

Book of the Deeds of Ardashir son of Babag

CHAPTER ONE. [In the name of the Creator Ahura Mazda, who is majestic and glorious.] The records of Ardashir, son of Babag, it is written as follows: That after the death of Alexander, inhabitant of Arum, there were in the territory of Iran two hundred and forty princes. Spahan (that is, modern Isfahan), Pars and the borderlands that were nearest to them, were in the hands of Arvadan, the chief (king). Babag was the frontier governor of Pars, and [was] one of the commissioners appointed by Ardavan. The seat of Ardavan was in Stakhra (that is, Persepolis). And Babag had no son to preserve his name. And Sâsân was a shepherd employed by Babag, who always remained with the horses and cattle (belonging to the latter), and he was (descended) from the line of (king) Dârâb, son of Dârâê. During the evil reign of Alexander, the descendants of Dârâb privately lived in distant lands, wandering with Kurdish shepherds. Babag did not know that Sâsân was descended from the family of Dârâb, son of Dârâê. One night Babag saw in a dream as though the sun was shining from the head of Sâsân and giving light to the whole world. Another night he dreamt that Sâsân was seated on a richly adorned white elephant, and that all those that stood around him in the kingdom made obeisance to him, praised and blessed him. The [next] third night he, accordingly, saw as if the sacred fires, Adar Farnbag, Adar Gushnasp and Adar Burzin Mihr, were burning in the house of Sâsân and giving light to the whole world. He wondered at it, and (directly) invited to his presence the sages and interpreters of dreams, and narrated to them the visions he had seen in

his dreams during those three nights. The interpreters of dreams spoke thus: "The person that was seen in that dream, he or somebody from among the sons of that man, will succeed to the sovereignty of this world, because the sun and the richly adorned white elephant (that you observed) represented vigor and the triumph of opulence; the sacred fire Adar Farnbag the religious intelligence of the great men among the mobeds; the sacred fire Adar Gushnasp warriors and military chieftains; and the sacred fire Adar Burzin Mihr the farmers and agriculturists of the world [and] thus this sovereignty will fall to that man or the descendants of that man." On hearing these words, Babag dispatched somebody to call Sâsân to his presence, and questioned him as follows: "From what race and family are you? Out of your forefathers and ancestors was (there) anybody who had exercised sovereignty or chieftainship (before)?" Sâsân solicited from Babag his support and protection in these words: "Do me no hurt or harm." Babag accepted (the request), and Sâsân declared before Babag his own secret as it stood. (On hearing his reply) Babag was delighted, and (so) he ordered (Sâsân) thus: "Elevate your body (by taking a bath)." Meanwhile Babag directed (his servants) that a suit of clothes fit to be worn by a king should be brought and given to Sâsân, and Sâsân wore the royal garments accordingly. Babag (further) directed [in the case of Sâsân] that he should be nourished with invigorating, fresh and proper food for several days. Later on he gave him his daughter in marriage, and according to the law of nature she, in a short time, was pregnant by Sâsân, and from her Ardashir was born. When Babag observed the youthful body and cleverness of Ardashir, he interpreted it thus: "The dream which I beheld was true." He regarded Ardashir as his (own) son, and brought him up as a dear child. When Ardashir reached the age which was the time for higher instruction, he became so proficient in literary knowledge, riding, and other arts that he was

renowned throughout Pars. When Ardashir attained the age of fifteen years, information reached Ardavan that Babag had a son proficient and accomplished in learning and riding (that is, in heroic horsemanship). He wrote a letter to Babag to this effect: "We have heard that you have a son, who is accomplished and very proficient in learning and riding; our desire (has been) that you should send him to our court, and he shall be near us, so that he will associate with our sons and princes, and we might order for him position and reward according to the learning which he possesses." As Ardavan was powerful and very absolute, it was improper on the part of Babag to do anything contrary to or to evade his command. Immediately (therefore) he sent Ardashir well-equipped with ten servants and a superb present of many marvelous, magnificent, and suitable things for the acceptance of Ardavan. When Ardavan saw Ardashir he was glad, expressed to him his affectionate regard, and ordered that he should every day accompany his sons and princes to the chase and the polo-round. Ardashir acted accordingly. By the help of Providence he became more victorious and warlike than them all, on the polo and the riding (ground), at Chatrang (chess) and Vine-Ardashir, and in (several) other arts. One day Ardavan went a hunting with his chevaliers and Ardashir. An elk which happened to be running in the desert was (then) pursued by Ardashir and the eldest son of Ardavan. And Ardashir, on reaching close to the elk, struck him with an arrow in such a manner that the arrow pierced through the belly as far as its feathers, passed through the other side, and the animal died instantly. When Ardavan and the chevaliers approached them;, they expressed wonder at such a dart and asked: - "Who struck that arrow?" - Ardashir replied: "I did it." The son of Ardavan said: - "No, because I did it." Ardashir became angry and spoke thus to the son of Ardavan: "It is not possible to appropriate the art and heroism (of another) through tyranny, unpleasantness,

