The Sassanians (New Persia) [1]

By George Rawlinson

Lesson	Titles
SASS001	Chapters 1 to 3
SASS002	Chapters 4 to 6
SASS003	Chapters 7 to 9
SASS004	Chapters 10 to 12
SASS005	Chapters 13 to 16
SASS006	Chapters 17 to 19
SASS007	**Chapters 20 and 21**
SASS008	Chapters 22 to 24
SASS009	Chapters 25 and 26
SASS010	Chapters 27 and 28

20. Accession of Chosrose I

The accession of Chosroes was not altogether undisputed, Kaoses, the eldest of the sons of Kobad, regarding himself as entitled to the crown by right of birth, assumed the insignia of royalty on the death of his father, and claimed to be acknowledged as monarch. But Mebodes, the Grand Vizier, interposed with the assertion of a constitutional axiom, that no one had the right of taking the Persian crown until it was assigned to him by the assembly of the nobles. Kaoses, who thought he might count on the goodwill of the nobles, acquiesced; and the assembly being convened, his claims were submitted to it. Hereupon Mebodes brought forward the formal testament of Kobad, which he had hitherto concealed, and, submitting it to the nobles, exhorted them to accept as king the brave prince designated by a brave and successful father. His eloquence and authority prevailed; the claims of Kaoses and of at least one other son of Kobad were set aside; and, in accordance with his father's will, Chosroes was proclaimed lawful monarch of Persia.

But a party among the nobles were dissatisfied with the decision to which the majority had come. They dreaded the restlessness, and probably feared the cruelty, of Chosroes. It might have been expected that they would have espoused the cause of the disappointed Kaoses, which had a solid basis of legality to rest upon; but, apparently, the personal character of Kaoses was unsatisfactory, or at any rate, there was another prince whose qualities conciliated more regard and aroused more enthusiasm. Zanies, the second son of Kobad, had distinguished himself repeatedly in the field, and was the idol of a considerable section of the nation, who had long desired that he should govern them. Unfortunately, however, he possessed a disqualification fatal in the eyes of Orientals; he had, by disease or mischance, lost one of his eyes, and this physical blemish made it impossible that he should occupy the Persian throne. Under these circumstances an ingenious plan was hit upon. In order to combine respect for law and usage with the practical advantage of being governed by the man of their choice, the discontented nobles conceived the idea of conferring the crown on a son of Zames, a boy named after his grandfather Kobad, on whose behalf Zames would naturally be regent. Zames readily came into the plot; several of his brothers, and, what is most strange, Chosroes' maternal uncle, the Aspebed, supported him; the conspiracy seemed nearly sure of success, when by some accident it was discovered, and the occupant of the throne took prompt and effectual measures to crush it. Zames, Kaoses, and all the other sons of Kobad were seized by order of Chosroes, and, together with their entire male offspring, were condemned to death. The Aspebed, and

[1] This Grace Notes study of material in the public domain is published for free distribution. Edited by Warren Doud, warren.doud@gmail.com, Austin, Texas.

the other nobles found to have been accessory to the conspiracy, were, at the same time, executed. One prince alone, the intended puppet-king, Kobad, escaped, through the compassion of the Persian who had charge of him, and, after passing many years in concealment, became a refugee at the Court of Constantinople, where he was kindly treated by Justinian.

When Chosroes had by these means secured himself against the claims of pretenders, he proceeded to employ equal severity in repressing the disorders, punishing the crimes, and compelling the abject submission of his subjects. The heresiarch Mazdak, who had escaped the persecution instituted in his later years by Kobad, and the sect of the Mazdakites, which, despite that persecution, was still strong and vigorous, were the first to experience the oppressive weight of his resentment; and the corpses of a hundred thousand martyrs blackening upon gibbets proved the determination of the new monarch to make his will law, whatever the consequences. In a similar spirit the hesitation of Mebodes to obey instantaneously an order sent him by the king was punished capitally, and with circumstances of peculiar harshness, by the stern prince, who did not allow gratitude for old benefits to affect the judgments which he passed on recent offences. Nor did signal services in the field avail to save Chanaranges, the nobleman who preserved the young Kobad, from his master's vengeance. The conqueror of twelve nations, betrayed by an unworthy son, was treacherously entrapped and put to death on account of a single humane act which had in no way harmed or endangered the jealous monarch.

