hafan Ali Ebn Mazjad sustained an overthrow, by the conduct and bravery of Modar, and fled into the district or territory of Al Nil. The Mazjadite Arabs lost on this occasion all their horses, tents, and military chest, as well as the booty which before the action they had acquired ^x.

A war between the Mazjadite and Dobaisite Arabs.

About the same time, some of the lower class of people at Deinawar or Dainawar murdered Abu'l Kasem Ebn Yusef Ebn Ahmed, the kadi or judge of that place, commonly called Ebn Cajji, a zealous adherer to the sect of Al Shâfeî. He had, however, several peculiarities in his notions. He published many books, acquired much knowledge, and was for a considerable time at the head of his profession. The villains that assassinated him were excited to the perpetration of that horrid fact by fear; they being apprehensive of receiving the punishment due to their enormous crimes.

The kadi or judge of Deinawar is murdered.

Yamino'ddawla Mahmûd Ebn Sabektekîn now undertook another expedition into India, and reduced the kingdom of Marwin, which had a capital of the same name. Here he was informed, that an Indian idolatrous prince occupied a province, which produced a race of elephants, called Moslem, or *faithful* elephants. This information excited him to attempt the conquest of that province; which having effected, he brought off with him a vast quantity of spoil, and a great number of those elephants. They were termed Moslem, or faithful elephants, because they sometimes performed a sort of genuflection and prostration, not unlike those of the Moslems or Mohammedans; which induced many of the latter to believe that they were religious animals.

Soltân Mahmûd reduces a considerable part of India.

Badis Ebn Mansûr Ebn Yusef Ebn Zeir Al Sanhâji, the emir of Libya, having conferred the government of Ashîr or Ashûr upon his uncle, Hammad or Hamet Ebn Yusef Ebn Zeir Al Sanhâji, in the year of the Hejra 387; this

Hammad revolts against Badis in Africa.

^w Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 404. fed. ubi sup. D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 673.

^x Ism. Abu'l-

Hammad,

Hammad, who founded the dynasty of the Hammadites, in the province of Bajayah, having enlarged his territories, amassed great treasures, and raising a numerous army, shook off the yoke of Badis. This revolt occasioned an intestine war in that part of Africa.

Hammad is overthrown by Badis, who soon after dies.

Next year, being the 406th of the Hejra, in the beginning of the Former Jomâda, a bloody battle was fought between Hammad and Badis, his nephew; wherein the former was routed, and forced to fly to the castle of Majilah. From this place he made excursions as far as the city of Dzacamah, and carried off a considerable quantity of provisions. This enabled him to sustain a siege, which was carried on with great vigour by Badis; who had pursued him to Majilah, and closely besieged him in that town. However, he was delivered from all future apprehensions of Badis, by that prince's death; which happened in the night preceding the last day of Dhu'lkaada of the present year. As soon as Al Hâkem, the khalif of Egypt, was apprized of this event, he sent Badis's son, Al Moezz, the robes of state, and the instrument confirming him in his father's post; though he was not then above eight years old. Al Hâkem also dignified him with the title or surname of Sharfo'ddawla; assuring him, at the same time, that he might depend upon his favour and protection. Nevertheless, Hammad continued still to assert his independency, and to maintain himself in the possession of the territories he had acquired *.

Soltân Mahmûd penetrates again into India.

In the course of this year, soltân Mahmûd penetrated again into India; but this irruption had almost proved fatal to him: for crossing an immense solitude or desert, with his army, he found one part of it covered with water. Here he lost many of his men, who perished in the flood, without being able to keep pace with the rest. However, he at last got clear of that dreadful morass, and arrived safe with the remainder of his forces in Khorasân.

Soltânô'ddawla puts to death his wazîr.

In the same year, Soltânô'ddawla Ebn Bahao'ddawla deprived Fakhr Al Molk, his governor of Irâk, then about fifty-three years of age, of his office, and soon after put him to death. He had presided over the people of that province five years four months and several days. He met with his fate at Ahwâz, where he had a palace fitted up in the richest manner, and adorned with many things of exceeding great value. He also left behind him, in ready money, one million of dinârs. But this palace was plun-

* Ism. Abu'lfed. ubi sup. D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 673.

dered

dered immediately after his execution. Soltâno'ddawla substituted Abu Mohammed Al Hafan Ebn Sahlana to preside over the people of Irâk, in his room.

Abu Mohammed, the shâr or shâh shar of Gurjestân, who, in the days of Nûh Ebn Mansûr Al Sammâni, had resigned his kingdom to Abu Nafr, his son, in order to live a retired and private life, died, according to Mirkhond, in the course of the present year. When Abu Ali rebelled against Nûh, he seized upon Abu Nafr's territories; upon which, that prince engaged in Sabektekîn's service, who re-instated him in the government of his dominions. However, some time after, sultân Mahmûd, Sabektekîn's son, placed Abu Mohammed, Abu Nafr's father, who was one of his most faithful servants, again upon the throne of Gurjestân: but that prince refusing, under frivolous pretexts, to attend Mahmûd in one of his Indian expeditions, he, after his return, sent Altun Tash and Arslan Balu, two of his generals, against him and his son, Abu Nafr, who then reigned in conjunction with him. Abu Mohammed, having recourse to Mahmûd's clemency, was received again into favour; but Abu Nafr, retiring into one of his fortresses, in defiance of the sultân, was soon afterwards obliged to surrender it, and, by means of the rack, forced to discover the immense treasures he had concealed. Abu Mohammed had then, according to this writer, lands assigned him near the city of Gazna, instead of what he was deprived of in Gurjestân; but as for Abu Nafr, he was first scourged in a cruel manner, and then thrown into prison. Here, if we believe some of the authors followed by M. D'Herbelot, after Mahmûd had taken possession of the vast sums of money he had amassed, he miserably ended his days.

Abu Mohammed, the shâr of Gurjestân, dies.

In the 407th year of the Hejra, Solimân Ebn Al Hâkem Ebn Solimân Ebn Abd'alrahmân Al Nafr, the eleventh khalif of the house of Ommiyah in Spain, was killed by Ali Ebn Hamed at Corduba. Solimân having assigned lands and habitations to the six clans, or Al Kabyleah, of Africans, which had in reality placed him upon the Andalusian throne, many of the Spanish Moslems, and particularly several powerful eunuchs, who were secretly friends to Heshâm, were disgusted, and took occasion from thence to inflame the minds of the people against him. One of these, named by Roderic of Toledo Hayran, who had formerly fled from Corduba, when Solimân possessed himself of that city, and was dangerously wounded by the Africans that attended him, soon began to grow formidable,

What happened in the Moslem part of Spain, the following year.

dable, assembled a large body of troops, and made himself master of several towns. Hayran was in a short time joined with a strong reinforcement by Ali Ebn Hamûda, a Moslem commander, who had been appointed by Heshâm governor of Ceuta; and seems then to have ruled over the people of Almeria. Hayran and Ali Ebn Hamûda retook Almeria, after a siege of twenty days, threw Asfa and his family into the sea, and in consequence of this success quickly expelled the Africans from that part of the Moslem conquests in Spain. Things being in this favourable situation, Hayran caused Ali Ebn Hamûda to be proclaimed khalif at Malaga; after which ceremony, Hayran, Ali, and others drew such a number of forces out of Granada, Murcia, &c. that they formed a powerful army, and ranged their troops in order of battle in the plains of Corduba. Solimân, having received advice of their approach, led all his forces out of the city against them, in order to decide this dispute by the sword as soon as possible. A general action ensued, wherein Solimân had the misfortune to be vanquished, with very great slaughter, and to lose his capital. Ali then commanded him, together with his father and brother, to be brought before him; and, after having reproached him with his traitorous conduct, slew them all with his own hand. Ebn Shohnah writes, that the new khalif ordered Solimân and all his family to be executed, under the pretext of taking vengeance of him for the murder of Al Mowayyad; but that he did not long enjoy the fruits of his cruelty and ambition, as he filled the throne only two years. He assumed the title or surname of Al Motawakkel Ala'llah; and was descended, as he pretended, in a right line from Al Hasan, the eldest son of Ali Ebn Abu Taleb. Ebn Shohnah places his elevation to the khalifat of Andalusia in the year of the Hejra 408, and Abu'l-feda, whom we chuse to follow in this particular, records it as a transaction of the present. Al Motawakkel Ala'llah was entirely stripped of his estates by a relation, named Abd'alrahmân, and soon after assassinated by one of his slaves. He is denominated by the Spanish historians Ali Ebn Hamid, and occasioned an interruption in the succession of the house of Ommiyah in the Moslem part of Spain.