falsehood, and injustice.” This is an excellent forest, and the wild asses here are many. Let us try here a second time, and bring into display (our) goodness or evil nature and dexterity. Ardavan thereby felt offended and thereafter did not allow Ardashir to ride on horseback. He sent the latter [Ardashir] to his stables of horses and cattle, and ordered him as follows: “Take care (of those animals so) that you do not go in the day or night from before those horses and cattle a hunting, to the playground or the college of learning.” Ardashir understood that Ardavan spoke (in this manner) from envy and grudge, and directly wrote a letter to Babag, stating the facts as they stood. When Babag saw the letter he became melancholy. He wrote in reply to Ardashir as follows: “You did not act wisely in disputing with great men on a matter from which no harm could have reached you, and in addressing them with coarse words in public. Now speak out excuses for your relief and feel humble repentance, for the sages have said: It is not possible for an enemy to do that for an enemy, which, is brought on himself by an ignorant man from his own actions.” This too, is said: Do not be grieved narrow-mindedly from a person at the time when you cannot pass your life (happily) without him. And you yourself know that Ardavan is a king more powerful than I, you, or many people in this world with reference to (our) bodies, lives, riches, and estates. (.) And now, too, such is my strictest advice to you that you should act in unison with and obediently (towards them), and not deliver up your own glory to annihilation (literally, disappearance).”

CHAPTER TWO. Ardavan had (in his service) an accomplished maiden, whom he regarded, with greater respect and affection than the other maidens (under him) and this maiden took part in every service that was meant to do honor to Ardavan. One day, while Ardashir was seated by the horse-stalls, playing a tune on a drum [or guitar], singing, and making other kinds of merriment, she beheld

Ardashir she became enamored of him, [and afterwards] frequently visited him, and formed friendship and love. Always regularly at every night, when the unfortunate Ardavan went to sleep, the maiden would clandestinely approach Ardashir, stay with him till the dawn, and then return to Ardavan (that is, to her palace). One day, Ardavan invited to his presence. the sages and astrologers, who belonged to his court, and put them the following question: "What do you observe regarding the seven planets and the twelve signs of the zodiac, the position and the motion of the stars, the condition of the contemporary sovereigns of different kingdoms, the condition of the peoples of the world, and regarding myself, children and our family?" The chief of the astrologers said in reply as follows: "The Nahâzîg [constellation of Capricorn] is sunk below; the star Jupiter [Avestan Ahura Mazda] has returned to its culminating point and stands away from Mars [Persian Warharan] and Venus [Persian Nahid, Avestan Anahita], while Haptoring [the Great Bear] and the constellation of Leo descend to the verge and give help to Jupiter; whereupon it seems clear that a new lord or king will appear, (who will) kill many potentates, and bring the world again under the sway of one sovereign." A second leader of the astrologers, too, came in the presence of the king and spoke to the following effect: "It is so manifest that any one of the male servants who flies away from his king within three days [from today], will attain to greatness and kingship, obtain his wish, and be victorious, over his king." The maiden, when she returned to Ardashir at night, recounted to Ardashir the words as they were told (by the astrologers) to Ardavan. Ardashir, when he heard those words, resolved upon departing from that place. He spoke to the maiden thus: "(First of all) if you are sincere and unanimous with me; and, secondly, if anyone who runs away from his king within the three fixed days which the sages and astrologers have spoken of, attains to greatness

and kingship, we should run away from here as far as this world (goes), and escape. If by the grace of God, the glory of the kingdom of Iran falls to our help, and we be delivered and (both) attain to virtue and goodness, I shall treat you so that no one in the world will be (regarded) more fortunate than you." The maiden consented and said: "I regard you as a nobleman, and shall obey you in every matter." As it was nearly dawn, the maiden returned to her own room (literally, place) near Ardavan's chamber. At night when Ardavan was asleep, she took (clandestinely) from the treasury of Ardavan an Indian sword, golden tackles, belts of fine leather, golden crowns, golden goblets full of jewels, dirams and dinars (silver and gold coins), coats-of-mail, highly engraved weapons of war, and many other (precious) things; and she brought them to Ardashir. (Meanwhile) Ardashir saddled two of Ardavan's horses that ran seventy frasangs (miles) a day. He seated himself on one and the maiden on the other, took the road to Pars, and rode on with speed. Thus they narrate that, at night, when they approached to a country [or village], Ardashir feared lest the countrymen might behold, recognize, and capture them; so he did not enter the country, but passed by one of its precincts. His approach was seen by two women seated together, who (on seeing them) exclaimed: "Do not fear Ardashir the Kai [Kayanian], son of Babag, (you) who are of the blood of Sâsân, and who has risen from King Darab; it is not possible for any evil person to take possession of you, (as) you are destined to rule over the kingdom of Iran for many years. Make haste until (you reach) the sea; and when you see the ocean before your eyes, do not guard yourself, because when your eyes fall on the ocean, then you will be quite free from the fear of your enemies." Ardashir became glad (on hearing these words), and rode onward with speed from that place. CHAPTER THREE. When the day commenced, Ardavan called for the maiden, but she was not to be found. The horse keeper came and