The fame of Chosroes rests especially on his military exploits and successes. On first ascending the throne he seems, however, to have distrusted his capacity for war; and it was with much readiness that he accepted the overtures for peace made by Justinian, who was anxious to bring the Eastern war to a close, in order that he might employ the talents of Belisarius in the reduction of Africa and Italy. A truce was made between Persia and Rome early in A.D. 532; and the truce was followed after a short interval by a treaty--known as "the endless peace"--whereby Rome and Persia made up their differences and arranged to be friends on the following conditions: (1) Rome was to pay over to Persia the sum of eleven thousand pounds of gold, or about half a million of our money, as her contribution towards the maintenance of the Caucasian defences, the actual defence being undertaken by Persia; (2) Daras was to remain a fortified post, but was not to be made the Roman head-quarters in Mesopotamia, which were to be fixed at Constantia; (3) the district of Pharangium and the castle of Bolon, which Rome had recently taken from Persia, were to be restored, and Persia on her part was to surrender the forts which she had captured in Lazica; (4) Rome and Persia were to be eternal friends and allies, and were to aid each other whenever required with supplies of men and money. Thus was terminated the thirty years' war, which, commencing in A.D. 502 by the attack of Kobad on Annastasius, was brought to a close in A.D. 532, and ratified by Justinian in the year following.

When Chosroes consented to substitute close relations of amity with Rome for the hereditary enmity which had been the normal policy of his house, he probably expected that no very striking or remarkable results would follow. He supposed that the barbarian neighbors of the empire on the north and on the west would give her arms sufficient employment, and that the balance of power in Eastern Europe and Western Asia would remain much as before. But in these expectations he was disappointed. Justinian no sooner found his eastern frontier secure than he directed the whole force of the empire upon his enemies in the regions of the west, and in the course of half a dozen years (A.D. 533-539), by the aid of his great general,

Belisarius, he destroyed the kingdom of the Vandals in the region about Carthage and Tunis, subdued the Moors, and brought to its last gasp the power of the Ostrogoths in Italy. The territorial extent of his kingdom was nearly doubled by these victories; his resources were vastly increased; the prestige of his arms was enormously raised; veteran armies had been formed which despised danger, and only desired to be led against fresh enemies; and officers had been trained capable of conducting operations of every kind, and confident, under all circumstances, of success. It must have been with feelings of dissatisfaction and alarm not easily to be dissembled that the Great King heard of his brother's long series of victories and conquests, each step in which constituted a fresh danger to Persia by aggrandizing the power whom she had chiefly to fear. At first his annoyance found a vent in insolent demands for a share of the Roman spoils, which Justinian thought it prudent to humor but, as time went on, and the tide of victory flowed more and more strongly in one direction, he became less and less able to contain himself, and more and more determined to renounce his treaty with Rome and renew the old struggle for supremacy. His own inclination, a sufficiently strong motive in itself, was seconded and intensified by applications made to him from without on the part of those who had especial reasons for dreading the advance of Rome, and for expecting to be among her next victims. Witiges, the Ostrogoth king of Italy, and Bassaces, an Armenian chief, were the most important of these applicants. Embassies from these opposite quarters reached Chosroes in the same year, A.D. 539, and urged him for his own security to declare war against Justinian before it was too late. "Justinian," the ambassadors said, "aimed at universal empire. His aspirations had for a while been kept in check by Persia, and by Persia alone, the sole power in the world that he feared. Since the 'endless peace' was made, he had felt himself free to give full vent to his ambitious greed, had commenced a course of aggression upon all the other conterminous nations, and had spread war and confusion on all sides. He had destroyed the kingdom of the Vandals in Africa, conquered the Moors, deceived the Goths of Italy by professions of friendship, and then fallen upon them with all his forces, violated the rights of Armenia and driven it to rebellion, enslaved the Tzani and the Lazi, seized the Greek city of Bosporus, and the 'Isle of Palms' on the shores of the Red Sea, solicited the alliance of barbarous Huns and Ethiopians, striven to sow discord between the Persian monarch and his vassals, and in every part of the world shown himself equally grasping and restless. What would be the consequence if Persia continued to hold aloof? Simply that all the other nations would in turn be destroyed, and she would find herself face to face with their destroyer, and would enjoy the poor satisfaction of being devoured last. But did she fear to be reproached with breaking the treaty and forfeiting her pledged word? Rome had already broken it by her intrigues with the Huns, the Ethiopians, and the Saracens; and Persia would therefore be free from reproach if she treated the peace as no longer existing. The treaty-breaker is not he who first draws the sword, but he who sets the example of seeking the other's hurt. Or did Persia fear the result of declaring war? Such fear was unreasonable, for Rome had neither troops, nor generals to oppose to a sudden Persian attack. Sittas was dead; Belisarius and the best of the Roman forces were in Italy. If Justinian recalled Belisarius, it was not certain that he would obey; and, in the worst case, it would be in favor of Persia that the Goths of Italy, and the Armenians who for centuries had been subjects of Rome, were now ready to make common cause with her." Thus urged, the Persian king determined on openly declaring war and making an attack in force on the eastern provinces of the empire.

