

By God's victorious fortune and decree
Will I suspend that dragon from a tree."

§ 12

*How Gushtásp slew the Dragon and how Cæsar gave his
Daughter to Ahran*

Ahran departed and prepared whatever
Gushtásp required of him. When all was ready
The hero mounted, and with his companions
Set forward. When Híshwí saw Mount Sakíla
He pointed with his finger, breathing hard,
And when the sun shot out its rays on high
He and Ahran turned and retraced their steps.
Gushtásp remained before the mountain-lair
Of that fierce worm and, having hung his helmet
Upon his saddle, thinking dragon's breath
And death but trifles, drew anear the mountain,
And gave a shout that made the dragon quake.
Now when it looked upon that lofty form
It strove to suck Gushtásp in with its breath,
While he rained arrows on it swift as hail,
And thick as petals from pomegranate-bloom.
V. 1475 It closed with him. Invoking all his powers
The young man thrust his sword adown its jaws,
And called upon the Judge who giveth good.
The dragon gnashed its teeth upon the sword
Deep in its maw, while blood and venom flowed
And drenched the mount until the brute grew weak.
Then, scimitar in hand, the Lion clove
The dragon's head and strewed the rock with brains.
Dismounting next that lucky warrior
Prized out a couple of the dragon's teeth,
And thence departing washed his head and body;
Then as he wallowed in the dust he raised