spoke to Ardavan as follows: "Ardashir and two of your steeds are not (to be found) in their places." Ardavan thereby became aware that one of his maidens, (too), had run away and gone with Ardashir. And when he heard the information regarding his treasures, his heart burst with grief. He invited the chief of the astrologers, and said: "Make the best of your time, and observe carefully as to the place where that offender (Ardashir) has gone with that dissolute harlot, and as to the time when we shall be able to get hold of them." The chief of the astrologers observed the positions of the planets, and replied to Ardavan as follows: "As the Aris [Varak in the Bundahishn] is dismissed by Saturn [Persian Kivan] and Mars, and approached by Jupiter and Mercury [Persian Tir], and as the lord of the center of the sky [that is, the Pole Star] stands far below the brightest place of the Sun, it is clear that Ardashir has fled away and gone, and is now on the road towards the frontiers of Pars; [and] if he is not overtaken within three days, it will not be possible to capture him thereafter." Immediately Ardavan prepared an army of men, and took the road leading to Pars in pursuit of Ardashir. At midday he reached the spot where the (direct) road crossed to Pars. And he inquired (of the inhabitants) thus: "At what time did those two riders who came towards this side depart?" The people said: "At the dawn of day, when the sun brought on its sharp rays, they, passed like a violent wind, and a very powerful eagle was running after (them) [than which no more handsome eagle could be found]; and we believe that by this time they must have gone to a distance of many frasangs, and you will not, (therefore), be able to overtake them." Accordingly Ardavan did not hesitate, but hastened onward. When he reached another place, he asked the inhabitants: "At what time did those two riders pass (this place)?" They replied: "At midday they rode on (from here) as swiftly as a violent wind, and an eagle followed them as their companion." Ardavan seemed

astonished at this, and said: "Consider that we know the pair of riders, but what is the propriety of the eagle following them?" (So) he questioned the high-priest (his minister), and the latter answered as follows: "It is the Majesty [Pahlavi Gadman, that is, Khwarrah] of the Kayanian sovereignty, which has not reached him (up to now), so it is necessary that we should ride on (quickly) that we might catch him before that glory is attained by him." Ardavan impetuously hastened onward with his cavalcade, and the next day they passed over seventy frasangs. On the road he met a body of people belonging to a caravan, of whom Ardavan inquired: "At what place have those two riders met you?" They said: "Between you and them there is still a distance of twenty frasangs; and we have noticed an eagle that was very large and swift, and seated on the horse with one of the riders." Ardavan asked the high-priest: "What does that eagle which accompanied them on the horse indicate?" The high-priest replied as follows: "May you be immortal! (It is) the Majesty of the Kayanians (which) reaches Ardashir; it is not possible to get hold of him by any (such) means, (so) hereafter you and (your) horsemen should not take any more pains, nor fatigue the horses (any further) and kill them; but you should seek means of a different kind against Ardashir." When Ardavan heard such advice, he turned back and came to his capital. Afterwards he got his forces and heroes equipped, and dispatched them with one of his sons to Pars, in order to catch Ardashir. CHAPTER FOUR. Ardashir had (now) taken the road to the sea-shore, and so resumed his journey. Several of the inhabitants of Pars, who had been distressed by Ardavan, placed their wealth, property, and themselves at his disposal, and expressed (to him their) unanimity and submission. When he reached the place, which they call Ramishne Ardashir [The Delight of Ardashir], a magnanimous hero of the name of Banâk, an inhabitant of Spahân, who had escaped from the hands of

Ardavan and settled himself there, came personally to Ardashir with his six sons, many soldiers and heroes. Ardashir was (at first) afraid of Banâk, lest the latter, having captured him, would deliver him up to Ardavan. Afterwards Banâk approached Ardashir, took an oath, and gave (him) confidence in these words: "As long as I live, I myself with my sons will remain submissive to you." Ardashir became glad, and on that site he ordered a town to be built, which was called Ramishne î Ardashir. He left Banâk there with a detachment of cavalry, and himself marched towards the sea-coast. When (in his march onward) he saw the ocean before his eyes, he offered thanksgiving to God, called that place the city of Bokht Ardashir, and ordered an Atash-i Warharan to be enthroned on that sea-coast. From that place Ardashir returned to Banâk and his cavalry; and prepared an army. (Thence) he went to the threshold of the (sacred) fire Adar Farnbag, which is meritorious, and solicited (spiritual) gifts from it. (Then) he came to battle with Ardavan [rather Bahman, the son of Ardavan], killed the entire army of the latter, seized their wealth, property, horses; and portable lodges, and settled himself in Stakhar (the metropolis.) He collected soldiers in large numbers from Kerman, Mokristan, Spahan, and different districts of Pars, and came to fight with Ardavan (himself.) There was fighting and slaughter of many every day for four months. (So) Ardavan sent for soldiers and provisions from different frontiers, such as Rai, Damawand, Delman [= modern Gilan], and Patashkhvargar. But as the Glory [Khwarrah] of the Kayanians was with Ardashir, the latter gained success. He killed Ardavan, whose entire wealth and property fell into the hands of Ardashir, who married Ardavan's daughter, and went back to Pars. He built a city which was named Ardashir Gadman [=Piruzabad], wherein a large tank was dug, from which water was conveyed by means of four canals; and near that tank an Atash-i Adaran was

established. (Further,) Ardashir excavated a high mountain, and turned the course of a river (into the city) through subterranean canals. He bestowed his patronage on many cities, made them very prosperous, and ordered that several Atash-i Warharans should also be enthroned.

CHAPTER FIVE. Afterwards he (namely, Ardashir), having collected many soldiers and heroes of Zavul, proceeded to battle against Mâdîg, the King of the Kurds. There was much fighting and bloodshed (in which) the army of Ardashir (finally) sustained a defeat. Ardashir became anxious on account of his own army. (On his way back) he came at night through a desert which contained neither water nor food, so he himself with all his troops and horses came to hunger and thirst. (Marching onward) he saw, from a distance, a fire belonging to (some) shepherds, and there Ardashir went and beheld an old man living with (his) cattle on a mountain-steppe. Ardashir passed the night there, and the next day he asked them (namely, the shepherds) about the road. They said: "Three frasangs hence there is a very fertile village which has many inhabitants and plenty of food." Ardashir went to that village, and dispatched a person to send to his capital his entire cavalry. The army of Madig boasted thus: "Now there should be no fear of Ardashir, as on account of his defeat he has returned to Pars. (Meanwhile) Ardashir, having prepared an army of four thousand men, rushed upon them (namely, the Kurds), and surprised them with a night attack. He killed one thousand of the Kurds, (while) others were wounded and taken prisoners; and out of the Kurds (that were imprisoned) he sent to Pars their king with his sons, brothers, children, his abundant wealth and property.