The scene of contest in the wars between Rome and Persia had been usually either Mesopotamia or Armenia. On rare occasions

only had the traditional policy been departed from, and attempts made to penetrate into the richer parts of the Roman East, and to inflict serious injury on the empire by carrying fire and sword into peaceful and settled provinces. Kobad, however, had in his later years ventured to introduce a new system, and had sent troops across the Euphrates into Syria in the hope of ravaging that fertile region and capturing its wealthy metropolis, Antioch. This example Chosroes now determined to follow. Crossing the great stream in the lower portion of its course, he led his troops up its right bank, past Circesium, Zenobia, and Callinicus, to Suron, a Roman town on the west side of the river. As this small place ventured to resist him, Chosroes, bent upon terrifying the other towns into submission, resolved to take a signal revenge. Though the garrison, after losing their commandant, made overtures for a surrender, he insisted on entering forcibly at one of the gates, and then, upon the strength of this violent entrance, proceeded to treat the city as one taken by storm, pillaged the houses, massacred a large portion of the inhabitants, enslaved the others, and in conclusion set the place on fire and burned it to the ground. It was perhaps in a fit of remorse, though possibly only under the influence of greed, that shortly afterwards he allowed the neighboring bishop of Sergiopolis to ransom these unfortunate captives, twelve thousand, in number, for the modest sum of two hundred pounds of gold.

From Suron the invading army advanced to Hierapolis, without encountering the enemy, who did not dare to make any resistance in the open field, but sought the protection of walls and strongholds. The defences of Hierapolis were in tolerable order; its garrison was fairly strong; and the Great King therefore prudently resolved to allow the citizens to ransom themselves and their city at a moderate price. Two thousand pounds of silver was the amount fixed upon; and this sum was paid without any complaint by the Hierapolites. Plunder, not conquest, was already distinctly set before the invader's mind as his aim; and it is said that he even offered at this period to evacuate the Roman territory altogether upon receiving a thousand pounds of gold. But the Romans were not yet brought so low as to purchase a peace; it was thought that Antioch and the other important towns might successfully defy the Persian arms, and hoped that Justinian would soon send into the field an army strong enough to cope with that of his adversary. The terms, therefore, which Chosroes offered by the mouth of Megas, bishop of Berhcea, were rejected; the Antiochenes were exhorted to remain firm; Ephraim, the bishop, was denounced to the authorities for counselling submission; and it was determined to make no pacific arrangement, but to allow Chosroes to do his worst. The Persian, on his side, was not slack or remiss. No sooner had he received the ransom of Hierapolis than he advanced upon Berhoea (now Aleppo), which he reached in four days. Observing that the defences were weak, he here demanded twice the ransom that he had accepted from the Hierapolites, and was only induced to forego the claim by the tears and entreaties of the good bishop, who convinced him at length that the Berhoeans could not pay so large a sum, and induced him to accept the half of it. A few more days' march brought him from Aleppo to the outskirts of Antioch; and after an interval of nearly three centuries the "Queen of the East," the richest and most magnificent of Oriental cities, was once more invested by Persian troops and threatened by a Sassanian monarch.

A great calamity had fallen upon Antioch only fourteen years previously. The entire town had been ruined by a succession of terrible earthquakes, which commenced in October, A.D. 525, and terminated in August of the ensuing year. All for a time was havoc and disorder. A landslip had covered a portion of the city, and in the remainder almost every house was overthrown. But the liberality of Justinian, the spirit of the inhabitants, and the

