

MEMOIRS

OF

ZEHIR-ED-DIN MUHAMMED BABER, EMPEROR OF HINDUSTAN,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, IN THE JAGHATAI TURKI,

AND TRANSLATED, PARTLY BY

THE LATE JOHN LEYDEN, Esq. M.D.

PARTLY BY

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WITH

Notes and a Geographical and Historical Introduction :

TOGETHER WITH A

MAP OF THE COUNTRIES BETWEEN THE OXUS AND JAXARTES,

AND

A MEMOIR REGARDING ITS CONSTRUCTION,

BY

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of my principal adherents advised me, that if we were to enter Hindustân, we should do it on a proper footing, and with an adequate force; that a great part of our army had been left behind at Kâbul; that a body of our best troops had been left at Bajour; that a number, too, in consequence of the weakness of their horses, had returned to Lamghân; that the horses even of those who still continued with us, were so wretched, that they were unfit for a single day's hard service. Though the advice was perfectly judicious, we made the inroad in spite of all these objections.

Early next morning we marched towards the passage over the Sind. I despatched February 16 Mir Muhammed Jalehbân in advance, with his brothers and some troops to escort them, for the purpose of examining the banks of the river, both above and below. After sending on the army towards the river, I myself set off for Sawâti, which they likewise call Karak-Khaneh, to hunt the rhinoceros. We started many rhinoceroses,¹ but, as the country abounded in brush-wood, we could not get at them. A she rhinoceros that had whelps, came out and fled along the plain; many arrows were shot at her, but as the wooded ground was near at hand she gained cover. We set fire to the brush-wood, but the rhinoceros was not to be found. We got sight of another, that, having been scorched in the fire, was lamed and unable to run. We killed it, and every one cut off a bit of it as a trophy of the chase. Leaving Sawâti, after a wide and fatiguing circuit, we reached the camp about bed-time prayers. The party that had been sent to survey the passage over the river did so, and returned.

Next morning, being Thursday the 17th, we crossed the ford² with our horses, Baber crosses the Sind, February 17 camels, and baggage; the camp bazar and the infantry were floated across on rafts. The same day the inhabitants of Nilâb³ waited on me, bringing an armed horse and three hundred shahrokhis,⁴ as a Peshkesh. As soon as we had got all our people across, that same day at noon-day prayers, we proceeded on our march, which we continued for one watch of the night, and halted at the river of Kecheh-kot. February 18 Marching thence before day, we crossed the river of Kecheh-kot, and the same evening surmounted the Pass of Sengdâki,⁵ and halted. Syed Kâsim Ishek-Agha, who brought up the rear guard, took a few Gujers who followed the camp, cut off some of their heads and brought them in.

Marching at the dawn from Singdâki, and crossing the river Souhân⁶ about noon-February 19 day prayers, we encamped. Our stragglers continued to come in till midnight. It was an uncommonly long and severe march, and as it was made when our horses were lean and weak, it was peculiarly hard on them, so that many horses were worn out, and fell down by the way. Seven kos from Behreh⁷ to the north, there is a hill. This hill, in the Zefer-nâmeh⁸ and some other books, is called the hill of Jûd. At first I

¹ It is worthy of notice, that the rhinoceros is now no longer to be found to the west of the Indus.

² Baber appears to have crossed a little above Attok.

³ Nilâb lies fifteen miles below Attok on the Sind.

⁴ Something less than £15 sterling.

⁵ The river of Kecheh-kot is the Harrû, or river of Gharshîn. By his ascending a pass so speedily after leaving the river, and by his reaching the Swân so soon, it appears that Baber turned sharp to the south after crossing the Harrû.

⁶ Or Swân, which lies between the Sind and Behat.

⁷ Perhaps the Bhira south of the Swân.

⁸ The Zefer-nâmeh, or Book of Victory, is the history of Taimur Beg, or Tamerlane, written in a very elegant style, by Sherifeddin Ali Yezdi. It has been well translated by Petis de la Croix.

A. D. 1525. these lines, my mind led me to reflections, and my heart was struck with regret, that a tongue which could repeat the sublimest productions, should bestow any trouble on such unworthy verses; that it was melancholy that a heart, elevated to nobler conceptions, should submit to occupy itself with these meaner and despicable fancies. From that time forward, I religiously abstained from satirical or vituperative poetry. At the time of repeating this couplet, I had not formed my resolution, nor considered how objectionable the practice was.

Baber renounces satirical poetry.

