

TRAVELS
IN
INDIA AND KASHMIR.

BY
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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER VIII.

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Iman-barah — The Iman-barah at Hussynabad —
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Horses—Throne-room—European lady—Royal pro-
cession—Mahometan festival—Knight in armour—
Breakfast with the Resident—Breakfast with the
King—Spectacle—Fencers.

I ARRIVED at Lucknow, the capital city of Oude, early in the morning. I do not intend to enter into the history of this province, the fate and conduct of whose princes have been so often brought before European eyes, and under so many different aspects, since the conquest of India by the British. I mean simply to relate what I saw, and the incidents which befel me during my stay.

Mounted on an elephant, and under the guidance of one of the king's schobdars, an equipage which Captain Shakspeare's kindness procured me, I visited the Iman-barah of Asef il Dhawla. The plan of the building is extensive, and the whole edifice exceeds any of the erections of the last century that I have seen in India. Buildings appointed for the celebration of the Moharum feast, are called Iman-barah. These feasts are instituted in memory of Iman Hassan or Husayn, and whilst they last, the buildings are lighted up with lamps. They generally contain a mosque or shrine for prayer, and may, indeed, be looked upon as mausoleums erected to the memory of Husayn.

Many rich Mussulmen have little Iman-barahs in their own houses. The Iman-barah built by Asef il Dhawla has a large garden, which communicates with several small buildings, most of which are touched by the hand of time. Within the Iman-barah is placed Husayn's grave, covered with a tabernacle of silver, exquisitely wrought. The building is closed in by a beautiful dome, terminating in a warlike ornament representing a sabre blade, a dagger, &c. The mosque is a beautiful massive building, and like the Iman-

barah, painted white, the cupola terminating in a gilded spire.

There is a labyrinthine passage leading from the Iman-barah, and so intricate that four persons are said to have lost their way, and *par conséquence*, their lives in it. Next to the Iman-barah is the door-way, or rather door-building, Rumi Derwasa, constructed in the same style as the temple to which it belongs. I remember well the wetting I got on the day I visited Iman-barah. Three days had I stayed at home in apprehension of the descent of the dark clouds which looked so threatening overhead, when on the very day that I ventured to go abroad, they all descended. I was thoroughly drenched.

On the following day, I visited the Iman-barah at Hussynabad, with the same suite as on the day preceding, my conductors furnished with gold and silver staves, being members of the king's household. The Iman-barah at Hussynabad is quite a European-looking building, furnished with gardens, adorned with temples and statues. I found there also some rhinoceroses and elephants, kept to amuse their masters by their combats in the arena.

The Iman-barah at Hussynabad is a smaller

building than that built by Asef il Dhawla, but in much better repair. In the centre of the garden is a large tank, which supplies a number of fountains, distributed through the different alleys and flower-knots, and which during the festival days were kept in full play. Within the temple are some things which in the eyes of the natives are wonders of art. Amongst these are two glass tigers, manufactured in England, and which certainly are not, either in execution or design, such as would entitle them to a place in the museum of the King of Oude, in whose dominions the living type roams free in his native fierceness and beauty. But such is the force of prejudice, everything coming from Europe is here esteemed beautiful, and the glass monster is admired, even where it comes in daily contrast with the grace of the living form in nature.

The small buildings attached to the garden serve for the accommodation of the king, in the visits which he makes during the feast. Beside one of the fountains are two wooden figures, which when the pipes that supply the water are worked, move in unison with the pumps, and have quite the appearance of working the machinery. Speaking of figures