

*A Visit to the Great Wall of China.
A Similar Wall of King Nushirwân
(Chosroes I) of Persia.*

READ ON 20TH APRIL 1923.

Last year (1922), I had the pleasure and honour of representing this Society and four¹ other Societies and Institutions at the second Oriental Conference, held in the end of January at Calcutta. From Calcutta I had gone to Burma, the Strait Settlements of Singapore and Penang, French Indo-China, China and Japan. In my itinerary, I had included the world-known Great Wall of China, which had influenced the history of many ancient countries. I had the pleasure of visiting it on 1st April 1922. It was one of the dreams of my life to see this Great Wall, the construction of which was a landmark, not only in the history of China but also in the history of the then known world. Being the realization of one of the dreams of my life, I take my visit of it in the evening of my life as a landmark in the history of my life. The object of this paper is, (I) to give a brief description of my visit of the wall and of my impressions, and (II) to speak of a similar, though smaller, wall, built about 800 years later, in the West, near the Caspian Sea, by Anoushirawân or Noushirwân (Chosroes I) of Persia, who, like Justinian, his contemporary of Rome, was known as Noushirwân *adal*, i.e., the Just, and of whose justice, his another contemporary, Mahomed, the great Prophet of Arabia, is reported to have said, that he considered himself very fortunate that he was born under the sovereignty of a just prince like Noushirwân. I speak of Noushirwan's wall as a wall similar to that of the Great Wall of China, because, like the great wall, it was built to keep away the inroads of a people, who were the descendants of an offshoot of the great people against whom the Chinese wall was built.

¹ The University of Bombay, the Anthropological Society of Bombay, the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute and the Jarthosati Din ni Khol Kânâri Mandli.

We have often heard of the Seven Wonders of the ancient World.¹ The Westerners, or, to speak more correctly at present, the Middle Westerners of the ancient times, looked for their Wonders, only to the countries round the Mediterranean, which was more intimately known to them, and they did not include the Great Wall of the furthest East among their seven wonders, as they had hardly any opportunity to see it. It is not from any architectural point of view, but from the point of view of the great enterprise and its great length, and also from the point of view of the great and noble thought of the safety of his people which led to its structure by the King of China, that one can include the Great Wall in the list of wonders. Dr. Edgar J. Banks, in his "Seven Wonders of the Ancient World" very properly says that "it is a common weakness of modern man to imagine that his own age and his own country have progressed beyond all others." But imagine a continuous wall of the length of 1,500 miles, of the width of about 12 feet at the top, with 200 towers here and there across its whole length, built in a kind of wilderness of wildernesses, rising and falling over mountains and into valleys, and think, that the great wall was built by a great king of the remote past for securing the safety of his people from the frequent inroads of hordes of marauders, and you will then, I think, admit, that it must be a wonderful piece of work by a wonderful man, wonderfully solicitous for the good of his country.

Some speak of the Himalayas, the Great Wall of China and the Pyramids as the three greatest Wonders of the World. Of these three, one, the Pyramids are colossal mausoleums, which, one may say, are not of any practical utility. But think of the great practical purpose, the long wall of Nature, the Himalayas, has served in defending the extensive frontiers of India on the North; and from that, you can form an idea of the great purpose which the Wall of China has served in keeping off the inroads of marauding tribes into China. Fortunately, I have the pleasure of visiting all these three great wonders and I am in a position to form a clear idea of the purposes they have served. From the point of view with which it was built and from the fact of its being built in a wilderness, the Wall of China is very

¹ The following are generally held to be the seven Wonders:—

1. The Pyramids of Egypt, especially that of Cheops, built about 2900 B. C.
2. The Wall and Hanging Gardens of Babylon from about 605 to 562 B. C.
3. The Statue of Olympian Zeno by Phidias about 470 to 462 B. C.
4. The Temple of Diana at Ephesus about 356 B. C.
5. The Mausoleum or tomb of King Mausolus of Caria, erected by his widow Artemesia, about 353 B. C.
6. The Colossus of Rhodes, about 280 B. C.
7. The Pharos or Watch-tower of Alexandria about 247 B. C.

properly taken to "have no paralled in the whole world, not even in the pyramids of Egypt."¹

From what you see, while travelling by train in China, and in Pekin itself, and from what you read in the books on China, you can say, that China is, as it were, a Country of Walls. The Great Chinese Wall has made it emphatically so

China, a Coun-
try of Walls.

But, even before that wall was built in about 217 B. C., a Chinese King named Ts'in, who lived about 100 years before this time, had built a wall against the Tartars who were now and then attacking his people. It is said, that even about 50 years before that time, Ngwei, a powerful prince of the Tsin family had built a wall to keep off his neighbours.² The city of Pekin, "a mysterious picturesque interesting City" itself, has several walls,—the wall round the Forbidden city which included the quarters of the Emperors and his nobility, the inner wall, and the outer wall. Some parts of the country are said to have walls built to keep off prevailing injurious winds.