A day or two after, when we halted at Bekrâm,¹ I had a defluxion and fever; the defluxion was attended with a cough, and every time that I coughed I brought up blood. I knew whence this indisposition proceeded, and what conduct had brought on this chastisement.

(*Arabic.*)—Then every one who fails and breaks his promise, that promise avenges its breach on his life; and he who adheres to his promises to God, God bestows on him boundless blessings.

(*Turki verse.*)—What can I do with you, O my tongue?
 On your account I am covered with blood within:
 How long, in this strain of satire, will you delight to compose verses,
 One of which is impure, and another lying?
 If you say, Let me not suffer from this crime,—
 Then turn your reins, and shun the field.

(*Arabic.*)—O my Creator, I have tyrannized over my soul; and, if Thou art not bountiful unto me, of a truth I shall be of the number of the accursed.

I now once more composed myself to penitence and self-control; I resolved to abstain from this kind of idle thoughts, and from such unsuitable amusements, and to break my pen. Such chastenings from the throne of the Almighty, on rebellious servants, are mighty graces; and every servant who feels and benefits from such chastisements, has cause to regard them as overflowing mercies.

Dec. 9.
Reaches
Ali Mesjid,

Marching thence, I halted at Ali Mesjid. On account of the smallness of the encamping ground at this place, I was always accustomed to take up my quarters on an adjoining eminence; the troops all took their ground in the valley. As the hillock on which I pitched my tents commanded the neighbouring grounds, the blaze from the fires of the people in the camp below was wonderfully brilliant and beautiful. It was certainly owing to this circumstance that every time that I halted in this ground I drank wine.

Dec. 10.
Reaches
Bekrâm.

I took a maajûn before sunrise, and we continued our march. That day I fasted. We continued our march till we came near Bekrâm, and then halted. Next morning we continued halting in the same station, and I went out to hunt the rhinoceros. We crossed the Siâh-Ab,² in front of Bekrâm, and formed our ring lower down the river.

Dec. 11.

Rhinoceros
hunt.

When we had gone a short way, a man came after us with notice, that a rhinoceros had entered a little wood near Bekrâm, and that they had surrounded the wood, and were waiting for us. We immediately proceeded towards the wood at full gallop, and cast a ring round it. Instantly, on our raising the shout, the rhinoceros issued out into the plain, and took to flight. Hûmâiûn, and those who had come from the same quarter, never having seen a rhinoceros before, were greatly amused. They followed

¹ Peshâwer.

² Black river.

it for nearly a kos, shot many arrows at it, and finally brought it down. This rhinoceros did not make a good set at any person, or any horse. They afterwards killed another rhinoceros. I had often amused myself with conjecturing how an elephant and rhinoceros would behave if brought to face each other; on this occasion the elephant-keepers brought out the elephants, so that one elephant fell right in with the rhinoceros. As soon as the elephant-drivers put their beasts in motion, the rhinoceros would not come up, but immediately ran off in another direction.

This day, when we staid at Bekrâm, I sent for several Beks and noblemen who were about my person, as well as for the paymasters and Diwans, and having nominated six or seven of them as superintendants, appointed them to attend at the Nilâb passage, to conduct the embarkation, to take down the name of every man in the army one by one, and to inspect them. That same night I had a defluxion and fever. The defluxion ended in a cough; every time that I coughed I spit blood; I was considerably alarmed; but, praise be to God! it went off in two or three days.

We made two marches from Bekrâm; and after the third, on Thursday the 26th, we encamped on the banks of the river Sind. Dec. 12.
13, and 14.

On Saturday, the 1st day of the first Rebi, we passed the Sind; and having also crossed the river of Kech-kot,¹ halted on its banks. The Beks, paymasters, and Diwâns, who had been placed to superintend the embarkation, brought me the return of the troops who were on the service. Great and small, good and bad, servants and no servants, they amounted to twelve thousand persons. Dec. 16.
Passes the
Sind

This year there was a deficiency of rain in the lower grounds, whereas there had been a sufficient quantity in the highlands. To secure a proper supply of corn, we advanced along the skirts of the hills towards Siâlkot.² On coming opposite to the country of the Gakers, in the bed of a brook, we found in several places a quantity of standing water. These waters were entirely frozen over. Although there was not much of it, the ice was in general a span in thickness. In Hindustân such ice is uncommon. We met with it here; but, during all the years³ that I have been in Hindustân, I have in no other instance met with any trace of ice or snow. Proceeds by
the route of
the hills.