efforts of the governor, had effaced these disasters; and the city, when the Persians appeared before it, was in most respects grander and more magnificent than ever. The defences were, however, it would seem, imperfect. The citadel especially, which was on the high ground south of the city, had been constructed with small attention to the rules of engineering art, and was dominated by a height at a little distance, which ought to have been included within the walls. Nor was this deficiency compensated by any strength in the garrison, or any weight of authority or talent among those with whom rested the command. Justinian had originally sent his nephew, Germanus, to conduct the defence of the Syrian capital, while Buzes, an officer who had gained some repute in the Armenian war, was entrusted with the general protection of the East until Belisarius should arrive from Italy; but Germanus, after a brief stay, withdrew from Antioch into Cilicia, and Buzes disappeared without any one knowing whither he had betaken himself. Antioch was left almost without a garrison; and had not Theoctistus and Molatzes, two officers who commanded in the Lebanon, come to the rescue and brought with them a body of six thousand disciplined troops, it is scarcely possible that any resistance should have been made. As it was, the resistance was brief and ineffectual. Chosroes at once discerned the weak point in the defences, and, having given a general order to the less trusty of his troops to make attacks upon the lower town in various places, himself with the flower of the army undertook the assault upon the citadel. Here the commanding position so unaccountably left outside the walls enabled the Persians to engage the defenders almost on a level, and their superior skill in the use of missile weapons soon brought the garrison into difficulties. The assailants, however, might perhaps still have been repulsed, had not an unlucky accident supervened, which, creating a panic, put it in the power of the Persians by a bold movement to enter the place. The Romans, cramped for room upon the walls, had extemporized some wooden stages between the towers, which they hung outside by means of ropes. It happened that, in the crush and tumult, one of these stages gave way; the ropes broke, and the beams fell with a crash to the earth, carrying with them a number of the defenders. The noise made by the fall was great, and produced a general impression that the wall itself had been broken down; the towers and battlements were at once deserted; the Roman soldiers rushed to the gates and began to quit the town; while the Persians took advantage of the panic to advance their scaling ladders, to mount the walls, and to make themselves masters of the citadel. Thus Antioch was taken. The prudence of Chosroes was shown in his quietly allowing the armed force to withdraw; his resolve to trample down all resistance appeared in his slaughter of the Antiochone youth, who with a noble recklessness continued the conflict after the soldiers had fled; his wish to inspire terror far and wide made him deliver the entire city, with few exceptions, to the flames; while his avarice caused him to plunder the churches, and to claim as his own the works of art, the marbles, bronzes, tablets, and pictures, with which the Queen of the Roman East was at this time abundantly provided. But, while thus gratifying his most powerful passions, he did not lose sight of the opportunity to conclude an advantageous peace. Justinian's ambassadors had long been pressing him to come to terms with their master. He now consented to declare the conditions on which he was ready to make peace and withdraw his army. Rome must pay him, as an indemnity for the cost of the war, the sum of five thousand pounds of gold, and must also contract to make a further payment of five hundred pounds of gold annually, not as a tribute, but as a fair contribution towards the expense of maintaining the Caspian Gates and keeping out the Huns. If hostages were given him, he would consent to abstain from further acts of hostility while Justinian was consulted on these proposals, and would even begin at

once to withdraw his army. The ambassadors readily agreed to these terms, and it was understood that a truce would be observed until Justinian's answer should be delivered to Chosroes.

But the Great King, in thus formulating the terms on which he would be content to make peace, did not intend to tie his own hands, or to allow the Syrian cities before which he had not yet appeared to be quit of him without the payment of ransom. After visiting Seleucia, the port of Antioch at the mouth of the Orontes, bathing in the blue waters of the Mediterranean, and offering sacrifice to the (setting?) sun upon the shore, he announced his intention of proceeding to Apameia, a city on the middle Orontes, which was celebrated for its wealth, and particularly for its possession of a fragment of the "true cross," enshrined in a case which the pious zeal of the faithful had enriched with gold and jewels of extraordinary value. Received peacefully into the city by the submissive inhabitants, instead of fixing their ransom at a definite sum, he demanded and obtained all the valuables of the sacred treasury, including the precious relic which the Apamaeans regarded as the most important of their possessions. As, however, it was the case, and not its contents, that he coveted, while he carried off the former, he readily restored the latter to the prayers of the bishop and inhabitants.

From Apameia Chosroes returned to Antioch, and after witnessing the games of the amphitheatre and securing victory to the green champion because Justinian preferred the blue, he set out at last on his return to Persia, taking care to visit, upon his way to the Euphrates, the city of Chalcis, the only important place in Northern Syria that had hitherto escaped him. The Chalcidians were required not only to ransom themselves by a sum of money, but to give up to Chosroes the Roman soldiers who garrisoned their town. By a perjury that may well be forgiven them, they avoided the more important concession, but they had to satisfy the avarice of the conqueror by the payment of two hundred pounds of gold. The Persian host then continued its march, and reaching the Euphrates at Obbane, in the neighborhood of Barbalissus, crossed by a bridge of boats in three days. The object of Chosroes in thus changing his return line of march was to continue in Roman Mesopotamia the course which he had adopted in Syria since the conclusion of the truce--i.e. to increase his spoil by making each important city ransom itself. Edessa, Constantina, and Daras were successively visited, and purchased their safety by a contribution. According to Procopius, the proceedings before Daras were exceptional. Although Chosroes, before he quitted Edossa, had received a communication from Justinian accepting the terms arranged with the Roman envoys at Antioch, yet, when he reached Daras, he at once resolved upon its siege. The city was defended by two walls, an outer one of moderate strength, and an inner one sixty feet high, with towers at intervals, whose height was a hundred feet. Chosroes, having invested the place, endeavored to penetrate within the defences by means of a mine; but, his design having been betrayed, the Romans met him with a countermine, and completely foiled his enterprise. Unwilling to spend any more time on the siege, the Persian monarch upon this desisted from his attempt, and accepted the contribution of a thousand pounds of silver as a sufficient redemption for the great fortress.