*Other occurrences
of the year
407.*

In the same year, Mâmûn Ebn Mâmûn, who had married soltân Mahmûd's daughter, and had been made by that prince governor of Khowârazm, revolted against his father-in-law at the instigation of Begal Takîn, and some other malecontents: but Mahmûd soon brought him back to a sense of his duty, and deprived him of his post, which
he

he conferred upon his favourite general, Altun Tash. About this time, a Bulgarian nobleman, who had murdered Al Katomers, Samuel's prime minister, and seized upon the kingdom of Bulgaria, wrote to the emperor Basilus, and offered to make his submission to that prince, according to Al Makin. This nobleman must undoubtedly have been John Bladisthlabus or Bladilaus, nearly related to Gabriel, king of the Bulgarians, and Samuel's son, whom he assassinated, and then mounted the throne. This usurper, according to Curopalates, after he had caused himself to be acknowledged king of the Bulgarians, sent ambassadors to Basilus, and proposed to submit to any terms, and to own himself, and behave on all occasions, as a subject and vassal of the empire. This year, Al Hâkem, the khalif of Syria and Egypt, sent Kayed Abu Shajâ' Azizoddawla to Aleppo, in the month of Ramadân, to take upon himself the government of that city. He had not been long there, before he renounced his allegiance to the Fâtemite khalif, asserted his own independency, and obliged the people of Aleppo to take an oath of fidelity to him^x.

We must not forget to observe, that a different account of the affairs of Khowârazm, at this time, has been given us by Mirkhond, the Persian historian. He relates, that Mamûn Khowârazm Shâh dying about this year, his son Abu Ali succeeded him; who, by marrying one of soltân Mahmûd's sisters, secured the repose of his subjects, during the short time he lived. His brother Mâmûn Ebn Mâmûn ascended the throne after his death: but he having been poisoned by Neala or Neal Takîn, almost immediately after his accession, according to the common opinion, his son was saluted king or shâh of Khowârazm. Mahmûd, being resolved to revenge Mâmûn Ebn Mâmûn's death, marched with a powerful army into that country. He had not long entered it, before he was surprised by Neala Takîn, and attacked with such vigour, that at first victory seemed but little disposed to declare in his favour. However, he at last defeated Neala Takîn; who was seized by the person to whom he applied for a boat, in order to cross a neighbouring river, and brought bound to the conqueror. Mahmûd, being greatly offended at his insolence, commanded him to be hanged, and conferred the government of Khowârazm upon Altun Tash. After having settled every thing there to his satisfaction, he

A different account of the affairs of Khowârazm is given by Mirkhond.

^x D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 533. 534. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 334. Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 264. 258. Joan. Curopalat. in Basil.

made the necessary preparations for another Indian expedition ^v.

A treaty of peace is concluded between Al Moezz and Hammad in Africa.

In the following year, being the 408th of the Hejra, Hammad Ebn Yusef Ebn Zeir Al Sanhâji, persisting in his rebellion, Al Moezz Ebn Badis, the emir of Libya, or rather Mauritania and Africa Propria, sent an army to reduce him. Hammad meeting the emir at Thabenah, a fierce conflict ensued; in which Hammad was defeated with great slaughter. However, a treaty was soon after concluded between him and the emir; whereby the tract denominated the prefecture of Ebn Ali, Ashir, and Tâhart, with their respective districts and dependencies, being all the territories he then possessed, were ceded to him. His son Al Kayed was likewise permitted to preside over Al Masilah, Thabenah, Marfa Al Dejaji, Zawawah, Macrah, Dzacamah, and other places; by which conditions, though the emir proved victorious in the late action at Thabenah, it should seem that his affairs at this time were not in a very flourishing situation.

A peace is concluded between Bahao'ddawla's sons.

Soltâno'ddawla Abu Shajâ', having appointed Abu Thaher Jalâlo'ddawla, one of his brothers, to govern the people of Shîrâz, and Abu'l Fawares, another of them, to command in Kermân, the latter revolted against him, and seized the city of Shîrâz. Soltâno'ddawla, having received advice of Abu'l Fawares's defection, advanced at the head of a formidable army to Shîrâz; which, Abu'l Fawares, not being able to make head against him, abandoned at his approach. He even pursued him into Kermân, and drove him out of that province. Abu'l Fawares, therefore, found himself obliged to fly into Khorasân, to implore the assistance and protection of sultân Mahmûd Yamîno'ddawla; who, in compliance with his request, sent Abu Sa'id Tahi, one of his generals, with a numerous body of troops, to make an irruption into Irâk. Abu Sa'id, who was attended by Abu'l Fawares in this expedition, reduced the province of Kermân, penetrated into Fârs, and took the city of Shîrâz. The news of this invasion being brought to Soltâno'ddawla, who was then at Baghdâd, he assembled all the troops he could levy, and marched again towards Shîrâz; of which motion Abu'l Fawares being informed, he fled from thence a second time, with the utmost precipitation, to Hamadân, a city of Al Jebâl, in the Persian Irâk, where Shamso'ddawla Ebn Fakhro'ddawla at that time reigned. Not thinking himself safe

^v Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 282, 283.

there,

there, he retired for farther security to a place called Fakey or Fakkey, the residence, according to Mirkhond, of one Mazzobo'ddawla; who treated him, notwithstanding the unfortunate circumstances he was in, with uncommon marks of distinction and esteem. An accommodation being soon after brought about between Abu'l Fawares and Soltâno'ddawla, by the intervention of Jalâlo'ddawla, their brother, then at Basra, the first of these princes was re-instated in the government of Kermân, by the mutual consent of all parties.

In the 408th year of the Moslem æra, a great body of Tartars and Moguls, comprized under the name of Turks, issuing from the borders of China, ravaged the country from the Oriental ocean to the confines of the proper Turkestan; though when they were within eight days journey of Balâsâgûn, then the capital of that region, they found themselves obliged to halt. Here they were apprized, that Togan or Dogân Khân, at that time king of Turkestan, was marching towards them with a numerous army, in order to cut off their retreat. This intelligence not only prevented their progress any farther westward, but obliged them to think immediately of returning home. We may form some sort of notion of the immense multitude of these eastern Turks, from the prodigious number of tents they pitched; which amounted to above three hundred thousand, according to Abu'l Faraj: but notwithstanding the greatness of their number, they did not think fit to wait for Togan Khân; who pursued them for three months together, at last came up with them, when they thought themselves secure, on account of the vast extent of tract they had traversed, and attacked them with such fury that he put above two hundred thousand of them to the sword. We are likewise told, that he carried off into Turkestan an infinite quantity of baggage, together with the beasts belonging to it, and many vessels of gold and silver, as well as porcelain, such as had never before been seen in his country. This last particular seems to evince, that a body of Chinese themselves were intermixed with those roving eastern Tartars, or Oriental Turks, who had been so rash as to undertake such a romantic expedition ^z.

The Oriental Turks advance towards Balâsâgûn.

The new khalif of Andalusia having violated the engagements he had entered into with Hayran and others,

^z Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 334, 335. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 899.

*What
passed in
the khalifat
of Spain
this year.*

who had been so instrumental in his elevation, they thought themselves at liberty to conspire against him, and, if possible, to drive him from the throne. Hayran, therefore, wrote to Al Mondar Ebn Yahya, the governor of Saragossa, to join him with a body of troops, that he might be enabled to dethrone the tyrant. Having united their forces, they marched to Corduba, and routed a large party of Ali's men, who sallied out of the town; but a dissension arising soon after between Al Mondar and Hayran, they reaped no manner of advantage from this successful action. Hayran began to think of placing the crown upon the head of Abd'alrahmân, of the house of Ommiyah, who bore, according to Roderic, or rather the authors he followed, a very excellent character. Ali, being informed of his design, pursued him from place to place, and at last defeated him. However, according to Ebn Shohnah, Abd'alrahmân found means to attain to the khalifat; and Ali, if we believe Roderic, was assassinated by some of his eunuchs in a bath. The assassins immediately fled from Corduba, and made their escape. Abd'alrahmân assumed the surname of Mortadi, or Mortada, as well as the title of khalif; his authority having been recognized not only by Hayran and Al Mondar Ebn Yahya, but likewise by the kingdoms of Murcia and Valencia, together with part of the people of Catalonia and Arragon. But the minds of Hayran and Al Mondar being afterwards alienated from him, on account of his ungrateful and insolent conduct, they took up arms against him, and were joined by the governor of Granada in their revolt. Abd'alrahmân, being informed of their defection, pursued them to Granada, and formed the siege of that city. But the garrison, being animated by a misunderstanding that prevailed among the officers of Abd'alrahmân's troops, made a sally upon the besiegers, entirely defeated them, and killed Abd'alrahmân upon the spot. This unexpected event gave great pleasure to Al Kasem Ebn Hamûda, who succeeded his brother Ali at Corduba; especially when he understood that Hayran, Al Mondar Ebn Yahya, and the governor of Granada, had submitted to him, and sent him all the valuable spoil that had fallen into their hands. Al Kasem, who had fixed his residence at Seville, now reigned without any competitor in Spain. Soon after his accession, he ordered two boys to be put to death, who had been privy to the murder of his brother.

At this period, an impostor, whose name was Mohammed Ebn Ismael, and his surname Al Darari, appeared in Egypt.