Advancing five marches from the Sind, the sixth brought us close by the hill of Jûd, below the hill of Balinât-jogi, on the banks of a river, at the station of Bakiâlân, where we encamped. Dec. 22.

Next morning we halted in the same encampment, for the purpose of allowing the troops to procure grain. That day I drank spirits.⁴ Mûlla Muhammed Parghari told us a great many stories. I have seldom seen him so talkative. Mûlla Shems was generally riotous in his cups, and, when once affected, he continued noisy and troublesome from morning till night. Dec. 23.

The slaves and servants, and men of all descriptions, that had gone to bring in grain, instead of employing themselves in searching for grain, went confusedly and unrestrained over hill, wood, and dingle, making a number of prisoners; in consequence of which Gichgineh Tunkitâr and some others of our men were cut off.

¹ The Harû, or Hurroo.

² Siâlkot lies on the east of the Chenâb river, below the mountains.

³ This passage must have been written not long before Baber's death.

⁴ Arak.

They account to the government for the elephants which they take. The elephant is an immense animal, and of great sagacity. It understands whatever you tell it, and does whatever it is bid. Its value is in proportion to its size. When it arrives at a proper age they sell it, and the largest brings the highest price. They say that in some islands the elephant grows to the height of ten gez.¹ I have never, in these countries, seen one above four or five gez.² The elephant eats and drinks entirely by means of his trunk. He cannot live if he loses it. On the two sides of his trunk, in his upper jaw, he has two tusks; it is by applying these teeth, and exerting all his force, that he overturns walls and tears up trees; and, when he fights or performs any operation that requires great exertion, he makes use of these tusks, which they call *Aaj*. The tusks are highly valued by the Hindûs. The elephant is not covered with hair or wool³ like other animals. The natives of Hindustân place great reliance on their elephants; in their armies, every division has invariably a certain number with it. The elephant has some valuable qualities: it can carry a great quantity of baggage over deep and rapid torrents, and passes them with ease; gun-carriages, which it takes four or five hundred men to drag, two or three elephants draw without difficulty. But it has a great stomach, and a single elephant will consume the grain of seven or fourteen camels.

Rhinoceros. The rhinoceros is another. This also is a huge animal. Its bulk is equal to that of three buffaloes. The opinion prevalent in our countries, that a rhinoceros can lift an elephant on its horn, is probably a mistake. It has a single horn over its nose, upwards of a span in length, but I never saw one of two spans. Out of one of the largest of these horns I had a drinking-vessel⁴ made, and a dice-box, and about three or four fingers' bulk of it might be left. Its hide is very thick. If it be shot at with a powerful bow, drawn up to the armpit with much force, and if the arrow pierces at all, it enters only three or four fingers' breadth. They say, however, that there are parts of his skin that may be pierced, and the arrows enter deep. On the sides of its two shoulder-blades, and of its two thighs, are folds that hang loose, and appear at a distance like cloth housings dangling over it. It bears more resemblance to the horse than to any other animal.⁵ As the horse has a large stomach, so has this; as the pastern of the horse is composed of a single bone, so also is that of the rhinoceros; as there is a *gumek*⁶ in the horse's fore leg, so is there in that of the rhinoceros. It is more ferocious than the elephant, and cannot be rendered so tame or obedient. There are numbers of them in the jungles of Pershâwer and Hashnagar, as well as between the river Sind and Behreh in the jungles. In Hindustân too, they abound on the banks of the river Sirwû.⁷ In the course of my expeditions into Hindustân, in the jungles of Pershâwer, and Hashnagar,⁸ I frequently killed the rhinoceros. It strikes powerfully with its horn, with which, in the course of these hunts, many men, and many horses,

¹ About twenty feet.

² Eight or ten feet.

³ Its skin is scattered with thin hair.

⁴ The rhinoceros's horn was supposed to sweat on the approach of poison, a quality which fitted it, in a peculiar manner, for being made into a drinking-cup for an eastern king.

⁵ It is to the eye more like the elephant, or a huge overgrown hog.

⁶ A marginal note on the Tûrki copy, translates *gumek*, marrow.

⁷ The Gogra.

⁸ The rhinoceros is now entirely expelled from the countries about the Indus.

were gored. In one hunt, it tossed with its horn, a full spear's length, the horse of a young man named Maksûd, whence he got the name of Rhinoceros Maksûd.

Another animal is the wild buffalo. It is much larger than the common buffalo. Its horns go back like those of the common buffalo, but not so as to grow into the flesh. It is a very destructive and ferocious animal.