Such is the account of the matter given to us by Procopius, who is our only extant authority for the details of this war. But the account is violently improbable. It represents Chosroes as openly flying in the face of a treaty the moment that he had concluded it, and as departing in a single instance from the general tenor of his proceedings in all other cases. In view of the great improbability of such a course of action, it is perhaps allowable to suppose that Procopius has been for once carried away by partisanship, and that the real difference between the case of

Daras and the other towns consisted in this, that Daras alone refused to pay its ransom, and Chosroes had, in consequence, to resort to hostilities in order to enforce it.

Still, no doubt, the whole conduct of Chosroes in enforcing ransoms from the towns after the conclusion of the truce was open to serious question, and Justinian was quite justified in treating his proceedings as a violation of his recent engagements. It is not unlikely that, even without any such excuse, he would shortly have renewed the struggle, since the return of Belisarius in triumph from the Italian war had placed at his service for employment in the East a general from whose abilities much was naturally expected. As it was, Justinian was able, on receiving intelligence of the fines levied on Apameia, Chalcis, Edessa, Constantina, and Daras, and of the hostile acts committed against the last-named place, with great show of reason and justice, to renounce the recently concluded peace, and to throw on the ill faith of Chosroes the blame of the rupture.

The Persian prince seems to have paid but little heed to the denunciation. He passed the winter in building and beautifying a Persian Antioch in the neighborhood of Ctesiphon, assigning it as a residence to his Syrian captives, for whose use he constructed public baths and a spacious hippodrome, where the entertainments familiar to them from their youth were reproduced by Syrian artists. The new city was exempt from the jurisdiction of Persian satraps, and was made directly dependent upon the king, who supplied it with corn gratuitously, and allowed it to become an inviolable asylum for all such Greek slaves as should take shelter in it, and be acknowledged as their kinsmen by any of the inhabitants. A model of Greek civilization was thus brought into close contact with the Persian court, which could amuse itself with the contrasts, if it did not learn much from the comparison, of European and Asiatic manners and modes of thought.

The campaign of A.D. 540 was followed by one of a very different character in A.D. 541. An unexpected offer suddenly made to the Persian king drew him from his capital, together with the bulk of his troops, to one of the remotest portions of the Persian territory, and allowed the Romans, instead of standing on their defence, to assume an aggressive in Mesopotamia, and even to retaliate the invasion which the year before Chosroes had conducted into the heart of their empire. The hostile operations of A.D. 541 had thus two distinct and far-distant scenes; in the one set the Persians, in the other the Romans, took the offensive; the two wars, for such they in reality were, scarcely affected one another; and it will therefore be convenient to keep the accounts of them distinct and separate. To commence with.

I. The LAZIO WAR.--Lazica had been a dependency of Rome from the time when Tzath, upon his conversion to Christianity, professed himself the vassal of Justin, and received the insignia of royalty from his new patron (A.D. 522). The terms of the connection had been at the first honorable to the weaker nation, which paid no tribute, admitted no Roman garrison, and was troubled by no Roman governor. As time went on, however, the Romans gradually encroached upon the rights of their dependants; they seized and fortified a strong post, called Petra, upon the coast, appointed a commandant who claimed an authority as great as that of the Lazic king, and established a commercial monopoly which pressed with great severity upon the poorer classes of the Lazi. Under these circumstances the nation determined on revolt; and in the winter of A.D. 540-1 Lazic ambassadors visited the court of Persia, exposed the grievances of their countrymen, and besought Chosroes to accept their submission, and extend to them the protection of his government. The province was distant, and possessed few attractions; whatever the tales told of its ancient wealth, or glories, or trade, in the time of Chosroes it was poor and