I

We left Pekin on the morning of 31st March by a train, leaving that city at 7-25 a.m., and arrived at Nankou at about 10-45 a.m. From there, we went to see the great tombs of the Ming Kings (1368-1662 A. C.). From the station to the tombs, it is a ride on mules of about 3 hours. The distance is about 11 miles. Resting at Nankou for the night on returning from the tombs, we took the next day, at about 10 a.m., a train for the Ching-lung-chiao station which is the station to go up to the Wall. Our train had its engine at the back; so we had, from the front gallery of our carriage in front, a good look of the Nankou pass along which the train ascends. The Nankou ridge is about 1,900 feet high. I had the pleasure of crossing, in my previous travels, three mountain passes—the Khyber Pass on the way from Peshawar to Cabul, the Bubu pass in the Himalayas leading to the Kulu Valley, and the Banihal pass leading from Vernag in Kashmir to Jamoo. Out of these three passes, I was reminded of the Khyber Pass on seeing the wildly picturesque scenery of the Nankou Pass. In the case of the Khyber, I remember leaving Peshawar on an early morning in the end of March in 1887 shivering with cold, and returning at midday to Jamrud from Ali Musjid, all exhausted, riding for 10 miles and back under a torching sun. It was well nigh the same time of the

1 Calcutta Review of January 1903, Vol. 116. p. 40.

2 Ancient China simplified, by Prof. Edward, Harper Parker (1908), p. 119.

year (1st April) when we crossed the Nankou pass by train and the weather here was cool. We saw snow here and there on some parts of the hills and also in some crevices down below. We began seeing the great Wall with its watch-towers here and there from the train. We saw from the train the old caravan route running in a zig-zag line here and there. We got down from the train at the Ching-lung-chiao station, and from there, about half an hour's walk of gradual ascent takes us to the top of a part of the wall. It was 12-10 when I placed my foot upon this historical wall, and the first words I wrote then with a glad heart in my note-book were "शुक्राना दादर! के तु आम्मे जमरे भने आ तवारीणी दीवालयर लाव्यो." i.e., "I am grateful to Thee, O God! that you brought me at this age on this Historic Wall."

The wall had watch-towers at some distances, and here and there, there were rooms beneath the floor which may be godowns or store-rooms for military requisites. The wind was blowing terribly strong on the top of the Wall, and, though it was mid-day and I had an overcoat on my body, it seemed to pierce through. Leaving my friends, I proceeded a few hundred yards further and it was a grand and glorious sight from there, to see the noble wall rising and falling over precipices in a wilderness. Looking on your right and on your left, in your front and on your back, you can cast your physical eyes to long distances of space, and your mental eyes to long vistas of time—past ages which had now and then kings in China, as noble as in any other parts of the world, who thought more of their subjects than of themselves. I would have liked to stay or sit longer on this awe-inspiring wall in the wilderness and to meditate there on the ups and downs of Empires. But there was not much time to indulge in that luxury, and, once more thanking God, I left the wall, full of joy for having seen this great piece of the work of Man inspired by God. When I say, that I saw the great Wall of China and realized a dream of my life, I say, that I saw only a very small part of the great wall which extended through a large tract of the country. We had a second look at the Great Wall from a distance, from the train on the 3rd of April 1922 at about 5-15 p.m., when we were on our way to Japan *via* Fengtien or Mukden. From the Chin-Wang-tao station, we saw the Wall on our left. The wall commenced from Shanhaikuan at the Gulf of Pechili close by, which has a great harbour. But the distant view from here was not sufficiently impressive. That at the Nankou pass was one, which, as said by a traveller, "once seen, can never be effaced from the memory."¹ As said by another writer,

¹ Charles E. D. Black in the *Calcutta Review* of January 1903, p. 34.

"It is one of the few great sights of the world that is not disappointing. It grows upon me hour by hour and from the incredible it becomes credible."¹

The wall is said to be 1,500 miles long. The most accessible part of it is that at the Nankou Pass. Its height varies from 20 to 50 feet. In some parts of it, at the distance of every 200 yards, there are watch-towers about 40 feet high. Some of these towers, in addition to being watch-towers for the sentries, served also as places for hurling stones towards the enemies. The base of the towers varied from 15 to 25 feet in thickness. It was 12 feet at the summit. In some parts, the wall is about 4,000 feet high from the sea level. Wherever it was more exposed to the marauding tribes, it was built of solid masonry. General Grant of America is said to have estimated, that the wall "took as much work as would have built all our (American) railroads, all our canals and nearly all our cities."² Another writer estimates the use of materials in its construction as follows:—"To give another idea of the mass of matter in the stupendous fabric, it may be observed that it is more than sufficient to surround the circumference of the earth at two of its greatest circles with two walls, each six feet high and two feet thick. It is to be understood that in the calculation is included the earthy part of the midst of the Wall."³

It is said, that about 30 lacs of men were engaged by the king in building this Great Wall. As the marauders, against whom the wall was being built, were likely to harass, and actually harassed, these builders who all were spread along a long line of the wall, an army of three lacs of men was required to protect the builders from harm. It is said on some authority that forced labour of 7,00,000 men⁴ was employed over it.

The Great Wall separates, as said by Mr. Geil,⁵ two lands of the East, the Cold North and the Summer South. It also separates two great races—"the outward flowing white race of the North and the black-haired race on the south, now known as the Yellow race." In the same way, it separates two epochs in

1 Miss Eliza Schidmore, as quoted by the above writer, *Ibid*, p. 36.

2 The Great Wall of China by William Edgar Geil.

3 *Calcutta Review* of January 1903, p. 41.

4 It is said of the Emperor who built it that he had employed 7,00,000 eunuchs on the work of building his palaces. The eunuchs were castrated criminals whose crimes were lesser than those that deserved the punishment of death or of maiming, such as chopping off of feet or slicing of knees. (*Ancient China simplified*, by Prof. Parker, p. 119.)

5 "The Great Wall of China" by William Edgar Geil.

the history of China—the Mythical age and the Historical age. The History of China is divided into four periods:—1. The most Ancient period. 2. The Ancient period (255-207 B. C.) 3. The Middle period and 4. The Modern period. Out of these four, the Great Wall divides the first two periods, and, “as the greatest monument of human industry, it has a noble history.”