Another is the nilgaû. Its height is about equal to that of a horse. It is somewhat slenderer. The male is bluish, whence it is called the nilgaû.¹ It has two small horns, and on its neck has some hair, more than a span in length,² which bears much resemblance to the mountain-cow tassels.³ Its tail is like the bull's. The colour of the female is like that of the gawezin deer; she has no horns, nor any hair on the under part of her neck; and is plumper than the male.

Another is the kotah-paicheh.⁴ Its size may be equal to that of the white deer. Its two fore legs as well as its thighs are short, whence its name—(short-legged). Its horns are branching like those of the gawezin, but less. Every year too it casts its horns like the stag. It is a bad runner, and therefore never leaves the jungle.

There is another species of deer that resembles the male honeh or jîrân. Its back is black, its belly white, its horns longer than those of the honeh, and more crooked. The Hindustânis call it kilhereh. This word was probably originally *halahern*, that is (black deer), which they have corrupted into kilhereh. The female is white. They take deer by means of this kilhereh. They make fast a running-net to its horns, and tie a stone larger than a foot-ball to its leg, that, after it is separated from the deer, it may be hindered from running far. When the deer sees the wild kilhereh, it advances up to it, presenting its head. This species of deer is very fond of fighting, and comes on to butt with its horns. When they have engaged and pushed at each other with their horns, in the course of their moving backwards and forwards, the net which has been fastened on the tame one's horns, gets entangled in those of the wild deer, and prevents its escape. Though the wild deer uses every effort to flee, the tame one does not run off, and is greatly impeded by the stone tied to its leg, which keeps back the other also. In this way they take a number of deer,⁵ which they afterwards tame. They likewise take deer by setting nets. They breed this tame deer to fight in their houses; it makes an excellent battle.

There is on the skirts of the mountains of Hindustân another deer which is smaller. It may be equal in size to a sheep⁶ of a year old.

Another is the gaû-kini; it is a small species of cow, like the larger kochkar (or ram) of our country. Its flesh is very tender and savoury.

The monkey is another of the animals of the country. The Hindustânis call it *Bander*. There are many species of them. One species is the same that is brought to our countries. The jugglers teach them tricks. It is met with in the hill-country

¹ Blue ox.

² On the lower part of its neck is a thick circumscribed tuft of hair.—D. W. (For this and the succeeding notes marked *D. W.* I am indebted to David White, M.D. second Member of the Medical Board of Bombay, and well known for his botanical researches.)

³ Kitâs.

⁴ Short-legged.

⁵ This way of catching the antelope is still in constant use in India.

⁶ Tugli ghalchen.

been compelled to evacuate Sambal, and had rejoined me. Sultan Muhammed Duldai had retired from Kunauj, and joined my army. The Pagans of the surrounding country came and blockaded Guâliâr. Alim Khan, who had been sent to the succour of Guâliâr, instead of proceeding to that place, had marched off to his own country. Every day some unpleasant news reached us from one place or another. Many Hindustânis began to desert from the army. Haibet Khan Gurg-endaz¹ fled to Sambal. Hassan Khan Bariwal fled and joined the Pagans. Without minding the fugitives, we continued to regard only our own force. On Tuesday, the 9th of the latter Jemâdi, on the day of the Nouroz, I advanced my guns, and tripods that moved on wheels, with all the apparatus and machines which I had prepared, and marched forward with my army, regularly drawn up and divided into right and left wing and centre, in battle order. I sent forward in front the guns and tripods placed on wheel-carriages. Behind them was stationed Ustâd Ali Kûli, with a body of his matchlock-men, to prevent the communication between the artillery and infantry, who were behind, from being cut off, and to enable them to advance and form into line. After the ranks were formed, and every man stationed in his place, I galloped along the line, animating the Begs and troops of the centre, right and left, giving each division special instructions how they were to act, and to every man orders how to conduct himself, and in what manner he was to engage; and, having made these arrangements, I ordered the army to move on in order of battle for about a kos, when we halted to encamp. The Pagans, on getting notice of our motions, were on the alert, and several parties drew out to face us, and advanced close up to our guns and ditch. After our army had encamped, and when we had strengthened and fortified our position in front, as I did not intend fighting that day, I pushed on a few of our troops to skirmish with a party of the enemy, by way of taking an omen. They took a number of Pagans and cut off their heads, which they brought away. Malek Kâsim also cut off and brought in some heads. He behaved extremely well. This incident raised the spirits of our army excessively, and had a wonderful effect in giving them confidence in themselves.

