

**MEMOIRS OF THE EMPEROR
JAHANGUEIR, WRITTEN BY
HIMSELF; AND TRANSLATED
FROM A PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT**

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Memoirs of the Emperor Jahangueir, Written by Himself; And Translated from a Persian Manuscript by Jahangueir & David Price

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JAHANGUEIR & DAVID PRICE

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M E M O I R S

OF

THE EMPEROR JAHANGUEIR,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF;

AND

TRANSLATED FROM A PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT,

BY

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1829.

N.B. In this work the Arabic or Persian letter ك is expressed by *kh*, as in *Khaun*, *Skeikh*, &c. The letter ج in the beginning of a word is generally expressed by *J*, as in *Jummaudy*, *Jaguir*; in other parts of a word by *dj*, as *Hidjerah*, *Adjmeir*, or by the simple *j*, as in *Punjab*, *Khanjar*, &c. The letter چ is represented by *gh*, as *Chiragh*, *Afghan*: the Arabic ث by *th*, as in *Thauni*: the long ا generally by *au*, as in *Khaun*, *Zauked*, *Bauz*, &c. The ي at the beginning of a word by *Y*, as in *Yaheya*; in other parts generally by *ei*, as *Peishkeh*, *Selein*, *Parveis*, &c. At the beginning of a word و is expressed by *V*, as in *Vezzir*; in other places by *w*, as *Dimon*; or by *ou*, as in *Roum*, *Nour*, &c. To express the Persian letter گ before ج *gui* or *gui* are used, as in *Jahanguir*, *Jaguir*, &c.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS

OF THE

REIGN OF THE EMPEROR JAHANGUEIR.

To HIM whose name is inscribed at the head of all that has existence; the characters of whose glory are stamped on the walls and portals of the universe: to the Eternal Designer, who with a word, from the bosom of nothing, brought forth the celestial spheres and the elements of created nature: to the Omnipotent Architect, who spread above us the alternate vaults of the firmament, and arrayed this globe of earth with the splendours of his might: to Him be endless praise and illimitable gratitude; and on our prophet Mahommed, that most excellent of created beings, who released mankind from the mazes of error, and conducted them to the high road of truth and duty, be countless blessings: to whom was given, from God, authority over all terrestrial power, and over all other prophets the pre-eminence; the Messiah himself bearing the glad tidings of his approach; of his approach at whose lamp the great legislator of Israel, the God-spoken prophet, sought to secure a spark of heavenly light.

For a memorial of sundry events incidental to myself, I have undertaken to describe a small portion, in order that some traces thereof may be preserved on the records of time.

On Thursday, then, the eighth of the latter month of Jummaudy, of the year of the Hidjera one thousand and fourteen,* at the metropolis of Agra, and in the forenoon of the day, being then arrived at the age of thirty-eight, I became Emperor, and under auspices the most felicitous, took my seat on the throne of my wishes. Let it not produce a smile that I should have set my heart on the delusions of this world. Am I greater than Solomon, who placed his pillow

B

upon

* Corresponding with the 10th of October, A.D. 1605. According to some authorities, the Emperor Akbar died on Wednesday the 10th of the latter Jummaudy, A.H. 1014, corresponding with the 12th of October, A.D. 1605; which would make the accession of Jahangueir to have preceded the death of his father by two days.

upon the winds? As at the very instant that I seated myself on the throne the sun rose from the horizon, I accepted this as the omen of victory, and as indicating a reign of unvarying prosperity. Hence I assumed the titles of Jahangueir Padshah, and Jahangueir Shah: the world-subduing emperor; the world-subduing king. I ordained that the following legend should be stamped on the coinage of the empire: "Stricken at Agrah by that Khossrou, the safeguard of the world; the sovereign splendour of the faith, Jahangueir, son of the imperial Akbar."

On this occasion I made use of the throne prepared by my father, and enriched at an expense without parallel, for the celebration of the festival of the new year, at the entrance of the sun into Aries. In the fabrication of the throne a sum not far short of ten krouns of ashrefies,* of five mithkals the ashrefy, was expended in jewels alone; a kroun being the term for an hundred laks, and a lak being one hundred thousand, independently of three hundred maunns of gold, Hindustanny measure, employed in the workmanship, each maunn of Hind being equal to ten maunns of Irák.† For the convenience of removal from place to place the throne was, moreover, so constructed, that it could be easily taken to pieces, and again put together at pleasure. The legs and body of the throne were at the same time loaded with fifty maunns of ambergris, so that wherever it might be found expedient to put it together, no further perfumes were necessary, for an assemblage of whatever magnitude.