CHAPTER SIX. On the road the army of Haftanbokht, the lord of the Worm, struck against them, seized the entire wealth, property, and portable lodges from those cavalry soldiers of Ardashir, and carried them into Guzaran, one of the boroughs of Gular, where the Worm

had its abode. Ardashir then entertained this idea: "I shall go to Armenia and Ataropatgan [Gk. Atropatene], because Yazdan-kard of Shaharzur has, with many soldiers and heroes, passed beyond the frontiers of Shaharzur, concluded a treaty with the ruler of Kerman, and become his ally." But as soon as Ardashir heard of the tyranny and wickedness of the sons of Haftan-bokht towards his army, he thought: "I must, first of all, put in order the affairs at Pars and become fearless of the enemies, and after that begin to meddle with other cities." Now as regards the (Worm) idolatry, it (grew) so powerful and tyrannical in Guzaran that an army of, men, that composed its forces in the different frontiers of the land of Sind and the coast towns, now came together (to its help.)" (Consequently), the troops and heroes of Ardashir reassembled around him from different quarters. Haftan-bokht, too, summoned his own entire army back to his capital. Then Ardashir dispatched an innumerable army with chieftains to the battle of the Worm. (Now) the friends of the Worm deposited their entire wealth, riches, property, and portable lodges in the citadel and fortress of Guzaran, and privately took refuge [themselves] in mountain cavities. And the cavalry of Ardashir had no knowledge thereof, so they, on reaching the foot of the fortress of Gular, blockaded the citadel. When night fell, the army of the Worm attacked them, committed bloodshed, killed many of Ardashir's troops, and seized from them horses, saddles, saddle-tackles, property, and portable lodges. With lamentation and dishonor, the troops returned to Ardashir in a disgraceful condition and unarmed. When the latter beheld them in such a plight, he became much distressed, and (consequently), invited to his capital all his troops from different cities and territories, and engaged himself with a large army to battle against the Worm. When he arrived at the fortress of Guzaran, the whole army of the Worm had encamped itself inside the fortress, so he, too, encamped

his army round (the outer walls of) the fortress. The lord of the Worm, Haftan-bokht, had seven sons, and each of them was appointed (by him) governor of a city with one thousand men (under him). At this juncture, one of the sons, who was in Arvastan, came by the passage of a sea, with a large army composed of soldiers from Arabia and Mazenderan, and stood against Ardashir in battle. The army of the Worm, which had been inside the fortress, completely marched out, and zealously and vehemently struggled and fought with Ardashir's troops, many being killed on both sides. When the army of the Worm came out (of the fortress), it took such a by-road that it became impossible for any of Ardashir's troops to go out (of the camp) or to bring in any food for himself or fodder for his horses, and, (consequently), the satiety of all men and animals was changed into want of food and helplessness. When Mitrok, son of Anoshepat, an inhabitant of Zarham in Pars, heard that Ardashir was without provision near the capital of the Worm, and obtained no victory over its army; he accoutered his troops and heroes, marched towards the residence of Ardashir, and carried away all the wealth and riches of Ardashir's treasure. Ardashir, hearing of such violation on the part of Mitrok and other men of Pars, reflected upon it for a while thus: "I ought to postpone the battle with the Worm, and [then] go to fight out a battle with Mitrok." He, (therefore), summoned all his forces back to his quarters, deliberated with their commanders, (first) sought the means of delivering himself and his army, and then sat himself down to eat breakfast. That very moment a long arrow, dispatched from the fortress, came down and pierced, as far as its feathers, through the (roasted) lamb that was on the table. On the arrow it was written as follows: "This arrow is darted by the troops of the lord of the glorious Worm; we ought not to kill a great man like you, so we have struck that (roasted) lamb," Ardashir, having observed the state of things, disencamped his army

and withdrew from the place. The army of the Worm hastened after Ardashir, and hemmed in his men again in such a manner that Ardashir's army could not proceed further. So Ardashir [himself] passed [literally, dashed] away singly by the sea-coast. CHAPTER SEVEN. They say that the "Glory of the Kayanians," which had been (previously) far from Ardashir, now stood near him, and gradually approached nearer, until Ardashir was led away unmolested from that dangerous place, from the hands of the enemies, and he reached the town which they call Mâvad. At night, he went to the house belonging to two brothers, one of whom was named Bûrjak, the other Bûrj-âtarô, and spoke to them thus: "I am one of Ardashir's troops, who has come encountering defeat from the battle against the Worm; today you will please allow me to repose here for a short time, so that information may reach me as to the land where the army of Ardashir is now encamped." Very sympathetically they replied to Ardashir as follows: "Accursed be Ahriman, the wicked (spirit), who has made that idolatry so victorious and stubborn that all the inhabitants of the frontier districts are rendered apostate from the religion of Ahura Mazda and the Ameshaspands, and who has finally turned into defeat even a great lord like Ardashir and the whole army that accompanied him, at the lands of those enemies, the wicked idolaters." (So saying) they held (the bridle of) Ardashir's steed, carried him into the courtyard, tied him in a stable, and recreated (the animal) with barley, straw, and lucern; while Ardashir was led in a decent manner to a sitting place or room where he reposed himself. Ardashir was (at the time) very melancholy and thoughtful. (Meanwhile) they (namely those brothers) performed the dron (or baj) ceremony, and requested Ardashir in these words: "Kindly recite the vâz [literally, 'hold the vâz'] and take (your) meal, and do not entertain melancholy and sorrow; because Ahura Mazda and the Ameshaspands would find out a means of (delivery