March 12.
He advanced against the enemy.

Encamped

March 13.

Next morning, I marched from that station, with the intention of offering battle: when Khâlîfeh and some of my advisers represented to me, that as the ground on which we had fixed for halting was near at hand, it would be proper, in the first place, to throw up a ditch and to fortify it, after which we might march forward and occupy the position. Khâlîfeh accordingly mounted to give directions about the ditch, and rejoined us, after having set pioneers to work on the different parts of it, and appointed proper persons to superintend their progress.

March 16.
Again advanced.

On Saturday, the 13th of the latter Jemâdi, having dragged forward our guns, and advanced our right, left, and centre in battle array, for nearly a kos, we reached the ground that had been prepared for us. Many tents were already pitched, and they were engaged in pitching others, when news was brought that the enemy's army was in sight. I immediately mounted, and gave orders that every man should, without delay, repair to his post, and that the guns and lines should be properly strengthened. As the letter announcing my subsequent victory contains a clear detailed account of the circumstances of the Army of the Faith, the number of the Pagan bands, the order

And engaged the enemy.

¹ If *Gurg-endaz*, the epithet is the wolf-hunter; if *Karak-endaz*, the rhinoceros-hunter.

On Monday the 4th, I marched from the banks of the Jumna against Behâr. Having advanced five kos, we halted at Lawâin. I sailed down the river as I had been accustomed. The troops had continued passing till this day. I now directed the guns and artillery which had been landed at Adampâr to be again embarked at Piâg, and sent forward by water carriage. Having reached our ground, we set the wrestlers a-wrestling. Dost Yâsin had an excellent wrestling match with Pehlevan Lahôri the boatman. Dost succeeded in throwing him, but by great exertions, and with much difficulty. I bestowed complete dresses on both of them. Somewhat farther on is the Tûs,¹ a very swampy and muddy river. We halted two days at this station, for the purpose of discovering a ford, and of constructing a road. Towards night, we found a ford by which the horses and camels could pass, but the loaded waggons could not cross on account of its broken, stoney bottom. Orders were, however, given that exertions should be used, to transport the baggage carts across by that ford.

March 15
Advances
against Br-
hâr.

March 16
and 17.

On Thursday, having marched thence, I went in a boat as far as the point where the river Tûs empties itself into the main river. At the point of junction I landed, rode up the Tûs, and returned about afternoon prayers to the camp, which, in the meantime, had crossed that river and taken its ground. This day the army marched six kos.

March 18

Next morning we halted on the same ground.

March 19.

On Saturday we marched twelve kos, and reached Nilabâr-Gang; whence next morning we marched, and having advanced six kos, halted above Deh. From thence we went on seven kos, and reached Nânupûr. At this station Bâki Khan arrived with his sons from Chunâr, and paid his obeisance.

March 20.

March 21.

March 22

At this time a letter from Muhammed Bakhshi gave me certain information, that my wives and household had set out from Kâbul.

On Wednesday I marched from that station, and visited the fort of Chunâr; the camp halted after having advanced about one kos beyond it. In the course of my march from Piâg, some painful boils broke out on my body. At this stage a Rûmi² administered to me a medicine, which had lately been found out in Rûm. They boiled the dust of pepper in an earthen pot, and exposed the sores to the warm steam, and after the steam diminished, washed them with the warm water. I did this for two astronomical hours. At this station, a man said that in an island³ close on the edge of the camp, he had seen a lion and rhinoceros.⁴ Next morning we drew a ring round the ground; we also brought elephants to be in readiness, but no lion or rhinoceros was roused. On the edge of the circle one wild buffalo was started. This day the wind rose very high, and the wind and dust occasioned a great deal of annoyance. Having embarked in a boat, I returned by water to the camp, which had halted two kos higher up than Benâres. In the jungle around Chunâr, there are many elephants.⁵ We were just setting out from this station, with the intention of having the sport of elephant hunting, when Bâbi Khan brought information, that Mahmûd Khan was on the banks of

Visits Chu-
nâr.

March 24

March 25.

Arrives at
Benâres.

Mahmûd
Khan occu-
pies the
banks of the
Sôn.

¹ The Tounse of Rennell.

² That is, an Ottoman Turk. Rûm is Turkey.

³ Arâl.

⁴ Neither lions nor rhinoceroses are ever heard of now at Benâres. The former might have been a tiger.

⁵ No wild elephants are ever found now in that quarter, or nearer than the hills.