

“. . . It is said that peace has been made between him” (Tahmasp Quli Khan) “and “the Turks, but there is no appearance of it: and three days ago I received a letter from “the English consul at Basra, who writes that the Persians have once more closed the Gulf¹ “with many vessels in order to prevent any provisions from entering Basra . . .”:

and not only to the Shatt-ul-'Arab was Tahmasp Quli Khan sending forces intent on extending the Persian dominions and, more still, on obtaining new sources for taxation and extracting wealth to maintain his military power; e.g. in April 1737 the Gāmburun diary of the East India Company recorded:

'Persian forces on the coast of 'Uman. The Persian fleet sailed for Khur Fakkan, '1.4.1736 (?), to land about 3,000 men and 2,500 horses to aid the Imam to quieten his 'rebellious subjects. . . .'

To return to follow Tahmasp Quli Khan, last noted as having taken Ganjeh in the Caucasus early in 1735. It is to be presumed that he remained in that area—for he captured Erivan—till by the commencement of 1736 the infant Shah 'Abbas III had perished ('poisoned', Fr. Leander's narrative appears to imply) or, if alive, could be ignored: and the moment arrived when the ambitious general could hold that 'Grand Majlis', foretold by the English 'Resident', when (on the plains of Mughan, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*) he found the moment propitious, or it suited his book to be saluted as Shah-in-Shah of Iran by the might of his sword, and be crowned, 26.2.1736, the inaugural ceremony taking place at Qazwin:

"Monday, 15.3.1736. A 'chapper' (i.e. *chapar*=postal courier) arrived today and "brings the advices that Thomas Caun by his own management had prevailed with the "Grand Assembly to desire he would take upon himself the title of king, which he graciously "accepted, and has appointed Mirza Taqi, when he created a Caun and Baiglarbaigi of "Fars. Wrote a letter to Shaw Nadir congratulating him on his accession to the throne. . . ."

was how the English Factory at Gāmburun recorded the event.²

Then in September 1736 he went on a campaign against the Lur tribes of the south-west, attacking and killing a chief of the Bakhtiari, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Perhaps at first the tribesmen had cut up some of his troops or offered a resistance, which at first appeared successful—as is often the case—for from Baghdad, 3.10.1736,³ wrote Fr. Emmanuel of S. Albert, already emphasizing the tyranny and foretelling its outcome:

"As to the wars in Persia, I do not think they are at an end. Tahmasp Quli Khan has "had himself declared king" (Shah), "sword in hand, but it is not believed that it will be "for long, his tyrannical rule rendering him detested by all the people. . . . The said "Tahmasp with his army has been beaten twice recently near Hamadan by the Bakhtiari, "who are certain rebels from the mountains, and do not want to recognize him: it is said "that peace has been made between him and the Turks, but there is no appearance of it. . . ."

But, however things had gone at first, he quickly crushed that revolt, for the Gāmburun diary merely mentions:

¹ By 'Gulf' presumably the estuary of the Shatt-ul-Arab meant.

² The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed., quotes, without citing contemporary evidence, that, when offered the crown, the new monarch, who adopted the title Nadir Shah, stipulated as conditions that the crown should be hereditary in his family and measures taken to bring the Shiah Muslims of Persia to accept uniformity of worship [[?] *sic*, for 'tenets'] with the Sunnis, and the Mulla-bashi [[?] *sic*, for 'Chief Mujtahid'] objecting the new Shah ordered him to be strangled, a sentence executed on the spot.

³ *S.N.R.*, IV, p. 421.