

" Approach without more mystery and tell it
Within mine ear."

Kulún drew near. The knife
Was up his sleeve. His villainy grew plain.
He feigned to whisper and then struck. A cry
Rose from the room. Now when Bahrám Chúbína
Called out the people ran to him. He said :—
" Arrest the fellow. Ask who prompted him."

Then all within the palace came and dragged
That hoary-headed man off by the feet,
The servants in their fury smiting him
With palms and fists. He took the buffetings,
And opened not his lips from noon till midnight,
Then when he had been broken, hand and foot,
They flung him down within the palace-court,
And gathered in their sorrow and dismay
About Bahrám Chúbína. He still bled,
And groaned. His cheeks were lapis-lazuli.
His sister too had come to him forthwith.
She tore her hair, laid on her lap his head,
Then wailed and cried right bitterly : " Brave horse-
man !

C. 1969

The lion used to flee the woods before thee !
Who hath removed this Column of the world ?
Who hath o'erthrown this mighty Elephant ?
Woe for the cavalier of chieftain-mould,
World-conqueror, undaunted, lion-queller !
Thou didst not serve the Sháh, and no God-server
Was he that smote thine elephantine form.
Alas ! who tore this tall, exalted Mountain
Out of the pleasant waters by the roots ?
Who hath plucked up so flourishing a Cypress ?
Who cast this crown of greatness basely down ?
Who filled the ocean suddenly with dust ?
Who hurled this moving Mountain to the abyss ?
Now alien, friendless, helpless, and alone

We live despised in other men's domains.
 I said to him : ' O captain of the host !
 Uproot thou not the sprout of loyalty,
 For if a daughter only had been left
 Sprung from Sásán she would assume the crown,
 The whole face of the land would be her slave,
 Her blest crown touch the sky.' Thou wouldst not
 hear

My profitable words but now repentest
 Thy deeds and bear'st a guilty soul to God.
 Ill is on our great house ; we are the sheep ;
 Our foemen are like wolves."

The wounded man,

On hearing what she said and seeing all
 Her heart and prudent counsellings, her cheeks
 Rent by her nails, her hair plucked out, her heart
 And eyes all blood, her face all dust, though faint
 And suffering loosed his tongue and answered thus :—
 " My noble sister ! nothing ever matched
 Thy counsel yet the measure of my days
 Is full. I acted not on thine advice ;
 A dív-like guide led me in everything.
 No prince was more exalted than Jamshíd,
 Through whom the world was full of fear and hope,
 Yet erred he at the bidding of the dív
 So that he made the world black for himself.
 'Twas just the same with watchful Kai Káuś,
 Heaven's favourite whose steps were fortunate.
 The loathly Dív's incitements ruined him ;
 The evils that befel him thou hast heard :
 He mounted heavenward to look upon
 The circling sky and course of sun and moon,
 But fell into the deep beyond Sarí,
 Headforemost.¹ In like manner hath the Dív
 Caused me to err and docked my hand from good.

¹ Cf. Vol. ii. p. 102 seq.