Egypt. He assumed the prophetic character, and taught the people to believe that Al Hâkem was God, who created the universe; and that it was their duty to worship and adore him. Nor did Al Hâkem himself discountenance such blasphemous notions, but on the contrary approved of and encouraged them. He even loaded this impious impostor with all manner of favours. Notwithstanding which, being detested by his subjects, a Turk assassinated him in the khalif's chariot. This outrage occasioned great commotions in Al Kâhirah, which continued three days: During this interval, the populace plundered Al Darari's house, and pulled to pieces several of his followers. As the gates were shut whilst the tumult lasted, the assassin could not make his escape; but was taken, thrown into prison, and at last executed for the crime he had been guilty of. Soon after this commotion was appeased, one of Al Darari's disciples, named Hamza Ebn Ahmed, surnamed Al Hâdi, encouraged probably by the execution of the Turk, who lived at a place called Mesjedbeir, in the neighbourhood of Al Kâhirah, began likewise to act the prophet, and to propagate Al Darari's impious opinions. He planted teachers at Mefr, as also throughout the district of that city, and in several parts of Syria. These were to instruct the converts they made in the most abandoned principles of their infamous sect. They permitted their followers to marry within the prohibited degrees, to omit fasting, prayer, giving alms, the pilgrimage to Mecca, and in short all religious practices and pious exercises whatsoever. This new religion being well calculated to please and soothe the irregular appetites and vicious dispositions of most of the Moslems, many of them readily embraced it, and amongst these even Al Hâkem himself. He asked Al Hâdi many questions concerning the number, manners, and qualities of his adherents; and, notwithstanding the shocking tenets he maintained, greatly carested him. He likewise abstained from the discharge of all the duties of his function, viz. public prayer and preaching in the mosque on Fridays, and the observance of the fast of Ramadân, as well as of the two Beirâms, or principal annual feasts. He also abolished for several years the pilgrimage to Mecca, and performed one himself to Al Thalabiya in its room. Nor did he send the annual present of a rich piece of damask to the Caaba, as his predecessors had usually done. These omissions gave great offence to all the sober Moslems in his dominions, who began to imagine that Islamism would in a short time

The sect of the Dararians commences in Egypt this year.

cease to be the established religion. The sect of the Dararites, or Dararians, grew very numerous at Tyre, Sidon, Berytus, or Bayreut, and the neighbouring districts. M. D'Herbelot, from some Oriental writers, asserts, that Al Darari came from Persia into Egypt; and that his successor, Al Hâdi, introduced an unlimited licentiousness and debauchery amongst the Egyptian Moslems. He moreover observes, that these profligate sectaries occupied a considerable part of Mount Lebanon, and the maritime coasts of Syria ^a.

Soltân Mahmûd's exploits in India, during the year 409.

Next year, being the 409th of the Hejra, soltân Mahmûd undertook to subjugate the northern part of India, and carried the war into the country of Kifraje, about three months journey distant from Gazna. All which immense tract he absolutely conquered, and brought home with him from thence riches that were almost inestimable, together with such a number of slaves, that he exposed them to sale for only six dirhems a-piece. He overthrew Gulkand, a pagan rajah, in this expedition, and put fifty thousand of his men to the sword. That rajah had a beautiful wife, of whom he was extremely fond; but fearing that she would fall into the enemy's hands, he first dispatched her, and then himself. After the conclusion of the military operations, Mahmûd returned to Gazna, loaded with the treasure as well as covered with the laurels he had acquired, in the course of this glorious campaign ^b.

Jaafar Ebn Yusef, the emir of Sicily, is deposed, and succeeded by Ahmed Ebn Yusef, his younger brother.

In the same year the Sicilian Moslems besieged in his palace Tajo'ddawla Jaafar Ebn Yusef, their emir. But his father Yusef, who had formerly presided over them, before a stroke of the palsy had rendered him incapable of discharging the duties of his office, appearing, and promising to abdicate in favour of Ahmed Al Akhali, his younger son, they presently dispersed, acknowledged Ahmed for their emir, and returned in peace to their respective habitations. Ahmed, soon after his accession, had the title of Tayedo'ddawla, that is, *the Strength, or Support, of the Court*, likewise given him by the khalif of Egypt. He continued to act in the capacity or quality of emir, till the year of the Hejra 427 ^c.

^a Joan. Europalat. in Basil. Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 264, 265. Al Makrizi, D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Dararioun. p. 287. Renaud. Hist. Patriarch. Alexandrin. Jacobit. p. 397. ^b D'Herbel. ubi supra, p. 534. Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 283. ^c Al Kadi Shahabo'ddin Ebn Abildam Al Hamawi. in Hist. cui tit. Asmodf. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 336. Joan. Baptist. Caruf. in Hist. Saracenicæ-Sicul. p. 22. Panormi, 1720.

In the 410th year of the Hejra, one of Soltâno'ddawla's generals held an illicit correspondence with Afem Ebn Bakao'ddawla, who was possessed of part of the province of Diyâr Becr, which being discovered, occasioned a war between those two princes. Which of them proved superior in this war, we have not been expressly told; though several actions, according to Mirkhond, happened in it. However, Moshrefo'ddawla, Soltâno'ddawla's brother, who seems to have been Afem's ally, by the treaty of peace concluded between the contending parties, before the close of the year in which the rupture commenced, was confirmed in the government of the Arabian Irâk. What was assigned Afem by this treaty, that author, or rather Teixeira, his translator, has not recorded; but as for Soltâno'ddawla, he was acknowledged, by virtue of it, absolute sovereign of Ahwâz and Fârs, two provinces over which he had presided before^d.

In the following year Al Hâkem, the khalif of Syria and Egypt, having reproved his sister, Settalmalûc, Settalmalûca, or Settalmolc, the daughter of Al Azîz Bi'llah, in very reproachful and menacing terms, she prevailed upon Ebn Dawâs, attended by two of his servants, to assassinate him, together with two horsemen and a boy that waited upon him. The scene of this dreadful transaction was Mount Al Mokattem, near the sepulchre of Al Fokâ'i, towards the eastern part of Holwân. In order to excite Ebn Dawâs to the perpetration of so horrid a fact, she promised to place him at the head of the administration, and gave the two assassins he employed one thousand dinârs. The body of the murdered khalif, which the villains brought to her, she buried in her own house, and for some time kept his death concealed. But at last, when the people began to be in a great ferment about him, she convoked the grandees and principal courtiers, and discovered the murder. Then she caused Ebn Dawâs and his two domestics, who had imbrued their hands in the blood of their sovereign, and all other persons in any manner privy to the affair, to be put to death; or rather, as we find it intimated by Al Makîn, she slew them with her own hand. Al Hâkem's violent exit happened in the month of Shawâl, soon after he had completed the twenty-fifth year of his reign, being then about thirty-seven years old. With regard to his disposition, the Arab writers have said little in favour of him. They have represented him as

*Al Hâkem's
death and
character.*

^d Mirkhond, apud Teixeir. p. 285, 286.

fickle and inconstant in all his actions, impetuous, cruel, capricious, and void of all religion. He was, however, on some occasions, munificent. As he knew his subjects had sufficient reason to dislike him, he frequently walked in the night-time disguised, to know their sentiments of his conduct. He also employed certain old women as spies and informers, to enter people's houses, observe what passed therein, and communicate to him the result of their observations. He was very severe upon the female part of his subjects, and destroyed several of them. Nay, he would not permit any of them to come out of their houses, or even to go up to the top of them. Nor would he suffer them to wear any shoes, imagining that this prohibition would effectually prevent them from making excursions into the streets, or any other public places; but issued an edict forbidding such a practice. The Egyptians, therefore, during his reign, groaned under the severest pressure of tyranny that could be conceived. This excited several of them to write anonymous letters, wherein they made bitter complaints of his oppressive conduct, and added to these complaints the most dreadful imprecations. Some went farther still, and placed in the highway a statue resembling a woman, with a girdle and shoes on, holding a sealed-up libel, or paper, in her hand. Al Hâkem himself, coming to the spot where the image had been erected, read the paper held out to him; the contents whereof gave him such offence, that he commanded the city of Meſr to be reduced to ashes, and all its inhabitants to be put to the sword. The latter of these orders, however, he found not so easy to be executed, the citizens defending themselves with uncommon bravery, and repulsing those sent to massacre them with the utmost vigour. Nevertheless, he found means to set the city on fire in several places, and to plunder many of its inhabitants, during the time of the conflagration; though he pretended to be ignorant both of the author and the cause of those public calamities, and even to be greatly concerned for them. When the flames had raged three days, the principal citizens assembled in the great cathedral church, which probably had been converted into a mosque, with copies of the Koran in their hands, imploring the divine assistance with many tears and lamentations, and sent a petition to Al Hâkem, subscribed by them all, and conceived in the following terms: "We are all your servants, and Meſr is your city; and our wives and children are in it. We are not conscious to ourselves of any crime that merits so
heavy

heavy a punishment. If it is your will that we should abandon the place, we are ready to do it. But if this disaster has happened without your knowledge or permission, give us leave to drive the instruments of it immediately out of the city." Al Hâkem returned for answer, that he had neither permitted nor commanded any incendiaries to burn the city. Notwithstanding which assertion, he dispatched private orders to the infamous actors of this tragedy to continue and even extend the flames, and massacre all the people that should fall in their way. A fourth part of the city being now consumed, and the citizens miserably pillaged, they came to a resolution to retire to Al Kâhira. This design so intimidated Al Hâkem, that he revoked the orders he had lately given; a circumstance which saved the remainder of the houses, that had escaped the fury of the conflagration, and repressed the insolence of the incendiaries, who had committed many disorders. For, they had not only massacred a great number of the Christians, Jews, and Moslems, without regard to either age or sex, that inhabited Meſr, but they had likewise ravished several married women, and forced their husbands afterwards to redeem them with large sums of money. Other women had also laid violent hands on themselves, in order to avoid being violated by these most infamous barbarians. In the mean time, the Dararians, and a considerable part of the mob, were so infatuated, that, when they saw Al Hâkem, who rode upon an ass about the streets, whilst this scene of villainy was acting, they cried out, "O our God, who art the author of life and death!" an expression which cannot but imprint in our minds a very lively idea of the madness and impiety of the most corrupt and abandoned state, at which the Egyptian rabble were now arrived*.