Having thus seated myself on the throne of my expectations and wishes, I caused also the imperial crown, which my father had caused to be made after the manner of that which was worn by the great kings of Persia, to be brought before me, and then, in the presence of the whole assembled Ameirs, having placed it on my brows, as an omen auspicious to the stability and happiness of my reign, kept it there for the space of a full astronomical hour. On each of the twelve points of this crown was a single diamond of the value of one lak of ashrefies of five mithkals, the whole purchased by my father with the resources of his own government, not from any thing accruing to him by inheritance from his

* A kroun of ashrefies is synonymous with gold mohrs, which I have reason to think would be equal to fifteen krouns of rupees; and ten krouns of ashrefies would be one hundred and fifty krouns of rupees, or about one hundred and fifty millions sterling! an incredible sum. Instead therefore of ten, we shall read two krouns of ashrefies, and thirty krouns of rupees, still making thirty millions sterling. We shall here remark that *noble* would be the appropriate English version of ashrefy. Again, the Bombay maunn is estimated at about twenty-eight pounds, or a quarter of a hundred-weight; and three hundred maunns will therefore be about four tons of gold.

† Calculating the ashrefy as before, at fifteen rupees, this would make the value of each diamond £150,000 sterling, which multiplied by twelve will give the enormous sum of £1,800,000.

his predecessors. At the point in the centre of the top part of the crown was a single pearl of four mithkals, of the value of one lak of ashrefies; and on different parts of the same were set altogether two hundred rubies of one mithkal each, and each of the value of six thousand rupees.*

For forty days and forty nights I caused the nuggaurab, or great imperial state drum, to strike up, without ceasing, the strains of joy and triumph; and for an extent of nearly fifty zereibs around my throne, the ground was spread by my directions with the most costly brocades and gold embroidered carpets. Censors of gold and silver were disposed in different directions for the purpose of burning odoriferous drugs, and nearly three thousand camphorated wax lights, three cubits in length, in branches of gold and silver perfumed with ambergris, illuminated the scene from night till morning. Numbers of blooming youths, beautiful as young Joseph in the pavilions of Egypt, clad in dresses of the most costly materials, woven in silk and gold, with zones and amulets sparkling with the lustre of the diamond, the emerald, the sapphire, and the ruby, awaited my commands, rank after rank, and in attitude most respectful. And finally, the Ameirs of the empire, from the captain of five hundred to the commander of five thousand horse, and to the number of nine individuals, covered from head to foot in gold and jewels, and shoulder to shoulder, stood round in brilliant array, also waiting for the commands of their sovereign. For forty days and forty nights did I keep open to the world these scenes of festivity and splendour, furnishing altogether an example of imperial magnificence seldom paralleled in this stage of earthly existence.

Until he had attained to the age of eight and twenty my father had had no child that survived its birth beyond one astronomical hour; and the circumstance was to him the subject of very deep concern. To obtain, therefore, the object of his wishes in this respect, many and anxious were the supplications which he addressed to the throne of Omnipotence. While he languished in this state of anxiety, one of his Ameirs, aware of his unbounded reverence for, and confidence in the influence of the class of dervishes, mentioned to him one day, that at the tomb of the venerated Moyen-ud-dein Tehousty, at Adjmeir, there resided a peir, or holy recluse, distinguished for the purity of his life and manners, in which, as he said, not only in India, but in the whole world, he was that day without his equal. In the ardour of zeal and hope, my father expressed a determination, that should Providence bestow upon him a child that might survive, he would walk all the way on foot from the metropolis of Aghrah to

B 2 Adjmeir,

* Altogether, then, this superb symbol of supreme power may be valued at two millions and seventy thousand pounds sterling.

Adjmeir, a distance of not less than one hundred and forty kóss,* for the sole purpose of offering his vows at the shrine of the saint. As my father's determination sprung from the sincerity of his heart, just six months after the death of my last departed infant brother, namely, on Wednesday the seventeenth of the former month of Rebbeia, of the year of the Hidjerah 978,† the sun being in the twenty-fourth degree of *Libra*, and when seven guries of the day were passed, the Most High ushered the humble narrator of these events into this stage of existence.