from) these circumstances, and not let this adversity continue in this manner; for with the tyranny of Zohak, Frasiyav of Tur, and Alexander of Arum, God was at last displeased; and they were thereby rendered, in spite of their grandeur and glory, so obscure and unknown as if the world had never known them." On (hearing) these words, Ardashir became pleased in mind, recited the vâz, and took his meal. As those brothers had no wine, they brought to him a pomegranate, performed the myazd or offering ceremony, and recited blessings (that is, the Afrin prayers). As Ardashir became unsuspecting regarding their piety, religiousness, unanimity and submissiveness, he divulged his own secrets to Bûrjak and Bûrj-âtarô, saying: "I am Ardashir myself. Now you contemplate as to how it is possible to discover the means of destroying this Worm and its troops. They said in reply as follows:"If it be necessary, while seeking on your behalf the kingdom of Iran, to deliver up ourselves in person, (our) lives, wealth, riches, women, and children, we will deliver them up. But we understand [it thus] that a means can be sought against this deceitful creature if you should dress yourself after the fashion of an inhabitant of some distant city, on (thy) way to the fortress, [and] devote yourself personally in its service and worship (namely of the Worm), [and] take there (with you) two men who are religious pupils and persons conversant with Revelation, [and] perform loudly with them the yazishne [Yasna] (adoration) and azbaishne (extollings) of God and the Ameshaspands (archangels); and when the time of the Worm comes for taking food, so arrange that you should have some molten brass for pouring into the mouth of that wicked creature, so that it dies, and the spirit of that druj, too, can be removed by the sacred adoration and extollings of the Deity." Ardashir approved of the advice, meditated upon it well, and then spoke to Burjak and Burj-ataro thus: "I can achieve this exploit by your assistance." They (namely the brothers) replied: "We devote ourselves up,

body and life, to do whatever you command.” CHAPTER EIGHT. Thence Ardashir marched again towards Ardashir-Gadman, undertook the battle with Mitrôk, son of Anoshepat, killed Mitrok, and took possession of his territory, land, wealth and property. For the purpose of bringing to an end the battle with the Worm, he dispatched a person to Burjak and Burj ataro, invited them to his presence, and deliberated with them. He took with himself many dirams, dinars, and garments, dressed himself like an inhabitant of Khurasan, and arriving at the foot of the castle of Gular, with Burjak and Burj-ataro, spoke (to its inmates) thus: “I am an inhabitant of Khurasan. I crave indulgence from that glorious lord, that I may approach (him) for the worship of his threshold (babâ).” The idolaters admitted Ardashir with those two male companions, and made room (for them) in the house of the Worm. For three days Ardashir showed himself engaged in that sort of worship and unanimity towards the Worm, gave the dirams, dinars, and clothes (which he had brought with him) to the idol worshippers, and acted in such a manner that everyone of the inmates of the fortress was astonished and commended him. Afterwards Ardashir spoke thus: “Be pleased to [so] permit that I may give food to the Worm for three days with my own hands.” The idolaters who were superintendents acceded (to it). Ardashir (now) dispatched a person with an order that skillful and zealous men of noble blood should hide themselves among mountain cliffs; and he further commanded: “On the day of Asman if you observe smoke (issuing) from the fortress of the Worm, you should perform feats of bravery and show (your) military skill, advancing towards the foot of the fortress.” That very day Ardashir had some brass melted [himself], while Burjak and Burj-ataro performed the sacred yazishne ceremony, and recited the azbaishne praises to God. . When it was its time for taking food the Worm cried aloud according to its daily habit. Some time before that, Ardashir had made the

commanding idolaters drunk and unconscious at breakfast, and he himself, with his own companions, went afterwards near the Worm, and carried to it the blood of large and small cattle, according as it was given it every day; and no sooner did the Worm turn up its mouth to drink the blood, than Ardashir poured the molten brass into the mouth of the Worm. As the brass permeated through the whole body, the Worm burst asunder into two pieces, and such a noise arose from it. that all the men in the fortress came on the spot, and confusion prevailed throughout the stronghold. Ardashir laid his hands on the shield and the sword, and committed grievous wounding and massacre in the fortress, while he ordered that they should make a fire, so that (its) smoke would become visible to his troops (outside). His companions did so. As soon as the troops that were on the (neighboring) mountain saw this (smoke issuing) from the fortress, they, in order to help Ardashir, came running to its foot, rushed into its gate, and exclaimed: "Victorious, victorious may Ardashir be, king of kings, son of Babag!" Instantly the sword was held for use; and in such a manner the lord of the castle was killed, and everything destroyed, that the soldiers (of Haftan-bokht), in the hurry and conflict of the battle, escaped by falling from the rampart, while those that remained solicited for protection, and went into bondage and submission. Ardashir commanded that the fortress should be razed to the ground and demolished, while on its site he ordered the city which they call Guzaran to be erected. In that quarter he caused an Atash-i Warharan to be enthroned. He loaded on the backs of one thousand camels the wealth, property, gold, and silver contained in the fortress, and dispatched them to Gobar. He granted to Burjak and Burj-ataro the share of such a superb reward as zealous adherents deserve, and entrusted them the chieftaincy and governorship of the city (of Guzaran) and its environs. CHAPTER NINE. After the Worm was killed, Ardashir returned to Gobar. His forces