The pre-historic or semi-mythical history of China begins at about 2,500 B. C., when China, under its three successive rulers, is said to have passed into a stage of civilization. During this period, marriage was instituted, animals were domesticated, agriculture taught, medical art founded with the use of herbs, cities were founded, time began to be regularly counted and calendars formed, communication between cities was carried by boats on rivers and by carts on land, and silk industry commenced. Before this time, language, as it were, consisted of expression of thoughts by means of knots tied on strings, but during this period picture-writing began, which, later on, developed into the modern system of Chinese ideographs.

The next set of rulers of China, after the first batch of the above three kings and their successors, were known for the great engineering works in connection with the regulation of floods, one of which is said to have been as large as the great Deluge of the Bible in Mesopotamia. The flood period lasted for about 9 years and was ended by the construction of canals, the engineering feat of some of which is said to be as great as that of the Panama canal. One of these rulers, Yu is known as the great canal-builder (2205 B. C.).

Then reigned the Shang (Tang) or Yin dynasty (1766-1122 B.C.), which was followed by the Chou (or Chow) dynasty, founded by Wu Wang, who established a kind of feudal system in China by granting portions of the kingdom to his supporters. The rule of this dynasty was the longest in China (1122 to 249 B. C.). The proper historical history of China begins with the rule of this dynasty. The three great Chinese philosophers, Confucius, Mencius and Taotze were born during the rule of this dynasty. The feudal system of this dynasty weakened China after a number of years when the feudal princes grew strong and weakened the central power. So, a powerful nobleman of the country, named Shih Hivang (or Hwang)-ti, spoken of as the Napoleon of China, founded in 221 B. C., a new regime of the Tsin or Chin dynasty. This was, as it were, the foundation of China as a great united Empire, which continued as an empire, though under different dynasties

and though now and then divided for short periods between rival rulers, for a long period of about 2,000 years, till it was overthrown in the beginning of this century and a Republic formed. Hwang-ti, the founder of the Empire, was a powerful man. When he found, that a number of people preferred the former Feudal system, and that scholars pointed for their authority for the advantages of that system to previous literature, he ordered the destruction by fire of all old literature which referred to old tradition. This was a great black spot on the brilliant life of this great man. He destroyed extensive libraries of old books formed by successive previous rulers of China, saving only scientific books on medicine, astrology, and husbandry and books on divination. He also buried alive a number of literary scholars who quoted old books in favour of the ancient rulers and against the then rulers. His name has therefore been condemned by later Chinese writers. He was to China what Alexander the Great was to ancient Iran, in the matter of destroying the country's old libraries, with this difference, that Alexander was a foreigner but Hwang-ti was a son of the soil. His name was cursed by the Chinese, as that of Alexander by the Persians. It was this king, who began building the Great China Wall in 214 B.C. to defend his country against the northern Tartars who formed a tribe of the great Hun nation. He entrusted his General Ming-tien with this great work. Chinese trade with Persia and, further on, with Rome flourished in the reign of this king. It was this great ruler Hwang-ti, who, from the name Tsin, where he was born and lived, gave his dynasty the name of Tsin or Chin, which dynasty, in its turn, gave the country its later name of Chin or China.¹

One may perhaps say from the above act of the Emperor that he was altogether opposed to education. But no; from his point of view of the good of the country, his quarrel was, to speak in our modern style of speech, a quarrel with the Humanists, who are believed to be attaching too much importance to the Classics. He was, as it were, an anti-humanist, an extreme anti-classic of the worst type. But while he tried to destroy the old Chinese Classics, he attempted to liberalize general education. He wanted to introduce a style of writing by which books can be easily composed by the writers and understood by the readers. From this point of view, Mr. W. E. Geil places him in the rank of Peter the Great, Alfred the Great and even Bismark. He cared less for the few learned and more for enlightened commonalty.

¹ His dynasty was overthrown by the Hun dynasty, whose founder was to China what Ardeshir (Artaxerxes) Babegan was to Iran—the restorer of its ancient literature and encourager of learning. It was he with whom commenced the well-known Chinese system of literary examinations for the civil service of China.

What is said of this Great Emperor who built the Great Wall of China, reminds us of what we are told of Chandragupta, the father of Asoka. It is said, that Chandragupta was so much afraid of his enemies who looked at his rise with jealousy, that, to keep them off their watch, he did not sleep in one and the same palace every night, and that, in the same palace also, he slept in different rooms during the different parts of night. Similarly, it is said of the Chinese king, that powerful as he had become after uniting the different kingdoms, he was not afraid of human beings, but was afraid of evil spirits, who, he imagined, pursued him. So, in order to throw them off their scent, he slept each night in the different rooms of his great palace consisting of about 1,000 bed rooms. He built the wall to keep off the ancient Tartars of the Hun nation. But, by what is spoken of as "an irony of fate," the dynasty of the same Monchu Tartars recently ruled over China, till overthrown by the formation of the Republic. To emphasize this change, all the Chinese got their long hair cut off.

The building of this great wall of China, spoken of by the Chinese as Chang-Ching, *i.e.*, the Great Wall, was preceded, as said above, by some walls on a smaller scale, here and there. M. Deguignes, in his History of the Huns, thus refers to the previous walls: "China was desolated since a long time, by the incursions made by the Tartars living on the North. Several small kings had erected a long wall on their frontiers to stop them. Tehing-van having become the master of the Empire joined them together and constructed one in his ancient country of Tsin, that which formed what we now call the Great Wall, of which he was not entirely the author as several writers of Europe have written."¹ M. Deguignes says, that one may regard this wall built to check the Huns as one of the Wonders of the World (*une des merveilles du monde*).²

The Great Wall affected the history of the whole world. It is generally, and, to a certain extent, properly believed, that the downfall of the Roman Empire in the 5th Century was due to the eruption of the Teutonic tribes into Roman territories. But the cause which led the Germanic hordes to drive towards the Roman territories was the movement of the Hun tribes of Central Asia. The ancestors of these tribes

The effect of the Great Wall upon the history of the world.

