

The noblest of Írán. He had withal
 Two ministers of high degree, who used
 To comrade him in fight. The name of one—
 An archimage—was Máhiyár, the other
 Was called Jánúsiyár. These twain, on seeing
 Their efforts fruitless and the star erewhile
 So lofty, and the glory, of Dárá
 Thus set, held talk and said: "This luckless man
 Henceforth will see not crown and throne again;
 We needs must poniard him upon the breast,
 Or smite his head with Indian sword. Sikandar
 Will give to us a province. We shall be
 A crown upon the kingdom."

Both of them,

One minister, the other treasurer,
 Went with the Sháh; Jánúsiyár, the chief,
 Upon the left hand, Máhiyár to right.
 Night gloomed, a storm arose, Jánúsiyár
 Laid hand upon a dagger, stabbed the king
 Upon the breast, that famed head reached its fall,
 And then the troops deserted, one and all.

§ 9

How Dárá told his last Wishes to Sikandar and died

The ministers came to Sikandar, saying:—
 "O Sháh victorious and endowed with knowledge!
 We have surprised and slain thine enemy;
 The crown and throne of chiefs are his no more."

Sikandar, having heard Jánúsiyár,
 Said thus to Máhiyár: "Where is the foe
 Whom thou hast overthrown? Show me the way."

The two led on. The Rúman's heart and soul
 Were filled with rage and grief. On drawing nigh

He gazed upon Dárá and saw his breast
 All blood, his countenance like fenugreek,
 Gave orders to alight and set a guard
 O'er those two ministers, and then, dismounting
 As swift as wind himself, took on his lap
 The wounded monarch's head and, tarrying
 Until the stricken should begin to speak,
 Chafed with his hands the visage of Dárá,
 Removing from the head the royal crown,
 Unclasping from the breast the warrior's mail,
 While showering tears on him because no leech
 Was then at hand to tend upon the wounded,
 And saying: "All yet shall be well with thee:
 It is thy foemen's hearts that shall be wrung.
 Arise and seat thee on this golden litter,
 Or, if thou hast the strength, mount on thy steed.
 I will have leeches brought to thee from Hind
 And Rúm, and mourn thy pain with tears of blood.
 I will resign to thee the realm and throne.
 When thou art better we will pack and go,
 But these that thus have wronged thee will I hang
 Head-downward from two gibbets presently.
 When yesterday these two old men informed me
 My heart flowed over, and I cried aloud,
 Because we twain are of one root and piece:
 Why for ambition should we wreck our race?"

Dárá, on hearing this, began to speak,
 And said: "May wisdom always be thy mate.
 Sure am I that thou wilt be recompensed
 By God, the all-holy Judge, for these thy words;
 But as for what thou said'st: 'Írán is thine,
 Thine are the crown and throne's seat of the brave,'
 Death is much nearer to me than the throne;
 'Tis quit of ruined men. High heaven so willeth,
 Whose joy is travail and whose profit loss.
 Beware of saying: 'I by mine own might

Prevailed o'er this famed people.' Know that good
 And ill are both of God, and while thou livest
 Give Him the praise. I illustrate my words,
 And am a sign to all. What majesty,
 Kingship, and wealth were mine! I injured none.
 What arms, what troops withal, what noble steeds,
 What thrones and crowns, what children, what allies!
 Allies! My brand was burnt upon their hearts!
 Then earth and time were bondslaves in my presence,
 And thus it was while fortune proved my friend.
 Then by this token I grew quit of good,
 And captive in the hands of murderers;
 I had no hope in children or in kin,
 The world was darkened and mine eyes were glazed.
 Of all my kindred there is none to help me;
 My sole hope is in Him who giveth all.
 Thus stricken am I lying in the dust;
 The world hath got me in the net of ruin.
 Such is the custom of this turning sky
 Alike with monarch and with paladin:
 All kingship too departeth in the end;
 It is the quarry and the hunter death."

Sikandar wept blood-drops upon the Sháh,
 Thus stricken in the dust, who at the sight
 Of all that heart-felt grief and tears o'erflowing
 His pallid cheeks, said: "Weep not, tears are vain,
 The smother is my portion of the fire.
 He that bestowed so much on me, and fortune
 That so illumed me, have apportioned this.
 Now give thine ear to this my last request,
 Receive and keep it wisely in thy heart."

Sikandar said to him: "'Tis thine to bid:
 Say what thou wilt; I pledge to thee my word."

V. 1803

Dára spake quickly and recounted all
 His last requests, beginning thus: "O chief!
 Fear thou the almighty Ruler of the world,

For He created the heaven, the earth, and time,
 The mighty and the weak. Protect my children,
 My kindred, and the consorts that I love;
 Ask me for my chaste daughter as thy wife,
 And let her share thy throne in happiness.
 Her mother used to call her Rúshanak,
 And made the world both glad and fair to her.
 Thou wilt have no reproaches from my child,
 Nor any jibings from the ill-disposed,
 For kings have nurtured her, and she is fit
 In rede to be the crown upon the noble.
 Thou mayst see born to her a youthful prince
 Who will revive the name Asfandiyár,
 Relume the altar of Zarduhsht, take up
 The Zandavasta, heed the presages,
 The feast of Sada and the Fanes of Fire,
 With glorious Naurúz, Urmuzd, and Mihr,
 And lave his soul and face in wisdom's stream,
 Restore the customs of Luhrásp and follow
 The doctrine of Gushtásp, maintain both high
 And low in their degree, illumine the Faith,
 And see good days."

Sikandar made reply:—

"O monarch of kind heart and honest speech!
 I do accept thy rede and last requests,
 And I will tarry in thy borders only
 To compass these good matters, and herein
 Take wisdom for my guide."

The world-lord grasped
 Sikandar's hand, began to wail, then pressed
 The palm upon his mouth, and said: "Be God
 Thy refuge. I resign my place to thee,
 Depart to dust, and give my soul to Him."

He spake, his soul passed, and folk wept him sorely. V. 1804
 Sikandar rent his garments and strewed dust
 Upon the Kaian throne. Then for Dárá,