

FERISHTA'S

HISTORY OF DEKKAN,

FROM
THE FIRST MAHUMMEDAN CONQUESTS :

WITH
A CONTINUATION FROM OTHER NATIVE WRITERS, OF THE EVENTS IN
THAT PART OF INDIA, TO THE REDUCTION OF ITS LAST
MONARCHS BY THE EMPEROR AULUMGEER AURUNGZEBE :

ALSO,
THE REIGNS OF HIS SUCCESSORS IN THE EMPIRE OF HINDOSTAN
TO THE PRESENT DAY :

AND
THE HISTORY OF BENGAL,

FROM THE ACCESSION OF ALIVERDEE KHAN TO THE YEAR 1756.

COMPRISED IN SIX PARTS.

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PART VI.

HISTORY OF BENGAL,

FROM THE ACCESSION OF

ALIVERDEE KHAN MAHABUT JUNG.

Hadee Khan, finding himself discovered, fortified himself in his own house, till, at length, obtaining leave to quit the provinces, he embarked with his family from Moorshudabad; but was afterwards seized and put to death, on his way up the Ganges, by a band of Afghauns, commissioned by the navob for that purpose. Meer Casim Khan, another of the conspirators, was also assassinated. The widow of Mahabut Jung, his daughter Goofeety Begum and Ameenyy Begum, also Lootf al Nissa, the widow of Serauje ad Dowlah, and her infant daughter, being suspected of encouraging the plot, were sent into confinement at Dacca. About three months after this, rumours were spread of the prince Ali Goher's intention to enter Bengal. This intelligence alarming the navob and his son, they, for their own safety, paid up part of the arrears due to the troops, and promised more attention and regularity in future.

Ramnarain, the deputy governor of Patna, was a man of much cunning and intrigue, void of any real regard to Meer Jaffier Khan and his family, but, from the connection he had formed with the English, he dared not openly act contrary to treaty, though secretly he wished his destruction, and was on the watch for opportunity to effect it. Rajas Sunder Sing and Pulwaun Sing, two principal zemindars, out of gratitude to the protection of Mahabut Jung, hated Meer Jaffier, as the destroyer of his family, and meditated rebellion. The greatest number of the principal people of the provinces, disgusted with the bad qualities and tyranny of the late navob, had been pleased at his depofal, judging, that as Meer Jaffier was advanced in years, and had long served Mahabut Jung, he would follow his example; but upon his accession to power, experiencing his behaviour, and more particularly the cruel actions of his son Meeraun, a monster of his time, they now regretted the fall of Serauje ad Dowlah, and the old saying of "Bless our former ruler," was

revived on the tongues of the wise and the simple. Meer Jaffier, who, when paymaster to Mahabut Jung, was celebrated among the troops for his profuse liberality, upon ascending the musnud, became as much decried for his avarice. It is said, that a person asking him the cause of this change in his behaviour, he replied, that in Mahabut Jung's time the public treasure was another's; but now it was his own, his heart felt uneasy to part with it.*

In this situation of affairs, the prince Ali Goher, eldest son of the reigning emperor, having made his escape from the hands of his father's minister, who wished to keep him in confinement, sought protection with Mahummud Koollee Khan, the soubahdar of Aleabad. This nobleman was a young man of courage, but of little conduct. Ambitious of enlarging the limits of his government, he was easily tempted, by reports of disorders in Bahar and Bengal, to attempt their conquest under the royal sanction; for which purpose he offered his services to the fugitive prince, who readily accepted them. Mahummud Koollee was also supported in his hopes by assurances of aid from Shujah ad Dowlah, his cousin, and soubahdar of Oude; who, however, was not sincere in his promises, and only promoted the expedition in order to remove his relation from the fort of Aleabad, which he wished to seize for himself. Mahummud Koollee Khan had also received invitations to invade Bahar from Sunder Sing, Pulwaun Sing, and other disaffected zemindars. The former was truly attached to the family of Mahabut Jung, and burned with ardour to revenge the ruin of his family. He possessed true honour, courage, and many other good qualities; so that, had fate permitted him, he might have attained his object; but his life was too short.

Under

* In his pleasures, however, he was ridiculously profuse, and lavished sums upon them, which, paid to his troops, would have secured his power.

Under pretence of regulating his districts, and visiting Raja Ramnarain, he left his fortress of 'Teekaurry, formed an encampment, and began to levy troops. While making preparations, a favourite officer desired the advance of a thousand rupees; which demand, as the like had often been repeated, caused the raja to say in a jesting manner to his attendants, "Gholaum Ghose inherits much bravery from his father, but this meanness of borrowing is from his mother, and darkens his better qualities." Gholaum Ghose, hearing of this observation, was much enraged, and resolved to murder his patron. He came and asked for a thousand rupees; upon which the raja told him, "Such importunity was not decent," and begged he would desist; but the other impudently declared he should not rise till he had given him the sum. The raja, upon this, attempting to rise, he seized his garment, crying, "Sit down till you give me the money." Sunder Sing exclaimed, "Are you mad?" when the traitor stabbed him mortally with a dagger; then rushing on the attendants, he wounded several, and forced his way through them. Mounting his horse, he fled from the camp, but was overtaken by Soorut Sing, a relation of the deceased, who called out, "It is cowardly to fly, return and fight me." He stopped, and dismounting from his horse, a bloody conflict took place. At length, the traitor's sword being broken, he rushed upon his antagonist and threw him to the ground. At this time some villagers appearing, Soorut Sing cried out, "Why stand you? behold here the murderer of your prince!" Upon this, they ran upon him and put him to death with clubs and swords. Thus was Sunder Sing prevented in his career of joining the prince.

In the year 1172, Mahummud Koollee Khan, under the royal standard of Ali Gohir, who had procured from his father the emperor grants of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, began his march A. D. 1759.

* A district in Bahar.