¹ I give my translation from "Histoire G n rale des Huns" par M. Deguignes (1756) Tome I Partie I p. 19.

² Ibid, Tome I Partie II p. 19.

were, for a long number of years, invading the different countries of the East, and among these, the country of China. The Chinese Emperor having built in the 3rd Century B.C., the Great Wall for the defence of the Chinese Empire against the Huns, the latter turned towards the West. Though there was the interval of nearly eight centuries between the time (the 3rd Century B.C.) when the Great Wall was built and the time (5th Century A.C.) when the Roman Empire fell, one can well trace the influence of the Great Wall upon the Roman Empire. A great event in history exerts its influence for a number of years, both in the country itself and outside of it. The particular tribes of the Huns who were repulsed from China by the construction of the Great Wall turned back and fell upon the Yuechi tribes who were in front of them and drove them further back. The latter in their turn fell upon the Ut-Suivi tribes and drove them back. The latter again fell upon the Scythic tribes which had extended up to the Caspian sea, and so on.

In my paper on "The Early History of the Huns and their inroads in India and Persia" before this Society, I have dwelt at some length on the influence of this great wall, upon the History of China, Rome, India and Persia. In my paper on "The Hunas in Avesta and Pahlavi" in the R. G. Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume (pp. 65-80), I have touched in passing the question as to who the king was, who defeated and put an end to the Huna supremacy in India—Was he Yashodharma (Vikramaditya) or Baladitya? In this controversy, the history of Persia is appealed to, and I have ventured to believe "that the credit of the defeat of the Huns belongs to Yashodharma." I will not enter here into the great question of the influence of the Great Wall on the History of the then known world, but pass on, referring my readers to the above papers for details.

The ancient Huns who harassed China were divided into various tribes, known under different names in different countries and at different times. These tribes had, as it were, a continuous war with the Iranians, down from, what may be termed, the prehistoric times of the Kayânian dynasty to well-nigh the end of the Sassanian dynasty. Just as it was Yashodharma who broke the power of the Huns in India, it was Noshirwân (Chosroes I) who broke their power against Persia. They had some fight with the successors of Noshirwân, but their power was greatly broken by Noshirwân. This brings us to the second part of my paper, the Wall built by Noshirwân against the Khazars who were a tribe or an offshoot of the Huns.

II.

THE WALL OF NOSHIRWÂN OF PERSIA.

About 750 years after the above Chinese Wall, Noshirwân of Persia (Chosroes I, 531-579 A.C.), built a similar wall to protect his people living on the Caspian shores from the inroads of the tribes whose ancestors had knocked often at the gates of China and who were prevented by the Great Wall from entering China. As said above, I speak of Noshirwân's wall as a similar wall, not on account of its extent, because it was very small in comparison, but on account of the association of events. It also was, like the Great Wall of China, built against the Huns. Just as the great wall of China begins from the sea at the Gulf of Pechili Noshirwan's wall began from the Caspian Sea at Darband. Like the Chinese wall, it ran across mountains—mountains of the Caucasus range—and valleys and is said to have extended upto the Black Sea. Just as our Himalayas form a kind of natural bulwark against invaders from the North, the Caucasus formed a bulwark running across the regions between the Caspian Sea on the East and the Black Sea on the West. The mountains were crossed by two passes, one inland, known as the Darial Pass, and the other, close to the Caspian at Derbend, known as the Derbend Pass. In fact, the latter cannot strictly be called a Pass because it was a gap between the mountain and the Caspian. The latter was very important, and, as the old name of the place, Bab-al-abwâb (door of doors), and the modern name Darband (the closed door) signify, it was the Door of Doors or Gate of Gates for the people coming to Persia from the North. Prof. Jackson¹ speaks of it as the "Key to Persia," and says, that when Peter the Great of Persia returned to his country after his conquest of a part of Persia, he carried with him as a souvenir "the keys of the city of Derbend." The ancient Romans spoke of the Pass or Gate as Caspiæ Portæ, i.e., the Caspian Gates. Several Arab and Mahomedan writers have referred to this work of Noshirwân. Maçoudi², who lived in the early part of the 10th Century, was one of these.

Maçoudi, in his Chapter on Mount Caucasus (Chap. XVII) spoken of as El-Kabkh (القبخ), while speaking of the city of Bâb-el-Abwâb (Darband), describes the wall built by Kosroe Anoushirawân (کسروی انوشروان) from sea to sea, to keep off the Khazars,

¹ From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayâm, p. 60.