unproductive, dependent on its neighbors for some of the necessaries and all the conveniences of life, and capable of exporting nothing but timber, slaves, and skins. It might have been expected, under such circumstances, that the burden of the protectorate would have been refused; but there was an advantage, apparent or real, in the position of the country, discovered by the sagacity of Chosroes or suggested to him by the interested zeal of the envoys, which made its possession seem to the Persian king a matter of the highest importance, and induced him to accept the offer made him without a moment's delay. Lazica, the ancient Colchis and the modern Mingrelia and Imeritia, bordered upon the Black Sea, which the Persian dominions did not as yet touch. Once in possesion of this tract, Chosroes conceived that he might launch a fleet upon the Euxine, command its commerce, threaten or ravage its shores, and even sail against Constantinople and besiege the Roman emperor in his capital. The Persian king therefore acceded to the request of the envoys, and, pretending to be called into Iberia by a threatened invasion of the Huns, led a large army to the Lazic border, was conducted into the heart of the country by the envoys, received the submission of Gubazes, the king, and then, pressing on to the coast, formed the siege of Petra, where the Roman forces were collected. Petra offered a stout resistance, and repulsed more than one Persian assault; but it was impossible for the small garrison to cope with the numbers, the engineering skill, and the ardor of the assailants. After the loss of their commandant, Johannes, and the fall of one of the principal towers, the soldiers capitulated; Petra was made over to the Persians, who restored and strengthened its defences, and Lazica became for the time a Persian province.

II. The War in Mesopotamia.--Belisarius, on reaching the eastern frontier, fixed his head-quarters at Daras, and, finding that the Persians had no intention of invading Syria or Roman Mesopotamia, resolved to lead his troops into the enemy's territory. As his forces were weak in numbers, ill-armed, and ill-supplied, he could scarcely hope to accomplish any great enterprise; but it was important to recover the Roman prestige after the occurrences of the preceding year, and to show that Rome was willing to encounter in the open field any force that the Persians could bring against her. He therefore crossed the frontier and advanced in the direction of Nisibis, less with the intention of attacking the town than of distinctly offering battle to the troops collected within it. His scheme succeeded; a small force, which he threw out in advance, drew the enemy from the walls; and their pursuit of this detachment brought them into contact with the main army of Belisarius, which repulsed them and sent them flying into the town. Having thus established his superiority in the field, the Roman general, though he could not attack Nisibis with any prospect of success, was able to adopt other offensive measures. He advanced in person a day's march beyond Nisibis, and captured the fort of Sisauranon. Eight hundred Persian cavalry of the first class were made prisoners, and sent by Belisarius to Byzantium, where they were despatched by Justinian to Italy, where they served against the Goths. Arethas, the chief of the Saracens who fought on the side of Rome, was sent still further in advance. The orders given him were to cross the Tigris into Assyria, and begin to ravage it, but to return within a short time to the camp, and bring a report of the strength of the Persians beyond the river. If the report was favorable, Belisarius intended to quit Mesopotamia, and take the whole Roman force with him into Assyria. His plans, however, were frustrated by the selfish Arab, who, wishing to obtain the whole Assyrian spoil for himself, dismissed his Roman troops, proceeded to plunder the rich province on his own account, and sent Belisarius no intelligence of what he was so doing. After waiting at Sisauranon till the heats of summer had decimated his army, the

Roman general was compelled to retreat by the discontent of the soldiery and the representations of his principal officers. He withdrew his forces within the Roman frontier without molestation from the enemy, and was shortly afterwards summoned to Constantinople to confer on the state of affairs with, the emperor.