That this monster of cruelty and folly should persecute both the Christians and the Jews, seems not at all surprising, after the preceding delineation of his character; though he appears to have been prompted to this conduct rather by his innate cruelty, than any zeal for his religion. For, notwithstanding he sufficiently favoured the professors of Islamism until the 400th year of the Hejra, yet he then began to alter his conduct; and was afterwards seized with such impiety, that he seemed to have a total disregard for all religions. Nor can we well account upon

Some farther particulars relating to him.

* Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 258, 259, 260. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 411. Greg. Abu'l-faraj. ubi sup. p. 335, 336. Ebn Shohnah, Al Makrizi, Al Kodai, Ebu Al Sabi, &c. Vide etiam Renaud. ubi sup. p. 397.

any other principle for his atrocious attempt to burn Mefr, and massacre all the inhabitants of that city. He demolished the church of the Resurrection at Jerufalem, at the instigation of the Jews, and many others in Syria and Egypt, between the 403d and 405th years of the Hejra, as we learn from Al Makrizi, a Mohammedan writer. All the rich furniture, sacred vessels, ornaments, revenues, and possessions belonging to them, he either confiscated himself, or suffered his Mohammedan subjects to seize upon and carry off. He likewise obliged all Christian and Jewish strangers either to wear such a habit as should distinguish them from all other people, or to embrace Islamism, or lastly to quit his dominions. By these and other hardships, he so harrassed and distressed both Christians and Jews, that many of them became Mohammedans. However, not long before his death, he permitted the Christians to rebuild their churches, and restored those that had not been thrown down. They were afterwards allowed the free exercise of their religion, and had all their former privileges confirmed in their utmost extent. All sorts of necessaries and provisions, which had been usually sold in the market-place, he commanded the men to carry about the streets, and to supply the women with them at home. Settalmalûc, Settalmolc, or Settalmolca, Al Hâkem's sister, caused Abu'l Hasan Ali, his son, to be saluted khalif of Syria and Egypt, on the last day of Shawâl, about eighteen days after the assassination of his father. The young prince was born at Al Kâhirah, on Wednesday the 14th of Ramadân, in the year of the Hejra 395, as we learn from Al Makîn. He received the surname of Al Thâher Leezâz'dini'llah, immediately after his accession. His aunt Settalmolca took upon her the government of Syria and Egypt, and survived her brother Al Hâkem about four years. At this time, there were no less than sixteen thousand Dararians, who acknowledged Al Hâkem for their divinity, in Egypt, according to Al Makîn †.

*Moshrefo'ddawla
defeats
Soltâno'd-
dawla's
forces.*

Although it had been formerly agreed, that Soltâno'd-dawla should remain possessed of Ahwâz and Fârs, and Moshrefo'ddawla Ebn Bahao'ddawla, his brother, should continue in the government of the Arabian Irâk, Soltâno'ddawla sent Ebn Sâleh, with a powerful army, to drive Moshrefo'ddawla out of his province. The latter of these princes met his brother's forces in the field, with an army much inferior in number; but as it consisted entirely of veterans, he easily routed Ebn Sâleh, and forced him to

† *idem* *ibid.* et alib.

shut himself up in a fortress of considerable strength. Here he closely besieged him, and at last obliged him to surrender at discretion; so that both he and his garrison were made prisoners of war. This victory so elevated Moshrefo'ddawla, that he assumed the title of Shâhinshâh or Shâhenshâh, that is, *King of Kings*. The success which had attended his arms secured to him the possession of his territories, though it did not immediately produce a peace^z.

Next year, being the 412th year of the Hejra, Moshrefo'ddawla deprived Ebn Salah of his sight; but we are ignorant of the motive to this cruelty. He also entered into an alliance with Jalâlo'ddawla, one of his brothers, and joined him with all his forces. This measure was pursued by both of them, as necessary for their mutual support. It seems to have paved the way to the accommodation effected between Moshrefo'ddawla and Soltâno'ddawla, in the following year.

Al Kasem Ebn Hamûda, the khalif of Andalusia, having been deposed by the people of Corduba, Yahya, one of his nephews, by the unanimous suffrages of the Moslems there, ascended the throne. He was courteous and munificent, and for a short time greatly pleased all his subjects: but, when he went to Malaga, he gave Al Kasem, who was then at Seville, an opportunity of posting with the utmost celerity to Corduba, and recovering the crown^b.

Al Kasem Ebn Hamûda loses, and recovers the khalifat of Spain.

In the 413th year of the Hejra, Al Kasem Ebn Hamûda, who had taken the surname of Al Kayem, not being able to repress the insolence of the barbarians, or African Moslems, who supported him, and committed great ravages and disorders both in the city and territory of Corduba, was deposed by the citizens of that capital; who assembled in a body, and expelled both him and the Africans adhering to him, many of whom were put to the sword. Being expelled Corduba, he went to Seville, where his sons then resided, and commanded the people to fit up one thousand five hundred of the best houses in the city, for the reception of the African troops that attended him. This order so incensed the inhabitants, that they shut their gates against him, sent his sons with a few of their adherents to his camp, and elected Al Kâdi Mohammed Ebn Habeth to govern them in his room. Al Kasem afterwards, for some time, strolled about the country, being

Al Kasem Ebn Hamûda is deposed.

^z Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. ubi sup. p. 286. Toletan. ubi sup. c. xlv. cap. 35.

^b Roderic. destitute

destitute of a fixed habitation; and was at last taken by his nephew Yahya, who reigned a short time at Corduba, and loaded with irons. Mean while, after the expulsion of Al Kasem, the people of Corduba elected Abd'alrahmân, cousin-german to Mohammed, one of their former princes, of the house of Ommiyah, who did not sit long upon the throne: for, though he had pardoned many of the principal citizens, who before his accession had consented to the election of Solimân Al Mortada, and afterwards delivered him up into his hands, he violated his promise, and sent them all to prison. The people of Corduba being justly exasperated at this perfidious conduct, broke open the prison doors, released the prisoners, killed Abd'alrahmân, whom they found hid in a bath, and buried him in a house belonging to one of the suburbs of the city, after he had reigned one month and seventeen days.

Abu Shajâ is assassinated at Aleppo.

The same year, Kayed Abu Sajâ, who had assumed the surname, or title, of Azîzo'ddawla, was assassinated in the citadel of Aleppo, by Bîrûz, an Indian slave. He was sent by Al Hâkem to Aleppo, as his governor of that city, in the year of the Hejra 407. He arrived at Aleppo in the month of Ramadân; and soon after declared himself independent in that city. He was no sooner dead than Abu'l Manajem Bedr, who had been servant to Al Manjûbekîn, the Turk, one of Al Azîz's mamluks, or purchased slaves, seized upon the sovereignty of Aleppo, and governed, as did his predecessor, independently on the khalif of Egypt. Azîzo'ddawla had reposed great confidence in him, and appointed him to command in the citadel; an office which enabled him, upon that usurper's exit, to make himself master of the city. After he had obliged the citizens to recognize his authority, as sâheb or prince of Aleppo, he took the surname of Walio'ddawla, and made the proper dispositions for his defence. However, having received advice, that Al Thâher, the khalif of Egypt, had sent a numerous army against him, under the command of Safio'ddawla Abu'l Hâsan Ali Ebn Jaafar Ebn Balâh Al Catâmi, and finding himself not in a condition to make head against the khalif's forces, he came to a resolution to surrender the place to that general. He, therefore, delivered up the keys both of the castle and the city to Al Catâmi, as soon as he presented himself before the town. Upon which, Al Catâmi, in obedience to the khalif's order, made Sa'âda, surnamed Yamîno'ddawla, commandant of the citadel, and took upon himself the government

government of the town. We must not forget to observe, that a treaty of peace was concluded between Moshrefo'ddawla and Soltâno'ddawla, Bahao'ddawla's sons, who had been at variance between two and three years before the close of the present yearⁱ.