² Maçoudi was born at the end of the 9th Century at Baghdad. He travelled in India in 912-13 A. C. upto Multan. He was again in India at Cambay in 915-16. Thence he went to Ceylon and then to Madagascar. He had travelled on the shores of the Caspian. He died in Egypt in 956-57.

the Allans, the Turcs, the Serirs and other tribes, who were the offshoots of the great people known under the general name of Huns. He says, that "the Caucasus contained a number of tribes, about seventy-two in the least, each ruled by a separate chief and speaking a separate language. Noushirwân built, at the head of one of the defiles of this mountain, the city of Bâb-el-Abwâb (Lit. Gate of Gates), the city latterly known as Darband, which is situated at the foot of the Caucasus, on the Caspian Sea known as the Sea of the Khazars (بستر الخزر). He also built a large extensive wall which began from about a mile in the sea, and then, ascending lofty mountains and descending deep valleys, ran for 40 farsangs,¹ ending at a place called Tabarestân. This length of 40 farsangs means the distance of about 120 or 160 miles. At the distance of every three miles or nearly three miles according to the importance of the road over which it opened, he placed an iron door near which he installed from the inside of the place a tribe of people to watch it (the gate) and the wall. This rampart was to present an insurmountable barrier to the attacks of the neighbouring tribes of Kabkh (قبخ), such as the Khazars, the Allans, the Turcs, the Serirs and other infidel people (انواع الكفار). In order to visit the cragged summits of the mountains of Kabkh and to run over their length and breadth, it required two months or more. The tribes inhabiting the mountain were so numerous that God alone can count them. One of the defiles of the mountain ended at the shore of the Caspian near Bâb-el-Abwâb and another at the sea of Mâyatis (بستر مايطيس), where lies the canal of Constantinople (قسطنطينيم). Over this sea (Caspian), also stands Trebizend, a centre of trade. Noushirwân settled the territories of all the above tribes with chiefs ruling over them just as Ardeshir, the son of Babak had done before him in the case of the princes of Khorasan. One of such territories was Shirwan (شروان), the chief of which was called Shirwân-shâh (شروان شاه).² This territory, according to Maçoudi, was ruled over, in his time, by Mahomed, son of Yazed, who traced his descent from Behramgour, from whom the chief of the Serirs (سريز) also traced his descent. The chief of Khorassan, at the time of

¹ A Farsang corresponds to a league, *i.e.*, three miles (Steingass). According to Wollaston, it is a league and three quarters, *i.e.*, it comes to about 4 miles. According to Herodotus (Bk. V. 53), an Iranian farsang was equal to 30 stades ("stadia, or furlongs," *i.e.*, 3½ miles. (According to Webster, stadium was a Greek as well as a Roman measure. It was equal to 600 Greek or 625 Roman feet or 125 Roman paces, or to English 606 feet 9 inches). According to Strabo, some took a farsang to measure 40 stades and others 60 stades. According to the Pahlavi Zadsparam. (Chapt. VI. 8 S. B. E. Vol. V. p. 170) also, a farsang comes to about 20,000 feet, *i.e.*, 30 furlongs.

² In this account, I have followed the Translation of Maçoudi by Barbier De-Meynard et Pavet de Courteille, Vol. II, pp. 1 *et seq.*

Maçoudi, was named Ismail, son of Ahmed. He also traced his descent from Behramgour.¹

Later on, Maçoudi says of this wall that, "had not God by his rare sagacity, his all-power, and his love for his people, helped with his grace the sovereigns of Persia in the foundation of the city of Bab-el-Abwâb, in the construction of this wall, which extends over the continent (*i.e.*, over land), in the sea and over mountains, in the erection of different fortresses, and in the establishment of several colonies subject to the regularly constituted powers, there is no doubt, that the kings of Khazars, the Allans, the Serirs, the Turks would have invaded the territories of Berdeh, (برذعت), Er-Rân (الران) Bailaqân, Azarbaijân, Zenjân, Abhar, Kazwin, Hamdan, Dinawar, Nehavend and other countries which, *via* Koufah and Basra, gave entrance into Irak. Fortunately, God has opposed to their barbarities these barriers, which are necessary to-day more than ever when the power of Islam gets feeble and declines, when the Greeks rail at the Musulmans, when the custom of pilgrimage falls into disuse, when one does no more hear of sacred war (*je'hâd*), when the communications are interrupted and the roads are hardly safe—to-day (332 Hijri) when the different chiefs of the Mahomedan countries have isolated themselves and have made themselves independent in their governments, imitating in that (matter) the conduct of the satraps (ملوك الطوائف) after the death of Alexander upto the time of Ardeshir, son of Bâbak, son of Sâssân, who re-established the unity of the kingdom, caused the internal divisions to cease, and gave security to the people and culture to the country."² The wall according to Maçoudi, was called Sour et-Tien (سور الطين)³ *i.e.*, wall of mortar.

After Maçoudi, Firdousi is the next known author who refers Firdousi on to the Wall of Noshirwân. He speaks of Noshirwân's Wall. it under the head of:—

گشتن نوشيروان گرد پادشاهی خود و دیوار بر آوردن براه گذار

¹ Among one of the pagan tribes of this district, there was prevalent in the time of Maçoudi, the custom of what we call Sutee in India. Maçoudi thus speaks of the custom: "They burn their dead by placing over the same funeral pile their beasts of burden, their arms and their dress. When a man dies, his wife is burnt alive with him; but if a woman dies first, the husband does not submit himself to the same fate. When one dies unmarried they give him a wife after his death. Women desire arduously to be burnt with their husbands to enter with them into paradise (al Jinnat). This custom, as we have already remarked, has prevailed in India where the wife is burnt with her husband only when she consents." Vol II. p. 9.

² Mogoudi par Barbier de Meynard, Vol. II, pp. 72-73.

³ Arab. *surat* سورت "A row of stones in a wall; a structure" and *tin* طين clay or mortar. According to Prof. Jackson, the Armenians speak of the Pass across which the wall runs as Pahak Sorai, "*i.e.*, the wall (saur) of protection" (From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayam, p. 61, n. 3.)

