

Draught of a Letter from Shah Abbas II. to Dara Shekoh.

A. D. 1659.*

THE plant of the garden of friendship and concord, the first fruits of amity and attachment, the wine of the repository of intimacy and regard, the effervescence of the cellar of affection and esteem, viz. your incomparable epistle, fortunately arrived in the auspicious moment, when the mistress of happiness fully adorned, was in my bosom, and the cup-bearer of hope held in his hands the goblet of success and enjoyment, and (by its arrival) sweetened the flavour of joy and satisfaction, and gave a brilliancy of colouring to the assembly resembling paradise.† The wine of (the intelligence of) the arrival of that ornament of the crown and throne in the vicinity of our boundless empire, gave an additional enjoyment to our delight,

Verse.

The happiness of friends is doubled by the letter of a friend, for the delight of the society of friends, is the epistle of a friend.

* See Dow's Hindostan, Vol. III. page 291.

† This monarch was much addicted to wine, &c. See Malcolm's History of Persia, page 582.

That which was expressed by your eloquent pen respecting the revolutions of the times, the changes of fortune, and the disturbed state of Hindūstan, was clearly reflected in the mirror of our friendly mind ; it must be evident to your penetrating understanding, which is a glass, displaying the true appearance of all events, that the world-enlightening sun, in consequence of the revolution of the sphere, is subject to be eclipsed and overshadowed by dense clouds, but that this circumstance does not diminish its splendour or magnificence, nor destroy its illuminating powers, nor by such accidents is the colour of its splendid countenance any way changed. Confiding in the favour of the creator of heaven and earth, and the support of your sincere friends, keep your mind tranquil, and do not defile the pure fountain of faith with the dust of despondency, for through the divine grace, the bright morning arises from the blackest night, and the darkest clouds are compelled to disperse on the appearance of the world-illuminating sun. That which you stated, respecting the sending of troops, and your being in possession of the province of *Bicker*, was perfectly understood and comprehended ; but as our desire for the pleasure of seeing you exceeds all bounds, it appears more consistent with the duty of friendship, and more conformable with the practice of affection and regard, that in the company and society of each other, we should renew the foundation of friendship laid by our illustrious ancestors,* and that after the gratification of meeting, and your having seen a portion of our boundless kingdom of Persia, and having had an opportunity of conversing and consulting with us, then by the grace of the creator of man and genie, the object of all your Highness's desires shall be accom-

* Shāh Tahmāsp and Homayon. See Dow's History, Vol. II. page 193.

plished in the most complete manner. On the subject of your wish of bringing certain articles from that province, a royal order has been sent to Zulfekār Khan, to act as he may think proper. If it please God, after laying the foundation of friendship, your auspicious mind will not be content with the insignificant corner of *Bicker*, for our all-powerful mind has in contemplation some very important affairs respecting that confidant of our royal secrets. In order to supply the wants of your Highness, and to observe the proper ceremonies and insure respect, we have appointed A. B. who is well acquainted with all the customs of our court, and in a short time he will have the honour of waiting on you. Let not your illustrious mind be cast down by the occurrence of such events or accidents, all will terminate happily. May the sun of success, rising from the horizon of prosperity, and secure from adversity, continue to shine, and be resplendent !

Note. This letter is taken from a thick volume of the correspondence of Shāh Abbas II.; it is written in the Shafia hand (see plate No. 6.) dated A. H. 1204, (A. D. 1790) and was brought from Persia by the late Major Campbell.