In the 414th of the Hejra, Mohammed, who succeeded Abd'alrahmân in the khalifat of Andalusia, was destroyed by his own servants, who coveted the pearls, jewels, and immense riches he was supposed to have amassed, after he had reigned one year and four months. He visited the frontiers of his kingdom, and was attended by a considerable retinue, formed of people who believed that he carried all his treasures along with him; an opinion, which, as Roderic seems to intimate, occasioned his being poisoned, before he had finished his intended progress. The inhabitants of Corduba, having received advice of his death, placed Yahya Ebn Ali upon the throne; who, after he had ruled over them three months and twenty days, went to Malaga, where he formerly used to reside. This removal gave the sâheb or emir of Granada an opportunity of sending two persons of his family to Corduba; of which circumstance the people of that city being informed, upon their arrival they admitted them into the town, killed one thousand of the Africans quartered amongst them, and obliged all Yahya's relations to fly to Malaga, where they were kindly received. Soon after this new revolution, Ismael Ebn Habeth assassinated Yahya, and sent his head to Heshâm, who had fixed his residence at Seville. Idris, the governor of Ceuta, having been informed of the commotions and civil dissensions in Spain, crossed the sea, and came to Malaga, where he was joined by the emir of Granada, and others, who acknowledged him for their sovereign. Being at the head of a large body of troops, he advanced first to Seville, and afterwards to Almeria, and forced the inhabitants of both those cities to make their submission. In the mean time, the two persons sent to Corduba by the emir of Granada, after their admission into the town became jealous and afraid of each other; so that both of them soon disappeared, and were never afterwards seen. The citizens of Corduba, therefore, pitched upon Heshâm for their khalif; who, according to Roderic, reigned at Corduba two years and four days, and in Fron-

The transactions in the Moslem part of Spain, the following year.

ⁱ Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 260, 261. Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 286,

taria, perhaps the modern Fronteira, two years seven months and eight days. His hâjeb, or chamberlain, who was his prime minister, and governed with absolute power, excited the hatred of all the Moslems over whom he presided, by his wicked and oppressive administration. As his tyranny knew no bounds, he at last fell a sacrifice to the fury of those who had been the objects of it, and his master Heshâm was deposed ^k.

*Sâleh Ebn
Mardâs
takes
Aleppo.*

In the same year, Al Thâher, the khalif of Egypt, deprived Safio'ddawla Al Catâmi of the government of Aleppo, and appointed Abu Mohammed Al Hafan Ebn Mohammed Ebn Tha'bân Al Catâmi, surnamed Sanad'oddawla, to succeed him in that post. This account we have from Al Makîn. But Abu'lfeza relates, that Sanado'ddawla, whom he calls Ebn Tha'bân, was sent by the khalif of Egypt to govern the town and that Mawfûf, an eunuch, was constituted by that prince commandant of the castle. Be that as it may, both those authors agree, that Sâleh Ebn Mardas, the emir of the Kelâbite Arabs, marched with a powerful army to Aleppo, in the course of the present year. They likewise add, that the Egyptian yoke being grown intolerable, the inhabitants of that city opened their gates to Sâleh, and admitted his troops into the town; a circumstance which obliged Sanado'ddawla Al Catâmi to retire into the castle, where Mawfûf commanded a pretty numerous garrison. The Egyptian troops, however, after having sustained a siege, were forced to surrender the place, by capitulation, to Abu'l Mansûr Solimân Ebn Tawf, Sâleh's secretary, for want of provisions. As soon as Saleh had possessed himself of the city of Aleppo, he made this Abu'l Mansûr Solimân Ebn Tawf governor of it, left him with a body of troops to lay siege to the castle, and marched with the rest of his army to reduce Baalbec; which, after some resistance he took by storm, and put a great number of people to the sword. Solimân having dispatched an express to his master with intelligence of the surrender of the citadel, Sâleh returned to Aleppo, put a garrison in the castle, and cut off Mawfûf's head. He has been represented as a just and equitable prince by Al Makîn; who likewise informs us, that, after the above mentioned conquests, he assumed the title, or surname, of Asado'ddawla, and ruled the people of Aleppo about six years. By the reduction of the castle, and the city of

^k Roderic. Toletan, ubi sup. cap. xlv. xlv. p. 36, 37.

Baalbec, his territories extended from the latter of those places to Ana, and the frontiers of Irâk¹.

Next year, being the 415th of the Hejra, Abu Shaja' Soltâno'ddawla, of the house of Bûiya, died, in the month of Shawâl, at Shîrâz. He succeeded Bahao'ddawla, his father, in the post of emir al omra, as well as in the sovereignty of Persia and Irâk, and reigned about twelve years. According to the Arab writers, Abu Câlijâr, Soltâno'ddawla's son, ascended the throne of Karmân and Fârs, after his father's decease. Mirkhond writes, that Soltâno'ddawla's son, then at Ahwâz, whom he calls Abu'l Ganjar, having received advice of his father's death, immediately made the proper dispositions for repairing to Shîrâz; an escort having been sent him by Abu Mokarram, one of Soltâno'ddawla's generals, to conduct him to that city. In the mean time, continues he, the Turks, or Turkmâns, settled at Shîrâz, declared for Abu'l Fawâres, one of Soltâno'ddawla's brothers, in Kermân; who arrived at Shirâz, before Abu'l Ganjar had left Ahwâz, and caused Abu Mokarram to be put under arrest. However, being informed, that Abu'l Kasem, Abu Mokarram's son, was marching with a large body of troops towards Shîrâz, and followed by Abu'l Ganjar himself at the head of a powerful army, he thought fit to abandon that city; which fell into the hands of Abu'l Ganjar, who was proclaimed sultân of Karmân and Fârs. But a new revolution in a short time happening, that prince found himself obliged to cede those provinces by treaty to Abu'l Fawâres, who assigned him the sovereignty of Ahwâz. Abu'l Ganjar's friends, being displeased with a treaty so dishonourable to him, excited him to assert his right to the territories he had been constrained to relinquish to his uncle. He, therefore, raised an army in the district of Ahwâz, which was soon reinforced by his adherents, who flocked to him out of Fârs, defeated Abu'l Fawâres, and possessed himself a second time of Shîrâz. His competitor's orders were nevertheless obeyed in Kermân, 'till the day of his death. This is the relation of the troubles which immediately happened on Soltâno'ddawla's decease, extracted from Mirkhond. Other authors affirm, that Soltâno'ddawla was not succeeded by his son, but by Abu Thâher Jalâlo'ddawla, his brother: from whence it ap-

Abu Shaja' Soltâno'ddawla dies, in the year 415.

¹ AlMakin, ubi sup. p. 261, 262. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad. ann. Hej. 414.

pears, that, both with regard to the principal transactions of Soltâno'ddawla's reign and the person who succeeded him, the eastern writers are far from being perfectly agreed. About this period, Set Al Malc, or Settalmolc, Al Hâkem's sister, who had placed herself at the head of the administration in Egypt, likewise departed this life ^m.

The principal events of the year 416.

In the 416th year of the Hejra, Ali Sharfo'ddawla, Abu'l Fawâres, Moshrefoddawla, or Abu Ali Moshrefo'ddawla, for he went by all those names, died at Baghdâd. He commanded in the quality of emir al omra, according to Mirkhond, five years and twenty-five days; and had not completed the 24th year of his age, at the time of his decease. He was no sooner dead than the grandees of the court sent to Abu Thâher Jalâlo'ddawla, his brother, then at Basra, to take the government upon him. But his arrival at Baghdâd having been by some accident retarded, another person was vested with the authority of emir al omra by the khâlif. This affront so exasperated Jalâlo'ddawla, that he advanced at the head of a formidable army to the gates of Baghdâd. The khalif Al Kader Bi'llah endeavouring in vain to appease him, a battle was fought in the neighbourhood of that city. This terminated in the entire defeat of Jalâlo'ddawla; who lost all his baggage, had a great number of his men killed on the spot, and fled with the utmost precipitation to Basra. However, he met with better success, as we shall presently see, in the following year. About the same time, soltân Mahmûd undertook another expedition into India, penetrated into the southern parts of that great region, and entered the kingdom of Sûmenat, or Sowmenat; which, after many victories, he subdued. Some historians say, that Sûmenat was the name of an idol, which the inhabitants of this country adored; and that this name was communicated to the whole tract, wherein that idol was worshipped. But Ferido'ddîn Atthar was of another opinion, when he affirmed, that Mahmûd's troops found in the country of Sûmenat an idol named Lât, or Al Lat. Mirkhond reports, in the temple of this idol there were fifty-six pillars of massy gold, all covered with rubies and other precious stones. The idol itself was made of one entire stone, fifty cubits in length; but did not seem to be

^m Al Makin, ubi sup. p. 262. Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 335, 336, 337. Khondemir, Lobb Al Tawarikh, Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 286, 287, 288. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Solthanaloulat, p. 826.

above three cubits high, the other forty-seven being buried in the earth. This idol Mahmûd broke in pieces with his own hands, and caused above fifty thousand of its idolatrous votaries in a short time to be sacrificed. He also took out of the temple and the royal treasury of the king, whose territories he had conquered, above five millions of pounds sterling, exclusive of the booty carried off by his troops, the quantity of which was likewise immense. The idol Lât, or Al Lât, was worshipped by the ancient Arabs, as well as the Indians subdued by Mahmûd, particularly the tribe of Thakîf, who dwelt at Tayef. Nasîro'ddawla Ebn Merwân, the sâheb or lord, of Diyâr Becr, took possession, this year, of the city of Al Rohâ, or Edeffa; which the inhabitants, justly displeased with the foolish and iniquitous conduct of Atîrâ, one of the Nomerite, or Nomerite Arabs, who before presided over them, delivered into his hands. As soon as the people offered to make their submission to him, Nasîro'ddawla sent Zenc or Zeng, the governor of Amed, to Al Rohâ; who, upon his arrival, cut off Atîrâ's head, and caused his master to be proclaimed sovereign of the place.

