

Thomas MAURICE
1754-1824

Printed

INDIAN ANTIQUITIES:

O R,

DISSERTATIONS,

RELATIVE TO

THE ANCIENT GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS,
THE PURE SYSTEM OF PRIMEVAL THEOLOGY,
THE GRAND CODE OF CIVIL LAWS,
THE ORIGINAL FORM OF GOVERNMENT, AND
THE VARIOUS AND PROFOUND LITERATURE,

OF HINDOSTAN.

COMPARED, THROUGHOUT, WITH THE
RELIGION, LAWS, GOVERNMENT, and LITERATURE,

O F

PERSIA, EGYPT, AND GREECE.

T H E W H O L E I N T E N D E D

A S I N T R O D U C T O R Y T O

T H E H I S T O R Y O F H I N D O S T A N,
U P O N A C O M P R E H E N S I V E S C A L E.

V O L. I.

Containing the DISSERTATION on the ANCIENT GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS of HINDOSTAN.

L O N D O N:

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his life, describes that capital* as consisting of three cities, which he denominates Seiri, Gehanpenah, and Old Delhi. Seiri was invested with a strong circular wall; † Old Delhi, or the ancient Inderput, had likewise a circular wall, but far more considerable in extent. Gehanpenah occupied the space between the two cities, and was considerably larger than either: the walls by which it was fortified running on each side in parallel lines, and connecting the two former cities. The metropolis, thus formed of three great cities, spread over a very wide extent of ground; and, according to Sherifeddin, had no less than thirty, others say fifty, gates. It was celebrated, he informs us, for a mosque of astonishing dimensions, and for a palace of admirable magnificence, which was erected by Malek Jona, an ancient king of India, and was ornamented with a thousand marble columns. ‡

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* See Sherifeddin's *Timur Beg*, vol. ii. p. 67.

† In the *Araab Akhbar* Seiri is said to have been built by Sultan Aladdin.

‡ Mr. Finch, one of the first and most respectable visitants of India in the last century, in describing the ruins of Old Delhi, particularizes the remains of this august pile, which at that period, (1692) little more than 200 years after Timur's invasion, was reduced away to what he calls "a mere a road, worn out, and disregarded to the last degree." *Harris's Voyages*, vol. i. p. 88.

The Persian authors are lavish in their praises of this great and beautiful metropolis. The seat of voluptuousness, and the central repository of whatever the vast traffic, carried on by the Indian merchants with Persia, Arabia, and China, produced, it abounded with costly rarities of every kind; the tribute of the most distant climes, the labour of the most skilful artificers. But a savage conqueror now approached, before whom the pride of India and the delight of her sovereigns must bow the head. Through a deluge of human blood, shed in his progress from Samarcand to India, and fresh from the unprovoked massacre of 100,000 captive Hindoos, who were left expiring almost beneath its walls, the merciless Timur pressed on to its destruction. He entered the city in triumph, on the 4th of January, 1399. The great standard of the Tartarian empire was immediately erected on its walls; and the usurper, seated upon the throne of India, in all the pride of conquest, received the prostrate obeisance of the nobility of both nations. The royal elephants and rhinoceros, adorned with rich trappings of gold and silver, were brought to the foot of the throne, and, instructed by their leaders, made the *jalaam* of gratulation. Some days were consumed in
rewarding

rewarding with suitable honours the princes and generals of the victorious army, in banquets of unbounded magnificence, and in insulting heaven with the grateful vows of successful tyranny. At length, on some resistance reluctantly made by the inhabitants to the wanton outrages of their conquerors, Delhi, and all the wonders it contained, was given up to be pillaged by an enraged soldiery; and, on the 13th of the same month, "that great and proud city was destroyed." We may form some judgment of the enormous booty obtained in this general pillage, from the account given by the same author of the number of slaves made captive, and of the immense quantities of precious stones, pearls, rubies, diamonds, gold and silver vessels, money, and bullion, carried away by the army. Even the Indian women and girls are said to have been adorned with a profusion of precious stones, and had bracelets and rings of gold and jewels, not only on their hands and feet, but also on their toes. Of these precious ornaments every individual had secured so ample a store, that they refused the incumbrance of more, and vast heaps of various plunder of inestimable value were left behind. These are nearly the words of the Persian author, who bears

said to produce two harvests in a year. Here grow most of the fruits of Persia, Tartary, and Hindostan, with a great variety of flowers. Throughout this soobah are many grand buildings of stone and brick ; and it is stored with the productions of every part of the globe. A part of the northern mountains of this soobah is called Kamaoon, where there are mines of gold, lead, silver, iron, copper, orpiment, and borax. Here are also found abundance of musk-deer, silk-worms, falcons of various kinds, and plenty of honey.

The city of Delhi has been already described at large. Sembhel (Sambul) is the city next deserving notice, in which is a Brahmin place of worship called Hurmundel, where it is said the tenth Avatar will make his appearance. Whenever he comes, and under whatever form, things will be found strangely altered in these parts since the period of the last Avatar, or the benevolent Boodh's appearance among the Hindoos. In fircar Sembhel the rhinoceros is frequently hunted. Of his skin they make shields, and his horn is applied to the ends of bows, where the string is fastened. Sehrind is called a famous city ; it was doubtless the Serinda whence silk was brought in the time of Justinian ; and, although

though Mr. Rennel observes that no mention is made of a silk-manufacture at this place in the Ayeen Akbery, yet he must have noticed that, a few lines above, this soobah is said to abound in silk-worms. Tanaffar is held sacred by the Hindoos. The river Sirfuttu, to which they pay profound adoration, runs near it; and in its vicinity is the venerated lake Koorkhet. This was the scene of the Mahabbarat, or the great war. The city of Huftnapore was the imperial residence of rajah Behrut, a prince renowned for justice and love of his subjects; of whom, and his capital of Huftnapore, or Hastinapore, much more will be said hereafter.

This soobah contains eighty fircars, subdivided into 232 pergunnahs. The revenue is 60,16,15,555 daums; out of which 3,30,75,739 daums are Seyurghal.

The Seiks, that rising and powerful state before-mentioned, connected together by a strong federal union, are at this day in possession of the western parts of Delhi. The southern region, extending quite to the city of Delhi, successively under the controul of the Jauts and Nudjuff Khan, has been of late years seized upon by Sindia, who permits Shah Aulum, his royal prisoner, to reign
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