and treasures came to the frontiers of Kerman, and to the battle against Barjan. Now he (namely, Ardashir) had with himself two of Ardavan's sons, the other two having been fugitives at the court of the king of Kabul. The latter dispatched a message, a written letter, to their sister, as she was wife of Ardashir, to the following effect: "It is quite fair that people do not divulge secrets to (such) women, since you have forgotten the deaths of your near relations, of your illustrious kinsmen, whom that sinner (namely Ardashir), the enemy of God, unbecomingly; killed. Consequently, you have abandoned every trace of love and affection for those (two) miserable brothers, who are subject to distress, difficulties, fear, terror, and indignity in exile and in the district of battles; as well as for those two other unlucky brothers of yours, upon whom that perfidious (mitro-druj) man inflicts punishment with the fetters of imprisonments, and who (namely, those brothers) always wish for death as a gift. Your mind has been sincere with that faithless one, so you have no sympathy or regard for us. That person will pass away distressed who will henceforward boast of, or trust, any woman in this world. Now this is, likewise, our (mutual) vow through you, that you should choose some means for our sake, and do not fail to avenge (the deaths of) your father and your near relations, who were illustrious; (that you should) accept from this man the fatal poison which is forwarded to you with one of (our) trustworthy male relatives, and, whenever you can, administer it to that sinner and faithless wretch before (he takes his) meal so that he directly dies, and both of your imprisoned brothers be set at liberty; and we, too, shall return to our native town, country and land; (thereby) your soul will be made worthy of paradise, and an eternal fame established for thyself; while other women in this world will regard your good acts as most worthy of (their) respect and esteem." When the daughter of Ardavan observed the letter sent to her in that form, along with

poison, she contemplated (upon the matter) thus: "I ought to act accordingly, and relieve these two brothers from their fetters." One day as Ardashir was very hungry and thirsty, he went back (from the chase) to his residence (to take dinner), and when he had finished saying of (the Zoroastrian prayer of) Grace, his consort handed to him the poison mixed with flour and milk with these words: "First of all pray drink this (liquid), because you will (thereby) refresh yourself from heat and fatigue." Ardashir, having held it in his hand, was going to drink it - when people relate that the glorious fire Adar Farnbag, which is victorious, flew into the room the shape of a red hawk, struck the goblet containing the flour with its wing, and the goblet, with the entire flour fell from the hand of Ardashir on the ground. Both Ardashir, and his wife got confused when they beheld this. A cat and a dog that were in the house licked up the contents and perished instantaneously. Ardashir understood that: "That was (some) poison prepared for killing me. He instantly sent for the chief of the Mobeds (Pahlavi 'the Mobed of the Mobeds'), and questioned him thus:"O Aerpat! what do you think of one who attempts [against] the life of her lord, and what should be done to her?" The Mobed replied: "May you be immortal! May you attain to your object! She who attempts the life of her lord is worthy of death (margarzan), and should be killed." Ardashir (then) ordered (the Mobed): "Take this dissolute woman (jah i zihânak), who is a sorceress [Av. yâtu], who is the offspring of wicked (parents), to the executioner, and order (him) to kill her." The high-priest, holding the hand of the woman, left the court. The latter addressed (the priest) in these words: "Inform Ardashir that this day I have completed seven months of pregnancy; because if I am worthy of death, this offspring that I have in my womb should not also be regarded as worthy of death." On hearing these words, the high-priest turned about and went back to Ardashir, and

addressed (him) as follows: "May you be immortal! This woman is pregnant, (so) she must not be executed, for a time, until she is delivered (of the child); for if she is fit to be killed, the offspring that is in her womb from your Majesty should not also be considered as worthy of death, and executed." As Ardashir entertained wrath, he said: "Don't stay a moment; kill her." The high-priest knew that Ardashir was full of wrath, and would have to repent it; so he did not allow the woman to be killed; (but) he conveyed her to his house, and kept her in concealment. He (then) said to his wife: "Keep this woman respectfully, and say nothing (about her) to anybody." When the time of delivery approached, she (that is, the queen) gave birth to a very worthy son. He was named Shahpuhr; and he was reared there till he reached the age of seven years. CHAPTER TEN. One day Ardashir went a hunting; and, (on entering the forest), he gave his horse loose rein in pursuit of a female elk, when the male elk coming straight up against Ardashir, rescued the hind, and gave himself up to death. Ardashir laid low the male animal, and galloped his horse against the fawn. The mother, on seeing the rider turn his horse in pursuit of her fawn, came and relieved her young one by delivering herself up to death. Ardashir, having observed this incident, stepped (pondering), and became sympathetic; and (when) he turned back his horse he mused upon the scene, as follows: "Woe be unto man, who ought to follow, (but does not follow), these dumb quadrupeds that are irrational and speechless, but so faithful towards one another that one lays down his life for the sake of his mate or his young one." He was (then) fully reminded of the child which she (that is, his wife) had in (her) womb, and he, on horseback as he was, loudly uttered a mournful cry. When the military chieftains, grandees, nobles, and princes beheld such a state of things, they stood perplexed (for a time), and went all together towards the head of the Mobeds (and questioned him thus): "How