In the 417th year of the Hejra, a numerous army of Turks, according to Mirkhond, laid siege to the city of Baghdâd; and took it, after a feeble defence. They were no sooner masters of this capital than they plundered and set fire to it; by which means the people were reduced to extreme poverty, and the greater part of the city was consumed. The victors not thinking themselves secure in the possession of their new conquests, on account of the incursions of the Arabs and Curds, they put themselves under the protection of Jalâlo'ddawla, then at Basra; who, having received advice of this unexpected revolution, immediately repaired to Baghdâd. Upon his arrival, he went to the khalif's palace, was received by that prince with the utmost affability and condescension, and permitted to kiss his foot. He had afterwards the post of emir al omra conferred upon him, and continued at the head of the administration, or rather exercised sovereign power, at Baghdâd, 'till the day of his death".

What happened, in the year 417.

In the following year, being the 418th of the Hejra, Jalâlo'ddawla firmly secured to himself the charge of emir

" Greg. Abu'l Faraj. ubi sup. p. 337. Al Makin, ubi sup. Mirkhond, apud Teixeir. p. 288. Ferido'ddin Atthar, apud D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 534. ut & ipse D'Herbel. ibid. Poc. Not. in Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 13a. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 380.

*The chief
transactions of the
year 418.*

al omra at Baghdâd, and satisfied the demands of the soldiers in such a manner, that he kept them within the bounds of their duty. About this time, soltân Mahmûd undertook another expedition into Indostân, overthrew Gîpal and Tandebal, two very powerful rajahs, with exceeding great slaughter, and acquired an immense quantity of spoil. After Mahmûd had reduced India, or at least the most considerable part of that great region, to his obedience, he established in one of the conquered provinces a tributary prince or rajah, of the house of Dabshelim, a most ancient and powerful king of the Indies, contemporary with Hufheng, the third Persian king of the race of Pishdâd. The affairs of the Moslems in Spain remained still in the utmost disorder and confusion. Towards the close of this, or the beginning of the next year, Heshâm, the king, or khalif of Corduba, was deposed, and his hâjeb, or chamberlain, who acted as his wazîr, murdered by the people of that city. This minister, who was of mean extraction, and discovered the lowness of his birth on all occasions, had, by his infamous and iniquitous conduct, excited the inhabitants of that capital to revolt. He squandered away the citizens money and most valuable effects upon the Africans, or Barbarians, that supported him, quarrelled with all the grandees of the court, punished the innocent, and was guilty of the most criminal excesses, through the whole course of his administration. The people therefore, fleeced and oppressed in so flagrant a manner, laid violent hands upon him, and drove his master from the throne. Heshâm, however, after his expulsion, was permitted to retire to a castle or fortress in the mountainous part of the district of Corduba, and his family to remain in the town. But, repenting afterwards of their lenity, the Moslems he formerly governed attacked the fortress in which he had shut himself up, seized upon his person, and put him under arrest. He had not been long in a state of confinement, before he found an opportunity of escaping by night to Solimân, the emir of Saragossa; who assigned him a castle, named by Roderic Alzuhela, for the place of his residence, where, he continued till the day of his death. The deposition of Heshâm gave the finishing stroke to the Moslem kingdom of Corduba, or khalifat of Andalusia, and to the domination of the house of Ommiyah in Spain; the governors, or emirs, throwing off their allegiance after that event, in most of the principal places of that country. The inhabitants of
Corduba

Corduba nevertheless still coined money inscribed with Heshâm's name, as he had not been yet succeeded by any other prince. Nor was there, if we believe Roderic, any regular government firmly settled amongst them, before the arrival of the Al Morabeta, or Molathemiyah, called Al Moravides by the Spanish writers, which introduced a new dynasty of Moslem princes into Andalusia, and the other neighbouring provinces of Spain°.

In the 419th year of the Hejra the Turkish troops mutinied for their pay, plundered the palace of Abu Ali, Jalâlo'ddawla's wazîr, and committed many disorders in the city of Baghdâd. As the treasure and effects found in the wazîr's palace amounted to the value of many thousand dinârs, they grew more insolent upon this success, and even at last seized upon the person of Jalâlo'ddawla himself, when he attempted to reclaim them to a sense of their duty. Nor would they permit him to remove from the house in which they had confined him, before the khalif had promised to satisfy their demands, which he afterwards did, having parted with all the ready money he had by him, and sold all the valuable furniture of his palace, in order to raise the sum he had engaged to pay.

The Turkish troops mutiny at Baghdâd.

About this time Abu Câlijâr, having received advice that sultân Mahmûd's troops had begun their march for Al Ray, wrote to Jalâlo'ddawla, his uncle, and proposed a defensive alliance for the safety of their respective dominions: but so far was Jalâlo'ddawla from entertaining any thoughts of this kind, that he in a hostile manner entered Ahwâz, pillaged it, and carried off a considerable sum of money, which he found in Abu Câlijâr's treasury. The Turks and the Deylamites coming to an open rupture at Basra, Al Mâlec Azîz Ebn Abû Mansûr, Jalâlo'ddawla's grandson, favoured the Turks at this juncture; a circumstance which greatly disgusted the Deylamites, and protracted the troubles in that city. This disaffection gave Abu Câlijâr, who after Jalâlo'ddawla's departure had moved at the head of a powerful army into the district of Ahwâz, an opportunity of making himself master of Basra. From thence he advanced to Wâset, and took it; upon which all Jalâlo'ddawla's wealth, together with his family and rela-

Other memorable events of the year 419.

° Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 282, 283, 288. Khondemir, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, in Nighiarist. Roderic. Toletan. ubi supra, cap. xlv. xlvii. p. 37. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 280, 534.

tions, fell into his hands. Jalâlo'ddawla himself was obliged to continue in a state of inaction, his troops refusing to follow him for want of their pay. As he had not a sum of money sufficient to enable him to satisfy their demands, on this emergency he attempted to borrow of one of the richest inhabitants of Baghdâd; a circumstance which drew upon him the general dislike of the people of that metropolis. Hammad or Hamet Ebn Yusef Belkîn Ebn Zeir Al Sanhâji, who founded the kingdom or dynasty of the Hammadites in the African province of Bajayah, according to Abu'lfeda, died, and was succeeded by his son Al Kayed in the present year. About the same time soltân Mahmûd's health declined, to the great concern of those about him. However he sent one of his generals, with a formidable army, to reduce Al Ray, Esfahân, and the whole Persian Irâk, the success of whose arms will in a short time fully appear.

The principal transactions of the year 420.

In the following year, being the 420th of the Hejra, soltân Mahmûd, after his return from the last Indian expedition to Gazna, according to Mirkhond, erected a stately mosque, as an instance of his gratitude to God for the many victories he had obtained. Soon after he conquered Majdo'ddawla Ebn Fakhro'ddawla's kingdom. This conquest he achieved by one of his generals, who penetrated into Al Jebâl, then possessed by that prince, and seized upon Esfahân and Al Ray, the two principal cities of that province. As Majdo'ddawla Abu Tâleb Rostam Ebn Fakhro'ddawla was a very pusillanimous and indolent prince, he made not the least attempt to oppose the soltân's forces, but submitted without striking a stroke; imagining that by such a conduct he should so ingratiate himself with Mahmûd, that his territories would not be taken from him; but in this hope he found himself greatly mistaken; for as soon as Mahmûd was informed that both he and his son were taken prisoners, he immediately repaired to the city of Al Ray, where Majdo'ddawla and his family then resided, and first examined his treasury. Here he found a million of dinârs in money, and jewels that amounted to five hundred thousand more. He likewise met with a vast quantity of gold and silver plate, and many other valuable effects. Afterwards he ordered Majdo'ddawla to be brought before him, and asked him, whether he had read the chronicle of the kings? To which he replied, he had. Mahmûd then demanded whether he could play at chess; he answered, he could.