The military operations of the next year (A.D. 542) were comparatively unimportant. Chosroes collected a large army, and, repeating the movement of A.D. 540, made his appearance in Commagene early in the year, intending to press forward through Syria into Palestine, and hoping to make himself master of the sacred treasures which he knew to be accumulated in the Holy City of Jerusalem. He found the provincial commanders, Buzes and Justus, despondent and unenterprising, declined to meet him in the field, and content to remain shut up within the walls of Hierapolis. Had these been his only opponents the campaign would probably have proved a success; but, at the first news of his invasion, Justinian despatched Belisarius to the East, for the second time, and this able general, by his arts or by his reputation, succeeded in arresting the steps of Chosroes and frustrating his expedition. Belisarius took up his head-quarters at Europus, on the Euphrates, a little to the south of Zeugma, and, spreading his troops on both banks of the river, appeared both to protect the Roman province and to threaten the return of the enemy. Chosroes having sent an emissary to the Roman camp under the pretence of negotiating, but really to act the part of a spy, was so impressed (if we may believe Procopius) by the accounts which he received of the ability of the general and the warlike qualities of his soldiers, that he gave up the idea of advancing further, and was content to retire through Roman Mesopotamia into his own territories. He is said even to have made a convention that he would commit no hostile act as he passed through the Roman province; but if so, he did not keep the engagement. The city of Callinicus lay in his way; its defences were undergoing repairs, and there was actually a gap in one place where the old wall had been pulled down and the new one had not yet been built. The Persian king could not resist the temptation of seizing this easy prey; he entered the undefended town, enslaved all whom he found in it, and then razed the place to the ground. Such is the account which the Byzantine historian gives of the third campaign of Chosroes against the Romans, and of the motive and manner of his retreat. Without taxing him with falsehood, we may suspect that, for the glorification of his favorite hero, he has kept back a portion of the truth. The retreat of Chosroes may be ascribed with much probability to the advance of another danger, more formidable than Belisarius, which exactly at this time made its appearance in the country whereto he was hastening. It was in the summer of A.D. 542 that the plague broke out at Pelusium, and spread from that centre rapidly into the rest of Egypt and also into Palestine. Chosroes may well have hesitated to confront this terrible foe. He did not ultimately escape it; but he might hope to do so, and it would clearly have been the height of imprudence to have carried out his intention of invading Palestine when the plague was known to be raging there.

The fourth year of the Roman war (A.D. 543) opened with a movement of the Persian troops toward the Armenian frontier, consequent upon the desertion of the Persian cause by the Roman Armenians in the course of the winter. Chosroes in person once more led the attack, and proceeded as far as Azerbijan; but, the pestilence breaking out in his army, he hastily retreated, after some futile attempts at negotiation with the Roman officers opposed to him. Belisarius had this year been sent to Italy, and the Roman army of the East, amounting to thirty thousand men, was commanded by as many as fifteen generals, almost of equal rank, among whom there was little concert or agreement. Induced to take the offensive by the

retirement of the Persian king, these incapable officers invaded Persarmenia with all their troops, and proceeded to plunder its rich plains and fertile valleys. Encountering suddenly and unexpectedly the Persian general Nabedes, who, with a small force, was strongly posted at a village called Anglon, they were compelled to engage at disadvantage; their troops, entangled in difficult ground, found themselves attacked in their rear by an ambush; Narses, the bravest of them, fell; and, a general panic seizing the entire multitude, they fled in the extremest disorder, casting away their arms, and pressing their horses till they sank and expired. The Persians pursued, but with caution, and the carnage was not so great as might have been expected; but vast numbers of the disarmed fugitives were overtaken and made prisoners by the enemy; and the arms, animals, and camp equipment which fell into the hands of the Persians amply compensated all previous losses, and left Persarmenia the richer for the inroad.

The ravages of the pestilence having ceased, Chosroes, in the following year (A.D. 544), again marched westward in person, and laid siege to the city of Edessa. It would seem that he had now resolved not to be content with plundering raids, but to attempt at any rate the permanent conquest of some portion of the Roman territory. Edessa and Daras were the two towns on which the Roman possession of Western Mesopotamia at this time mainly depended. As the passing of Nisibis, in A.D. 363, from Roman into Persian hands, had given to Persia a secure hold on the eastern portion of the country between the rivers, so the occupation of Edessa and Daras could it have been effected, would have carried with it dominion over the more western regions. The Roman frontier would in this way have been thrown back to the Euphrates. Chosroes must be understood as aiming at this grand result in the siege which he so pertinaciously pressed, and which Edessa so gallantly resisted, during the summer of A.D. 544. The elaborate account which Procopius gives of the siege may be due to a sense of its importance. Chosroes tried, not force only, but every art known to the engineering science of the period; he repeated his assaults day after day; he allowed the defenders no repose; yet he was compelled at last to own himself baffled by the valor of the small Roman garrison and the spirit of the native inhabitants, to burn his works, and to return home. The five hundred pounds of gold which he extorted at last from Martinus, the commandant of the place, may have been a salve to his wounded pride; but it was a poor set-off against the loss of men, of stores, and of prestige, which he had incurred by his enterprise.

It was, perhaps, his repulse from the walls of Edessa that induced Chosroes, in A.D. 545, seriously to entertain the proposals for an arrangement which were made to him by the ambassadors of Justinian. Throughout the war their had been continual negotiations; but hitherto the Persian king had trifled with his antagonist, and had amused himself with discussing terms of accommodation without any serious purpose. Now at last, after five years of incessant hostilities, in which he had gained much glory but little profit, he seems to have desired a breathing-space. Justinian's envoys visited him at Ctesiphon, and set forth their master's desire to conclude a regular peace. Chosroes professed to think that the way for a final arrangement would be best prepared by the conclusion, in the first instance, of a truce. He proposed, in lieu of a peace, a cessation of hostilities for five years, during the course of which the causes of quarrel between the two nations might be considered, and a good understanding established. It shows the weakness of the Empire, that Justinian not only accepted this proposal, but was content to pay for the boon granted him. Chosroes received as the price of the five years truce the services of a Greek physician and two thousand pounds of gold.