could such a thing happen that Ardashir should remain in such a lonely mood, and be visited by, wailing, grief, and sorrow, and should cry aloud in that manner?" The chief of the Mobeds, the commander-in-chief of Iran, the commander of the guards, the chief secretaries, and the moral preceptor of the princes went near Ardashir, fell prostrate on their faces, made obeisance, and addressed him as follows: "May you be immortal! I Pray do not render yourself melancholy in this manner, and fill your heart with grief and lamentation. If it be possible to contrive means, through human activity, to undo an act that has been done, make us also cognizant of it, so that we may lay before you our bodies, lives, riches, wealth, wives, and children; but if it be such a calamity that no remedy can be found, pray do not render yourself and ourselves, the subjects of the region, full of grief and lamentation." Ardashir said in reply: "Nothing adverse has now happened unto me; but today on my personally beholding the dumb, speechless, and stupid quadrupeds in a certain condition in the forest, I was reminded of the wife and the innocent child that was in the mothers womb of whose execution I was the devisor and judge; wherefore a grievous sin should be on my soul." When the head Mobed observed that Ardashir repented of the act, he fell prostrate on his face, and addressed him thus: "May you be immortal! Order that the punishment of margarzan sinners, or of those that disobey the kings command, should be inflicted upon me." Ardashir said (surprisingly): "Why do you speak so? What crime have you committed?" The chief of the Mobeds answered: "That woman and the child, whom you had ordered to kill, have not been killed by us, and a son has been born, who is more handsome and accomplished than all the newly-born children and princes. Ardashir said (with amazement): "What do you say?" The high-priest said: "May you be immortal! It is so as I have said." : Ardashir ordered that a superb present consisting of red rubies, kingly

pearls, and jewels, should be made to the Mobed. Directly somebody entered, bringing in Shahpuhr. On beholding his [own] son, Shahpuhr, Ardashir fell prostrate on his face, and offered much thanksgiving unto Ahura Mazda, the Ameshaspands, the Glory [Khwarrāh] of the Kayanians, and the victorious “King of the Sacred Fires,” (namely, the Atash i Warharan), and he spoke as follows: “What has come to me has never been the lot of any lord or king. Who was there that came back to life from amongst the dead, like such a beautiful offspring of mine, before the millennium, the Resurrection, and the Final Renovation, of Saoshyant?” On that very site he ordered the erection of a city which they call Rāye i Shahpuhr. He also established there an Atash-i Warharan, transferred much riches and wealth to the building of the “King of the Sacred Fires” (namely, Warharan), and ordered the continuation therein of many religious duties and acts. CHAPTER ELEVEN.

Afterwards Ardashir marched towards different frontiers, and fought many bloody battles with the principal rulers of the territory of Iran. But always when one of the frontiers was restored to order, another rose in perfidy and unsubmission. Ardashir largely gave away his riches for this very purpose; and he communed with himself as follows: “Is it not perhaps destined for me by Providence that the kingdom of Iran should be restored (by me) to an absolute monarchy?” He, therefore, determined thus: “We ought to consult several learned and sagacious (Indian) princes, who are soothsayers, as to whether it is so that it is not appointed by our destiny to conduct the sovereignty of the kingdom of Iran, and we ought to remain content with our lot, to invoke blessings, to abandon these bloody battles, and to rest quietly ourselves from such drudgery of the time (that is, of life).” (Consequently), Ardashir dispatched one of his confidential men to the (head) Kaît of India [or, ‘of the Hindus’] to put him the question concerning the restoration of the kingdom of Iran to an

empire. When Ardashir's man reached the presence of the Kaît of India, the latter, observing the messenger, spoke to him, before he could express himself, (the purport of his message) to the following effect: "Are you sent by the king of the Parsis to put me the question: 'Will the sovereignty of the kingdom of Iran reach unto me as its emperor?' Now return and give him this reply from me (said the Kaît): 'Such a monarchy cannot be restored by any one except by a person who will be a descendant of two different families, one is yours, another that of Mitrok, son of Anoshepat'."

The messenger returned to the presence of Ardashir, and communicated the opinion of the Kaît of India, so that Ardashir became informed of it. When Ardashir heard his words, he said: "May the day never come, when from the line of Mitrok; whose soul is perverted, anybody should become dominant in the kingdom of Iran; because as regards myself Mitrok, who was of a grievous and mischievous race, was personally my enemy, while his descendants, who are alive, are all enemies of myself and my children; so if they become powerful and seek their fathers vengeance, they will prove harmful to my children." In consequence of wrath and malice, Ardashir went to the dwelling of Mitrok; and ordered that all his children should be belabored and killed. There was a daughter of Mitrok's, three years old, whom the village authorities privately carried away from the house, and gave in charge of a farmer, (directing him) that he should bring her up, and attend to her wants. The farmer acted accordingly and reared her in an excellent manner. And when several years elapsed the maiden reached the age of womanhood, and the beauty and gait of (her) body, (her) dexterity, and her, physical strength and power developed so well that she was (regarded as) the best and most prominent of all women.