“ Did

“ Did you ever then (continued Mahmûd) read in the book, that two kings reigned in one kingdom? Or did you ever see at cheſs two kings upon the ſame checquer?” Majo’ddawla anſwering in the negative, he rebuked him for entertaining ſo weak and ſimple a notion as that of being reinſtated in the government of his dominions. He then ſent him, together with his ſon and wazîr, to Gazna. He alſo ordered the noble library found at Ray, or Al Ray, to be tranſported to his reſidence in Khorafân; and ſoon after went thither himſelf. In the mean time he left his ſon Maſ’ûd at Al Ray to preſide over the people he had ſubjugated ^p.

The circumſtances attending this expedition of ſoltân Mahmûd’s troops into the Perſian Irâk, and the reduction of that large province, having been differently related by other eastern writers, our curious readers will not be diſpleaſed to find inſerted the following extraſt of that relation. In the 420th year of the Hejra ſoltân Mahmûd undertook the conqueſt of the Perſian Irâk, where Abu Tâleb Roſtam Majdo’ddawla Ebn Fakhro’ddawla, the laſt prince of this country of the houſe of Bûiya, at that time reigned. When this prince’s father died, Seyda, his mother, was appointed regent of the kingdom, which ſhe governed with great prudence and moderation, during the minority of her ſon. As ſoon as Majdo’ddawla came to be of age, he deprived his mother of the government, and conferred it upon Abu Ali Ebn Sînâ, or Avicenna, his wazîr. Seyda fled to the caſtle of Tabarek, in Larîſtân, or the kingdom of Lar, which extends itſelf along the eaſtern coaſt of the Perſian Gulf, where ſhe met with a very favourable reception from Padarîn, ſurnamed Haſnûiya, who commanded in that fortrefs. Being aſſiſted by that commandant with a ſtrong body of troops, ſhe advanced into the neighbourhood of Al Ray, overthrew Majdo’ddawla, who offered her battle, took him priſoner, made herſelf miſtreſs of Al Ray, his capital, and remounted the throne. In this eminent ſituation ſhe continued to give her ſubjects marks of her juſtice and wiſdom, after ſhe had moſt clearly demonſtrated her courage and conſtancy in adverſity. She granted audiences to her own miniſters behind a curtain made of tranſparent ſilk; but to the ambaffadors of great princes with her face uncovered. She ſoon pardoned her ſon, placed the crown again upon his head, and only

*Another
account of
this expe-
dition.*

^p Mirkhond, apud Teixeira, p. 284, 285.

assisted at his councils. As long as she lived his reign was prosperous and happy; but immediately after her death, which happened in the course of this year, soltân Mahmûd, who was a very powerful neighbour, attacked the Persian Irak on the side of Mazanderân, and approached the city of Al Ray, with an intention to besiege it. Before he entered the province he gave his generals orders to get soltân Majdo'ddawla alive, if possible, into their hands. They found it an easy matter enough to execute their master's orders; for Majdo'ddawla, through simplicity, came and surrendered himself a prisoner. It was no sooner known that Majdo'ddawla had met with so hard a fate, than the cities of Esfahân, Kazwîn, and others, as well as Al Ray, submitted to the victor. In consequence of which submission his authority was recognized throughout the Persian Irâk, where the house of Bûiyah had ruled a great number of years. The people of this province, however, grew weary of their new sovereign, and discovered an inclination to revolt, almost the very moment after they had so unanimously submitted to his dominion; but Mahmûd treated with such severity those who refused to bear the yoke he had so lately imposed upon them, that he put to death at once four thousand of the principal inhabitants of Esfahân, and a very considerable number of those of Kazwîn, who had broke into open rebellion against him. By which means having appeased all commotions in this part of his dominions, and settled his son Mas'ûd in the government of the Persian Irâk, he returned into Khorasân, and after he had made some stay in that province, departed from thence to Gazna. As for Mas'ûd, he fixed his residence at Al Ray, the capital of the territories over which he was left to preside ⁹.

*The Gazan
Turks are
defeated
by Mah-
mûd.*

In the same year soltân Mahmûd Yamîno'ddawla conquered a large body of Gaz, or Gazan Turks, commanded by Arslân Ebn Seljûn, and drove them out of Khorasân, where they committed dreadful ravages and depredations. This particular we learn from Abu'l-Faraj; who likewise informs us, that a great number were taken prisoners on this occasion, and that as many men as occupied two thousand tents retired to Esfahân. In the mean time Togrol Bek, Dawd, and their brother Bîgû,

⁹ Khondemir, Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Ab'daljaafar Al Kazwini, in Nighiarist. alique Scriptor. Orient. apud D'Herbel. ubi sup. p. 527. 534, 535. ut & ipse D'Herbel. ibid.

all of them sons of Mîcâyyl Ebn Seljûk Ebn Yakâk, remained with a considerable force of the same nation in Mawarâ'nahr. A corps also of the Gazan Turks, or Turkmâns, who had escaped out of Khorasân, penetrated into Adherbijân, advanced to Marâga, entered that city, and laid the temple in ashes. At the same time they put a great number of the inhabitants to the sword; amongst whom were many of the Hadhbâniyan, or Harrâyyan Curds. Afterwards, according to the same author, they made themselves masters of Al Ray and Hamadân, and even seized upon Al Mawfel; though he seems to intimate, that the last of these cities very strenuously opposed them, if they did not oblige them to abandon that place.

This year proved fatal to Sâleh Ebn Mardâs, the saheb or lord of Aleppo, according to Abu'lfeda and Al Makîn. The khalif of Egypt sent an army, under the command of Bûfakîn Al Darîri, to besiege Aleppo, which engaged Sâleh Afado'ddawla's forces in the district of Tiberias, near the Jordan, defeated him, and put Sâleh, together with his youngest son, to the sword. In order to make head against Bûfakîn, Sâleh had joined Al Hafan, the emir of the Arabs of the tribe of Tay, who had possessed himself of Al Ramla, and waited for the Egyptians on the banks of the Jordan, with a full intention to give them battle. After the action Bûfakîn, or Anûsttekîn, as Abulfeda calls him, sent the heads of Sâleh Ebn Mardâs and his son to Al Thâher, the khalif of Egypt, then at Meſr; but Naſr Abu Câmel Shablo'ddawla and Bamâl Abu Alwân Moezo'ddawla, his two other sons, made their escape to Aleppo, and jointly took the government of that city upon them. This is the account given by Al Makîn; but if we believe Abu'lfeda, Abu Câmel only survived his father, and assumed the sovereignty of Aleppo after that prince's death^r.

*Sâleh Ebn
Mardâs
is killed
this year.*

The next year, being the 421st of the Hejra, soltan Mahmûd Yamîno'ddawla Ebn Sabektekîn, that great conqueror, died at Gazna, after he had reigned thirty-one years. He is said to have been about sixty-one years old at the time of his decease. He was a prince endued with heroic virtues, and extremely zealous for the propagation of his religion, which he extended over a very considerable part of the Indies, exterminated an infinite number of idolaters,

*Mahmûd
dies at
Gazna.*

^r Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 262, 263. Ism. Abulfed. in Chron. ad an. Hej. 402. ad ann. Hej. 420.

and demolished most of the pagods, or Pagan temples of that country. It has been remarked, that Mahmûd had only one vice, and that was too eager a desire of amassing treasures, of which he has been represented as guilty by several historians. It is true no prince had ever a better opportunity of gratifying this passion; as he met with such riches in the Indies as could not elsewhere be found, and such as seemed sufficient to satisfy even the most insatiable avidity for gold and silver. He had for his wazîr Ahmed Ebn Al Hafan, surnamed Al Meimendi, from the city of Meimend, one of the dependencies of Gazna, where he was born; but being displeased with his conduct, the sultan at last dismissed him, and substituted the emir Jenk Menkal in his room. As Al Meimendi had an uncommon regard for learned men, he took under his protection Al Hafan Ebn Sharfshah, surnamed Ferdûsi, the famous Persian poet, who, at Mahmûd's command, wrote the annals of the Persian kings in verse, Abu Rihan and others, that made a shining figure in the republic of letters; all of whom frequented Mahmûd's court whilst Al Meimendi remained at the head of the administration. The sultan's mother was daughter to the prince of Zâblestân, or Zâbelestân; whence it came to pass, that he sometimes went under the denomination of Al Zâbeli, or the Zâbelian, and particularly in a tetra-stich, or quatrain, of verses, made upon him by the Ferdûsi. He was the first monarch of the family of Gazni, his father Sabektekin having rather been a governor or viceroy than an absolute prince. With regard to his person, we find little more remarked of it by the eastern writers than that he had a very ugly face. This, as he was viewing himself one day in a glass, gave him so much uneasiness, that he could not forbear repeating four verses to the following effect: "I have caused the glass of my mirror to be re-polished; and having had it presented to my eyes, I find so many defects in my own person, that I can easily overlook those of others." The moral of which quatrain is plainly this, the knowledge of ourselves convinces us of our own imperfections, and disposes us readily to excuse those of other men. His first wazîr having once observed an unusual melancholy in his countenance, took the liberty to ask him the reason of it. Mahmûd replied, "I have always heard it said, that the face of a prince ought to rejoice the sight of his subjects: I am surprised that mine, which is so deformed, does not offend the eyes of my people."

ple." The Wazîr immediately returned, "The excellency of a man does not consist in a good aspect, or a handsome mien. Virtue and the amiable qualities of the mind are the true sources of beauty, according to the sentiments of philosophers. Not one in a thousand of your subjects ever sees your visage, but your manners and your virtues are beheld by them all. It is by these that you must gain their hearts, and become the object of their affection. Nerkeffi, the celebrated poet, well said, "When our manners are not more deformed than your face, there will be no reason for any complaints." Mahmûd profited so well by the advice of this wise wazîr, that he became a pattern to all other princes, by his probity, his prudence, and his valour *.