ایران و توران *i.e.*, "Noshirwân's travels within his kingdom and his constructing a wall on the route of passage between Iran and Turan." According to Firdousi, Noshirwân, after ascending his throne, went on a tour in his dominions. His heralds shouted to the people wherever he went and inquired if the subjects had anything to say to their sovereign. During this tour, he passed from Gurgan through the country (of Mazendaran) where are situated the towns of Sari and Amoul. The country was very beautiful and he praised God for the creation of such a beautiful land. One of his subjects there said to the king, that the vicinity of the Turcs, who passed that way, was a bar to their happiness of living in such a beautiful place. They often came there and plundered the country. The people there, therefore, prayed to the king to relieve them from these frequent inroads. The king sympathised with them. He ordered skilful architects from other countries and got a wall built there¹ under the supervision of an old Mobad.

According to Yaqout,² the city of el-Bab (*i.e.*, the Porte or gate) or Bâb-el-Abwâb (the Gate of Gates), behind which Noshirwân had built the above wall, was latterly known as Darband (*i.e.*, the Bar of a Door) or Darband-Sehirwan. Across the two necks of land which form the entrance of the port of the city, they had put up barriers to make the entrance very narrow,

بدستور فرمود کز بند و روم : کجا نام باشد بآباد بوم¹
 ز هر کشوری مردم پیش بین : که استقام یابی بدین بر گزین
 یکی باره از آب بر کش بلند : بنش پهن و بالای اوده کمند
 بسنگ و بصاروج از ژرف آب : بر آورده تا چشمه آفتاب
 همانا کمزین گونه سازیم بند : زدشمن بایران نیاید گزند
 نباید که باشد کسی زین برونج : بده هر چه خواهد و بکشای گنج
 کشاورز و دهبان و مرد نژاد : نباید که آزار یابد ز باد
 یکی پیر صوبه بد آن کار کرد : بیابان همه پیش دیوار کرد
 دری بر نهادند از آهن بزرگ : رصه یکسرایمن شد از بیم گرگ
 همه روی کشور نگهبان نشاند : چوایمن شد از دشت لشکر براند

Mecan's Calcutta Edition Vol. III, p. 1630, M. Mohl's small edition of "Le Livre des Rois" Vol. VI, pp. 144-45.

¹ Dictionnaire Géographique, Historique et Littéraire de la Perse, par C. Barbier de Meynard (1851), p. 68. Yaqout was born in 1178 A. C.

and two strong and long chains closed the entrance of ships into the port without authority. Yaqout thus refers to the wall running from behind this city: "Above the city is a stone wall which extends over the mountain in the direction of its length; it is difficult to enter by that way the Mussulman countries on account of the difficulty of the routes and the narrow paths which lead to it. Besides this, a part of the wall advances into the city in the form of a promontory and prevents the ships from approaching. It is built very solidly and rests upon strong strata. It is Noushirwân who is the builder of it.¹.....The ancient Kousroes (kings) never lost sight of this frontier and omitted nothing to make it impregnable on account of the dangerous vicinity (of hostile tribes). They confided its guard to Persian troops of tried fidelity, to whom they left the possession of all the territories which they could cultivate with a view to develop the resources of the country and to defend against the Turkish tribes and other infidels." The reason why Noushirwân built this wall is thus described:— "The Khazar tribe had made themselves masters of the Persian Empire upto Hamdân and Mosul. Noushirwân, on ascending the throne, sent some deputies to ask in marriage, the daughter² of their king and offering his to him, with a view to cement by that alliance their union against their common enemies. This proposition having been accepted, Noushirwân selected one of his most beautiful slave women. He sent her, under the name of his daughter, to the King of the Khazars, to whom, according to custom, he made magnificent presents. The Khakan (the King of the Khazars) then offered his own daughter to Khosro. Noushirwân demanded an interview to strengthen the bonds of friendship between them. They selected a propitious place and the two sovereigns lived there for some time." One day Noushirwân ordered one of his officers to select 300 of his best soldiers and to plunder the camp of the Khakan when they were all asleep. The next morning, the Khakan complained of what happened in his camp at night and asked for an explanation. Noushirwân pretended ignorance and said that he would make inquiries which ended in nothing. This was repeated twice. Then the Khakan, being irritated at the culprits not being traced, asked one of his generals to do a similar thing, *i.e.*, to plunder one night the camp of Noushirwân. When Noushirwân complained the next morning, the Khakan said: 'Your camp has been put to this trouble only once but my

¹ Gibbon alludes to the building of the wall and its gate by Noushirwan when he says: "The Persian assumed the guard of the gates of Caucasus." (Vol. III, p. 120, Edition of 1844).

² Here, by the expression of exchange of daughters is meant the exchange of the royal brides of each's family.

camp has been thrice plundered." Then Noshirwân said: "This seems to be the work of evil-minded persons on both sides who wish to create a rupture in our friendship. I propose a project, which will benefit us both, if you accept it." On the Khakan asking, what it was, he suggested that a wall may be built between their territories to prevent the subjects of one entering into the territories of another without permission. The Khakan agreed and the wall was the result. It is said that when it was finished Noshirwân got his throne placed on the dam over the sea upto which the wall was extended and prostrating himself before God, thanked Him for having helped him to finish the great work. He then laid himself down on the throne and exclaimed: "I can now rest myself."

