

C. 1825

Grew like a pool of blood. The elephants
 Turned from the smart and fled the battlefield.
 Now when the elephants were smitten thus
 They trampled their own troops. The Íránian host
 Came on behind and earth grew like the Nile.
 All was confusion ; many died ; ill fortune
 Had all its will of them. There was a spot,
 A pleasant place, behind that stricken host
 Where, on a golden throne, fierce Sáwa sat.
 He saw his army like an iron mountain
 In flight with heads all dust and souls all gloom,
 While from behind enormous elephants
 Beyond control were trampling down the troops.
 He wept for wherefore should his army flee ?
 And mounting his bay Arab fled himself
 In dire dismay. Bahrám Chúbína came
 Pursuing like an elephant run mad,
 A lasso on his arm, a bow in hand,
 And shouted to his troops : " Illustrious men !
 Ill fate hath marked them out.¹ Rain swords on
 them,
 And quit you in the fight like cavaliers."

He reached the hill where erst king Sáwa sat
 Crowned on a throne of gold, beheld him thence
 Upon his mighty lion of an Arab,
 And sped forth like a tiger o'er the waste.
 He chose an arrow with a glittering point,
 Plumed with four eagle's feathers, took in hand
 His bow of Chách and laid the deer-hide thong
 Within his thumb-stall, straightened his left arm,
 And bent his right. The bow twanged as he loosed
 The shaft and pierced king Sáwa's spine, who came
 Down headlong to the dust ; the ground beneath him
 Was soaked with blood. Of that great host the king
 Bediademed was gone, gone golden throne,

¹ Couplet omitted.

And golden crown.

Such deeds the turning sky
Doth, showing neither love nor enmity.
Joy not in lofty throne and greatly fear,
What time thou feel'st secure, disaster near.

The brave Bahrám Chúbína came and dragged
The corpse face downward wallowing in the dust,
And severed that crowned head while none of all
Its kindred came anear. When the Turks found
Their king the corpse lay headless on the road.
All wailed ; cries filled the earth ; the air resounded,
And he that was the son of Sáwa said :—
" This is God's doing, for unsleeping fortune
Is with Bahrám Chúbína."

Multitudes

C. 1826

Died in the strait defiles. The elephants
Trode many under foot ; not one in ten
Of all that host escaped. They perished crushed
Beneath the elephants or were beheaded
Upon the battlefield, and when nine hours
Of that ill day had gone the Íránians saw
No enemy alive save prisoners bound,
Their souls and bodies pierced with grief and shafts.
The route was strewn with bards and helms whose
heads

Were suffocate therein,¹ with Indian swords,
With arrows and with bows dropped by the foe
On all sides. Earth was like a sea of blood
With slain, and everywhere were saddled steeds.

Bahrám Chúbína went his rounds to learn
Who had been slain upon the Íránian side ;
Then said he to Kharrád, son of Barzín :—
" Give me thine aid to-day and ascertain
What slain Íránians it is ours to mourn."

¹ " de casques qui n'avaient pas garanti ce jour-là les têtes contre
la mort." Mohl.