The following article, extracted from the Nighiaristân, affords us so singular an instance of this great monarch's inflexible attachment to sentiments of justice, that it would be unpardonable in us to omit an insertion of it. A Turk, in Mahmûd's service, entered a poor man's house at midnight by force, and so tormented him, that he was obliged to quit his habitation, to abandon his wife and children, and to repair directly to the palace, in order to carry his complaints to the sultân. Mahmûd was up, when the poor man came, and heard him so favourably, that he had reason enough to be filled with consolation. In short, he said to him, "If this Turk should ever trouble you again, let me know it without delay." The Turk failed not to return three days after; of which circumstance the sultân being informed, he instantly, with a few attendants, went to the poor man's house, ordered the light to be extinguished, and immediately cut the insolent Turk to pieces. After this execution, he commanded a flambeau to be lighted, and then looked upon the face of the criminal he had dispatched; which was no sooner done, than he prostrated himself, returned God thanks, and asked for something to eat. The man, who lived in extreme poverty, had nothing to give him but some barley-bread, and a little sour wine. The sultân, however, contented himself with his repast, and seemed well enough pleased with what had

A singular instance of his attachment to justice.

* Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra, p. 338. Mirkhond, apud Teixeira, p. 283. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Chron. ad ann. Hej. 421. Khondemir, Ferdusi, Nerkeffi, apud D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. art. Mahmoud fils de Sebeſteghin, p. 534, 535. ut & ipse D'Herbel. ibid.

been set before him. When he was upon the point of returning to the palace, the poor man threw himself at his feet, and most humbly begged that he would be so good as to inform him why he ordered the light to be put out at his first entering into his house, why he prostrated himself after the death of the Turk, and lastly how he could take up with so bad a repast? The sôltân answered him very courteously in the following terms: "After you had brought your complaint to me, I always suspected that no one could be bold enough to commit such unparalleled insolence, but one of my own sons; and, therefore, as I was resolved to punish it with the utmost severity, and would not be diverted from my resolution by a sight of the offender, I ordered the light to be put out: but finding afterwards that it was not one of my sons, I praised God in the manner you saw. And lastly, with regard to the repast, it is no wonder I should be satisfied with it; since the outrage upon you, which the Turk had been guilty of, so enraged me, that it deprived me both of my appetite and repose for the last three days^t.

He is succeeded by his two sons, Mohammed and Mas'ûd.

Not long before his death, sôltân Mahmûd appointed his eldest son Mohammed to succeed him in the sovereignty of all his dominions, except that of the Persian Irâk, which he had given to his youngest son Mas'ûd. After having made this disposition, he also asked Mas'ûd upon what terms he intended to live with his brother Mohammed after his death? "Upon the same, (replied Mas'ûd), that you did with your brother Ismael." This answer strongly affected Mahmûd; for after Ismael had formerly fallen into his hands, and he had pardoned him, he demanded of that prince how he would have treated him, if God had given him the victory? "I would, said Ismael, have shut you up in prison, and kept you confined till the day of your death." This insolent answer so irritated Mahmûd, that he sent him to one of his castles in Jorjân, and ordered the governor to detain him there as long as he lived. He nevertheless supplied him plentifully with provisions, and all the other necessaries of life. By the answer Mas'ûd gave him, Mahmûd plainly perceived, that his two sons would not continue long in peace; and therefore he endeavoured to oblige Mas'ûd to take an oath never to molest his brother: but this he could not effect before Mohammed had

^t Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, in Nighi-arist.

sworn,

sworn, that all their father's immense treasures should be divided between them, after his decease ^u.

The distemper that carried off this great prince, according to some of the Oriental historians, was a slow or hectic fever, occasioned by an ulcer in his lungs. Two days before his death, he commanded every thing that was most valuable in his treasures to be brought before him; and at the sight of it, he could not refrain from shedding tears. As he assigned no reason for this expression of sorrow, the motive is not certainly known: but because he ordered every thing to be put up again in its proper place, he seems to have been shocked at the thoughts of leaving treasures of such inestimable value, which he had amassed with so much anxiety and fatigue. In the 400th year of the Hejra, one single fortress, seated in the midst of a deep and extensive lake, and therefore deemed impregnable, where the Indians had deposited all the wealth of the pagods, or *idol temples*, of the whole neighbouring territory, supplied him with no less than seven millions of dinârs, a large number of ingots of gold, and a vast quantity of pearls and precious stones. He also, as we are assured by Mirkhond, not long after laid siege to Baghdâd, and forced the khalif Al Kâder, then incapable of making any tolerable defence, not only to surrender the city, but likewise to pay him the sum of five millions of dirhems. Besides all the other branches of his prodigious revenues, Manûjahar Ebn Kâbûs likewise remitted him annually, by way of tribute, for a considerable term, fifty thousand dinârs. In consequence of the dispositions with regard to the succession that in his life time had been made, his eldest son Mohammed succeeded him; but his brother Mas'ûd drove him from the throne, and put out his eyes, in the course of the following year ^w.

Other particulars relating to Soltân Mahmûd.

Before we conclude our relation of the principal events that happened in this year, it may not be improper to remark, that Nafr Abu Câmel Shablo'ddawla expelled Bamâl Abu Alwân Moezzo'ddawla, his brother, from Aleppo, and took the government of that city solely upon himself. About the same time, Abu Câlijâr, who

Shablo'ddawla expels his brother from Aleppo.

^u Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 290. Khondemir, Greg. Abu'l-Faraj. ubi supra. Al Makîn, ubi supra, p. 268. D'Herbel. ubi supra, p. 534. ^w Mirkhond, apud Teixeira. p. 277. 280, 281. 283. Ahmed Ebn Mohammed Abd'aljaafar Al Kazwini, in Nighiarist. D'Herbel. ubi supra, p. 536.

after

after Abu'l Fawâres's death had been called to the government of Kermân by the inhabitants of that province, advanced at the head of a considerable army towards Baghdâd, in order to drive Jalâlo'ddawla from that capital, and occupy the post of emir al omra there : but his arms were not attended in this expedition with the desired success *.

*Al Kâder's
death and
character.*

The khalif Al Kâder Bi'llah departed this life at Baghdâd, in the 422d year of the Hejra, after he had sat forty-one years, three months, and twenty-three days upon the Moslem throne. He was eighty-six lunar years, and ten months old, at the time of his decease. With regard to his disposition, he is said to have been just, sincere, religious, devout, and extremely charitable ; but he was only a nominal prince ; the whole authority of the khalifat being then invested in the house of Bûiya. Nevertheless, as he was mild, munificent, and lived a very austere life, frequently visiting in the habit of a plebeian the tombs of the Moslem saints, both the Turks and the Deylamites were touched with reverence for his person ; and out of regard to his sanctity and amiable disposition, treated him with the most profound respect. He was succeeded by his son Abu Jaafar Abd'allah, with the approbation of the emir al omra.

*A remarkable
story
of him.*

The poet Ferdûsi, whom we have already had occasion to mention, was near being the cause of a war between the khalif Al Kâder and Mahmûd Gazni, if the authority of a certain eastern writer in this point may be depended upon. That poet, notwithstanding the great favours that had been conferred upon him by the sultân, left his court in disgust, and retired to Baghdâd, where he put himself under the protection of the khalif. Mahmûd wrote a letter to that prince, and insisted upon Ferdusi's being sent back to Gazna ; threatening, in case of refusal, to make an irruption into the territory of Baghdâd. Al Kâder, who was a person of great wisdom and moderation, returned no other answer to his insolent letter than the following words, in the beginning of the one hundred and fifth sûra, or chapter, of the Koran. " Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the masters of the elephant ?" This sûra is entitled The Elephant, and speaks of the miraculous defeat of the forces of Abraha, the king of Ethiopia, who entered Arabia with a powerful army, and a vast number of elephants, in order to destroy the city and temple of

* Al Makin, ubi supra, p. 263.

Mecca. The khalif, therefore, thought, that nothing could be more to the purpose than this passage; as Mahmûd, who was king of the Indies, had a prodigious number of elephants in his army; and as he was only to be overcome by God, who had overthrown with stones, darted upon them from heaven by flocks of birds, the numerous troops of Abraha, the Ethiopian ^r.

^r Aut. Nawad. Al. Kor. Moham. sur. cv. Al Zamakhshar. Al Beidawi, Jallal. Ism. Abu'lfed. in Hist. Gen. &c. D'Herbel. Biblioth. Orient. p. 12. 225.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.