The Derbend-namah¹ refers to Noshirwân's Wall. I give here a substance of the portion, which precedes referred to in the the reference to Noshirwân's wall, showing Turkish Derbend-namah. that there existed then, even before the time of Noshirwân, a wall known as the Wall of Alexander: There reigned in Iran, a king named Kobad who ruled over the whole of Turkistan and Ajamastan (عجمستان). Anoushirawân Adil was the son of this King. In the North, there ruled over the Khazar tribe a king called Khakân Shâh (خاقان شاه) who also ruled over Russia (روسيم), Moscow (مسكو), Kazân (قزان), Crimea (قريم) and other countries. The seat of the throne of this Khâkân-shâh was on the sea-shore on the banks of the river Adil (عدل Volga). There was a constant war between Persia and the Khakân-shâh, which was put to an end by a peace, the principal term of which was, that King Kobad of Persia was to marry a daughter of the King of the Khazars. To prevent disturbances in future, Kobad proposed that a boundary wall may be constructed between the frontiers of the Persian territories and the territories of the Khazars. The Khakan proposed that the wall built by Iskander Zoulqarnin (اسكندر ذولقرنين) may form the boundary and that the Persian king may build a city there. The city was built and named Babul-abwâb

¹ Vide Derbend-namah or the History of Derbend, translated from a select Turkish version and published with the Texts and with Notes, by Mirza A. Kazem-Beg. (St. Petersburg 1851). According to Mirza Kazem-Beg, it was written at the end of the 16th century by Mahomed Awabi Aktâchi (محمود اوایی اقطاشی) under the patronage of Ghazi Geral, a brother of Semiz Muhamed Gheral Khan, the Khan of Crimea. This was some time after the Ottomans subdued Aderbaizan and Daghistan in the reign of Sultan Murad III. A Persian translation of this Turkish Derbend-namah is said to have been made in 1806 (Ibid, p. XI) by one Ali-Yar. Then there has been another Turkish version made from the Persian version.

Darbend and many Persians went and settled there. This being done, Kobad-shah sent the daughter of the Khakan-shah back inviolated to her father's court, apprehensive that, were children to be born of this marriage, such an event might in future ages be a cause of discord between two kingdoms, and might give occasion to the tribes of Khazar to possess themselves of the frontiers of Iran. The Khakan-shah was enraged at this conduct of Kobad and wars were again renewed. The new city of Darbend was invaded and Noshirwân, the son of Kobad, defended it.

Then we further read that Noshirwân himself also "erected a wall, at the distance of three farsakhs from Derbend which extended to the distance of ninety-two farsakhs."¹ Thereafter, "Prince Anoshirwân on the death of his father ascended the throne of the Kingdom and reigned. He filled with warriors all the cities and fortresses lying around Derbend and on the frontiers; and himself retired to his metropolis Medâyan, where he remained with a firm resolution to defend the boundaries of his Empire.....His object in building these towns and fortresses was to prevent Khakan-shah and the Khazarians from having it in their power to conquer Derbend.....Thus the ancient kings endeavoured to defend Derbend in order that the Khazars might not gain possession of it; for if the Khazars could have taken Derbend, all the kingdoms of Aderbaijan and Fârs would inevitably have fallen under their dominion."²

Tabari, though referring to Noshirwan's war with the Khazars, does not refer to his wall. But he refers to a reservoir of water built by Noshirwan at the city. While speaking of the war of Maslama, son of Abdou'l Malik governor of Armenia, with the Khazars, Tabari refers to Noshirwân's reservoir and describes a stratagem whereby the Khazars were made to run away from the city of Bab-al-Abwâb. According to this writer, there lived in the city 1,000 Kazar families. Maslama besieged the city but to no purpose. One of the Khazars of the city proved treacherous to his tribe, and on the promise of a reward, he undertook to help Maslama. He asked from Maslama 100 sheep and oxen and took them to the reservoir of water built by Noshirwân from which the Khazars in the citadel of the fort drew their supply of water by a subterranean channel. He slew all the 100 animals there and rendered the water bloody. So, the Khazars in the citadel could not drink the water. Being thus deprived of their water,

¹ Ibid, p. 7. ² Ibid, pp. 7-9.

³ Tabari was born at Amol in Tabaristan in 838-9.

to avoid dying by thirst, they left the city. Thus, this stratagem brought the citadel into the hands of the Musulmans.

Prof. Jackson, in his second book of travels in Persia, gives us a very interesting account of his visit to Noshirwân's Wall and of his researches there. We learn from it, that even now, after the lapse of nearly 14 centuries, one sees the relics of Sassanian times there on the banks of the Great Caspian.¹ The surest evidence of identifying the wall as the work of the Sassanians was the fact that "in the stones..... there were carved the oft-repeated figure of a ring with two lines hanging from it resembling the familiar Sassanian chaplet with streamers. These devises were generally carved high up at the sides."² According to Prof. Jackson, the construction of the wall is of large blocks, four feet in length and two feet in height but only eight inches broad between them. Many of the larger blocks, however, are of still greater proportions. Ibn Takil (903 A. D.) said that it would take fifty men to lift them. All the blocks are carefully set; and some of the oldest accounts of them speak of their being bound together by cramps of iron, so that they must have formed a perfect breastwork in the days when artillery was not known."³

That the Khazars, against whom Noshirwân built the wall at Derbend, were a tribe of the Huns, is evident from the fact that the Armenians speak of the pass along which the wall is built as Honor Pahak, *i.e.*, the Watch or the protector against the Huns.⁴ It is said that Noshirwân spent a good deal of money on this wall. Finding his treasury empty for further work, he is said to have "paid a surprise visit to Âzâd Mohân," who had "accumulated enormous wealth" at Kerman. Âzâd Mohân provided a sum of money, sufficient not only to complete the great work, but also to found the city of Astrabad.⁵

According to Deguignes, the Turcs, a tribe of the Huns, who made frequent inroads in the territories of the Persians near Media or Aderbadgan, were looked at peacefully by the Romans of Justin II, who was now and then at war with the Persians. They were taken to be, as it were, a check upon the Persians of Noushirwân. So, the Persian king, to put an end to their frequent inroads, built a great wall of 40 farsangs (quarante parsanges).⁶ Noshirwân also built a city there called Darband.