Faithful to his engagement, my father, whose mansion is now on the empyrean, accompanied by several of the most distinguished Ameirs of his court, took his departure from Agrah, and proceeding on foot at the rate of five koss a day, presented himself on his arrival at Adjmeir before the shrine of Moyen-ud-dein, and having performed his devotions, hastened without further delay in quest of the derveish, through the influence of whose piety he had obtained the object of his anxious supplications. The pious recluse bore the name of Sheikh Seleim, and my father, on repairing to the place of his residence, then lodging me in his arms, intreated him to pray to God for the safety of his infant child. This however was not all: during his visit my father ventured to inquire of the derveish if he could undertake to tell him the number of the sons whom the Almighty in his providence had decreed to bestow upon him. Elated at the moment by the presence of his imperial visitor, the derveish did not hesitate to announce to my father that Providence would bless him with three sons. "Of these," cried my father, "I have cast the first-born into thy bosom."—" Blessings upon it," replied the derveish, "since thou hast committed the child to my arms, I have given him the name of Mahommed Seleim." Accepting these testimonies of attention on the part of the derveish as greatly auspicious to his hopes, my father then returned to his capital, where, for the space of fourteen years afterwards, he continued to maintain with this holy recluse an intercourse of the closest intimacy.

[In this place there appears something of an omission in the manuscript, as the imperial memorialist is made to refer rather abruptly to the village of Sikry, to which, in commemoration of the conquest of Gújerat, he states that his father gave the name of Futtahpour—Nicolopolis.]

I must however observe, continues the imperial narrator, that from my father's anointed lips, I never on any occasion heard myself called by the name of Mahommed Seleim; baba (child) being the more paternal and affectionate appellation

* The kóss is an indefinite measurement, from one and a half to two miles and upwards.

† 18th of August, A.D. 1570; this prince at his accession could therefore be no more than thirty-six.

lation by which he invariably addressed me. And, peradventure, I might have been contented to the last with the title of Sultan Seleim : but to place myself on a par with the monarchs of the Turkish empire (Roum), and considering that universal conquest is the peculiar vocation of sovereign princes, I thought it incumbent on me to assume at my accession that of Jahangueir Padshah, as the title which best suited my character : and I trust, with the aid of a gracious Providence, with length of life, and a favouring star, that I shall so acquit myself as to justify the appellation.

The very first ordinance which issued from me, on ascending the throne of my ancestors, was that which related to the chain of justice, one end of which I caused to be fastened to the battlements of the royal tower of the castle of Agrah, and the other to a stone pillar near the bed of the river Jumnah ; to the end that, when at any time the dispensers of law under my authority might fail in the administration of justice, the injured party by applying his hand to the chain would find himself in the way of obtaining speedy redress. The chain was of gold, one hundred and forty guzz in length, with eighty small bells attached at different distances, and it was of the weight of sixty maunns of Hindústaun, equal to six hundred maunns of Irák.*

I instituted twelve special regulations, to be applied by the different functionaries of the empire as rules of conduct, never to be deviated from in their respective stations.

1. I remitted altogether to my subjects three several sources of revenue, the Zekhaut, Sermohary, and Tumgha, which in the whole yielded to my father no less than sixteen hundred Hindustany maunns of gold, equal to sixteen thousand maunns of Irák.†

2. I ordained that wherever the property of God's people entrusted to my charge should be wrested from them, either by highway robbery or any other act of violence, the inhabitants of the district, as best knowing whence it proceeded, should be compelled to produce either the property or the depredator. I directed, when the district lay waste or destitute of inhabitants, that towns should be built, and the population registered, and every method resorted to that might contribute to protect the subject from injury. I charged the Jaguir-dours, or feudatories of the empire, in such deserted places to erect mosques and substantial serrais, or stations for the accommodation of travellers, in order to render the district once more an inhabited country, and that wayfaring men might again be able to pass and repass in safety. For these purposes I provided

* About fifteen hundred-weight, reckoning the maunn at 28 lbs. or a quarter of an hundred-weight.

† About twenty-two tons and a half.