CHAPTER TWELVE. According to the appointment of nature and time, one day Shahpuhr, son of Ardashir, happened to pass by that town on his way to the hunting

ground; and at the close of the chase he himself with nine horsemen returned to the country-farm wherein the maiden lived. The farmer's daughter was (sitting) on the top of the well, drawing water from it, and supplying it to the quadrupeds. The farmer was away on some business. As soon as the maiden beheld Shahpuhr and his chevaliers, she got up, made obeisance, and addressed (him) as follows: "You are welcome in health, goodness, and blessings. Pray take rest, because (this) place, is delightful, and the shade of trees pleasant; and as the time is hot I will draw out some water, which you yourself and the horses may drink." Shahpuhr was vexed owing to fatigue, hunger, and thirst, so he answered the maiden (peevishly) thus: "We will have water for ourselves, you need not trouble thyself about it." The maiden went away dejected and sat aside. (Then) Shahpuhr spoke to the chevaliers as follows: "Throw that bucket into the well and draw out water, so that we may drink it, and you may give it to the quadrupeds (to drink)." They acted accordingly and cast the bucket into the well; but owing to the largeness of the bucket it was impossible for them to draw it up full of water. The maiden was observing this from a distance. Shahpuhr, on seeing that his chevaliers could not draw the bucket up from the well, grew angry, went himself to the top of the well, and abusing those horsemen said: "Shame and disgrace to you who are less hardy and less qualified than a woman." (So saying) he seized the rope from the hands of the chevaliers, and applying his own force to the rope he drew up the bucket from the well. The maiden felt surprised at the strength, skill, and vigor of Shahpuhr. No sooner did she see this than she, with the strength, skill, and vigor that were purely established (in her), drew up the bucket (full of water) from the well, and went running to Shahpuhr, bowed down to him, blessed him, and exclaimed: "May you be immortal, Shahpuhr, son of Ardashir, the best of heroes!" Shahpuhr laughed and asked the maiden: "How do

you come to know that I am Shahpuhr?" The maiden replied: "I have heard from many people that there is not a single chevalier in the kingdom of Iran who can emulate Shahpuhr, son of Ardashir, in physical strength, vigor, the beauty, and gait of body, and dexterity." Shahpuhr said to the maiden: "Tell me, truly, whose offspring you are." The maiden answered: "I am the daughter of the farmer who stays in this village." Shahpuhr said: "You do not say the truth, since the daughter of a peasant has no such skill, vigor, gait, and decency as you possess. Now we will not believe you until you speak the truth." The maiden replied: "If you should give me protection, I would sincerely tell you the truth." Shahpuhr exclaimed: "Protection! Don't be afraid." The maiden said: "I am daughter of Mitrok, son of Anoshepat, and brought to this place on account of the fear of Ardashir; and of the seven children of Mitrok none has survived up to now except myself." Shahpuhr summoned the farmer before him, solemnly accepted the maiden as his wife, and remained with her for the night. According to the law of generation, that is, according to the law of nature, the very night the maiden became pregnant with Hormizd, son of Shahpuhr. Shahpuhr kept his wife in (royal) pomp and respect, and Hormizd, son of Shahpuhr, was born from her. CHAPTER THIRTEEN. Shahpuhr kept Hormizd in secrecy from his father, until he reached the age of seven years. One day Hormizd went to the racecourse with the youth and princes (of the family) of Ardashir, and (while) he was playing polo (with them) Ardashir happened to be sitting there (in his camp) with the high-priest, the commander of warriors, several noblemen, and grandees, and attentively beholding them. Hormizd as well as the youth were victorious and warlike at riding. And naturally one of them struck his polo-club to the ball which fell on the side of Ardashir, and the latter connived at it [literally, 'showed nothing']. The youth stood dumbfounded, and none would ride on or proceed further owing to the grandeur of

Ardashir. But Hormizd intrepidly went (towards him), took up the ball, and, striking it back courageously, he raised a cry (of joy). Ardashir asked of those (present): "Whose boy is this?" They said: "May you be immortal! We do not know this boy." Ardashir sent a person, called the boy in his presence, and asked him: "Whose son are you?" Hormizd answered: "I am son of Shahpuhr." Instantly he (namely, Ardashir) dispatched a person and summoned Shahpuhr and questioned him thus: "Whose son is this?" Shahpuhr solicited protection (saying): "Grant (it), O Ardashir! And protection was granted by him to Shahpuhr. Shahpuhr (then) said: "May you be immortal! This son is mine. I kept him in secrecy from you for several years." Ardashir replied: "What is the cause of this impropriety of [your] withdrawing such a worthy son from my sight for seven years?" (So saying) he embraced Hormizd, gave him many a gift and garment, and offered thanksgiving unto God. He (then) expressed himself thus: "This confirms what the Kaît of India has predicted." Afterwards, when Hormizd attained to sovereignty, he was able to bring back the whole kingdom of Iran under an absolute monarchy; and he (actually) brought the head rulers of different frontiers under his submission. And he demanded contribution and tribute from Arûm and India, and made the kingdom of Iran more embellished, more efficient, and more famous (than before). And the Emperor of the Arumians, the Tab of Kavul, the Raja of the Hindus, the Khakan of the Turks, and other chief rulers of different countries, had come to his court with sweet salutations.

COLOPHON. Completed with gratification, pleasure and joy. May Ardashir, the king of kings, son of Babag, and Shahpuhr, the king of kings, son of Ardashir, and Hormizd, the king of kings, son of Shahpuhr, be immortal-souled! May the immortal-souled Rustam, son of Mitro-avan, who has written this copy, be so, and more so!