¹ From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayâm (1911), Chap. V.

² *Ibid.*, p. 73. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 61. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁵ "Ten thousand Miles in Persia" by Major P. M. Sykes (1902), p. 49.

⁶ *Histoire General des Huns*, par Deguignes Tome I, Partie II. p. 390.

Caterino Zeno, who was in Persia as ambassador from the Republic of Venice in the 15th Century, thus speaks of Derbend, the city of the wall: "Derbento is a city which was built in the passes of the Caspian mountains by Alexander, to resist the incursions of the Scythians, where the pass is so narrow that one hundred resolute soldiers could bar with their pikes the passage of a million of men."¹

The Derbend-nameh, in its above description, refers to a previous wall built by one Sikandar Zu'l-qarnain.

Wall of Alexander. The word Zul-qarnain means bi-cornous or two horned (lit. master (zu) of two horns (*qarn*)).

There were two Sikandars or Alexanders, who were known by this name. The word *qarnin* or horns meant two directions, the East and the West. What was meant was that the person had conquered the whole world from the East to the West. The first of the two kings known by this name lived in the hoary past, and not much is known about him. The second of the two is Alexander the Great, spoken of by Eastern writers as Ben Phillicus, *i.e.*, the son of Philip.

Tabari refers to the wall near Derbend and speaks of it as the wall of Yajouj and Majouj (يا جوج و ما جوج Gog and Magog). From the way he describes the place of the wall, it seems, as if the place was somewhat mysterious and produced jewels of great value. He attributes it to one Zu'l-qarnain without joining the name of Askander to the word. It seems that he means the Sikander Zu'l-qarnain of some hoary antiquity and not Alexander the Great. Though Tacitus and others attribute the wall to Alexander the Great, perhaps the tradition about one Zu'l-qarnain has been transferred to another Zu'l-qarnain.

A part of Noshirwân's Wall extended into the sea and there, at the end, formed a kind of protection for the harbour also. We read the following about the process of the extension of the wall in the sea in Maçoudi's account² of the reign of Noshirwân. Maçoudi says:—³

1 Travels of Venitians in Persia, p. 44 (Hakluyt Society), quoted by Sykes.

2 Macoudi for Barber de Meynard, Vol. II, p. 196.

3 Macoudi says that the king received the title of Anousharavân (انوشروان) after his victory over Mazdak and his 80,000 followers who were killed in the country between Jâzir and Nahrwan (جاذر والنهروان). He says that the word means a "new king" (جدید المالك), Here, Maçoudi is wrong, the meaning being "immortal-souled."

The word is originally anaosha urvan (انوشا اویان *i.e.*, of undying or immortal soul) in the Avesta, and Anoshak roban (انوشاک روان Ardâ Viraf, I, 16) in the Pahlavi.

The king was called at the city of El Bab and at the Caucasus by the incursions of the neighbouring kings. He built over the (Caspian) sea with the aid of leather bottles of inflated leather, a wall of rocks (*i.e.*, stone-slabs) tied together by iron and lead. The leather bottles sank down in water according as the construction (of the wall) was raised over it. When they settled at the bottom and the wall came over the level of the water, the divers armed with daggers and cutlasses broke the leather bottles; the wall entering deeply under the sub-marine ground, attained then the height of the bank. It exists even to-day in 332 (Hijri), and all that part of the wall of which the layers have plunged into water is called el keid (القيد) *i.e.*, the chain, because it stops the ships of the enemy who attempted to land on this side. They continued the same work along the shore between the Caucasus (جبل القبح the mountain of Kabkh) and the sea. They opened the gates over the territories of the infidels and prolonged the wall across Mount Caucasus in the way, as said above, in describing this mountain and the city of El-Bab. Anoushirawân had, before its construction, long strifes with the kings of the Khazars and they pretend that he built the wall only to intimidate and subdue the peoples which inhabited this country."¹

We learn from Fridousi's account of the wall, that Noshirwân ordered skilful artisans (اسناد) from all countries, China may be one of these countries. He must have heard of the Great Wall of China built against the Huns about 800 years before his time. So, when he found his own country open to the inroads of the descendants of these Huns, he very possibly sent for some architects from China also, who from their knowledge of the great Chinese Wall against the Huns might assist him in his work against the then Huns. There is no doubt that in those early times there was a trade communication between Persia and China. Mr. Parker, in his book on China² refers to the early trade of the West with China by the land route of Parthia. The Romans later on began the trade by the sea route. According to Chinese records "the Parthians carried on a land trade in waggons and sea trade in boats."³ The distances of the stages in the route were all measured by Persian farsangs. It was the cupidity of the later Parthian traders that let slip the land trade from

1 I give my translation from the French translation of Barbier de Meynard.

2 China by E. H. Parker.

3 China, by E. H. Parker, p. 61.

the hands of the Persians to those of the Romans, who traded by the sea route.¹

Dr. Rostovtzeff, in his recently published interesting book, "Irânians and Greeks in South Russia" (1922), speaks at some length of the influence of the Irânians on South Russia. It was the presence of the Sassanians and their predecessors on the shores of the Caspian, and their conquest and long stay in that direction that had led to the influence.

¹ In the great massacre of Canton in 879 A. C. about 120,000 Jews, Christians, Mahomedans and Zoroastrians are said to have been killed. Most of the Zoroastrians, killed in this massacre, may be the Zoroastrians driven away from Persia by the Arab conquest, but some of them may be traders.