The five years' truce seems to have been observed with better faith by the Persian than

by the Roman monarch. Alamundarus indeed, though a Persian vassal, regarded himself as entitled, despite the truce, to pursue his quarrel with his natural enemy, Arethas, who acknowledged the suzerainty of Rome; but Chosroes is not even accused of instigating his proceedings; and the war between the vassals was carried on without dragging either of the two lords-paramount into its vortex. Thus far, then, neither side had any cause of complaint against the other. If we were bound to accept the Roman story of a project formed by Chosroes for the surprise and seizure of Daras, we should have to admit that circumstances rather than his own will saved the Persian monarch from the guilt of being the first to break the agreement. But the tale told by Procopius is improbable; and the Roman belief of it can have rested at best only upon suspicion. Chosroes, it is allowed, committed no hostile act; and it may well be doubted whether he really entertained the design ascribed to him. At any rate, the design was not executed, nor even attempted; and the peace was thus not broken on his part. It was reserved for Rome in the fourth year of the truce (A.D. 549) expressly, to break its provisions by accepting the Lazi into alliance and sending them a body of eight thousand men to help them against the Persians.

Very soon after their submission to Persia the Lazi had repented of their rash and hasty action. They found that they had gained nothing, while in some respects they had lost, by their change of masters. The general system of the Persian administration was as arbitrary and oppressive as the Roman. If the commercial monopoly, whereof they so bitterly complained, had been swept away, commerce itself had gone with it, and they could neither find a market for their own products, nor obtain the commodities which they required. The Persian manners and customs introduced into their country, if not imposed upon themselves, were detestable to the Lazi, who were zealous and devout Christians, and possessed by the spirit of intolerance. Chosroes, after holding the territory for a few years, became convinced that Persia could not retain it unless the disaffected population were removed and replaced by faithful subjects. He designed therefore, we are told, to deport the entire Lazic nation, and to plant the territory with colonies of Persians and others, on whose fidelity he could place full reliance. As a preliminary step, he suggested to his lieutenant in Lazica that he should contrive the assassination of Gubazes, the Lazic king, in whom he saw an obstacle to his project. Phabrizus, however, failed in his attempt to execute this commission; and his failure naturally produced the immediate revolt of the province, which threw itself once more into the arms of Rome, and, despite the existing treaty with the Persians, was taken by Justinian under his protection. The Lazic war, which commenced in consequence of this act of Justinian's, continued almost without intermission for nine years--from A.D. 549 to 557. Its details are related at great length by Procopius and Agathias, who view the struggle as one which vitally concerned the interests of their country. According to them, Chosroes was bent upon holding Lazica in order to construct at the mouth of the Phasis a great naval station and arsenal, from which his fleets might issue to command the commerce or ravage the shores of the Black Sea. There is no doubt that the country was eminently fitted for such a purpose. The soil is for the most part richly fertile; the hills are everywhere covered with forests of noble trees; the Rion (Phasis) is deep and broad towards its mouth; and there are other streams also which are navigable. If Chosroes entertained the intentions ascribed to him, and had even begun the collection of timber for ship-building at Petra on the Euxine as early as A.D. 549, we cannot be surprised at the attitude assumed by Rome, or at her persistent efforts to recover possession of the Lazic territory.

The war was opened by an attack upon the great centre of the Persian power, Petra. This place, which was strongly situated on a

craggy rock projecting into the sea, had been carefully fortified by Justinian before Lazica passed into the possession of Chosroes, and had since received important additions to its defences at the hands of the Persians. It was sufficiently provisioned, and was defended by a body of fifteen hundred men. Dagisthseus, the Roman commander, besieged it with his entire force of eight thousand men, and succeeded by his constant attacks in reducing the garrison to little more than a fourth of its original number. Baffled in one attempt to effect a breach by means of a mine, he had contrived to construct another, and might have withdrawn his props, destroyed the wall, and entered the place, had he not conceived the idea of bargaining with the emperor for a specific reward in case he effected the capture. Whilst he waited for his messenger to bring a reply, the Persian general, Memeroes, forced the passes from Iberia into Lazica, and descended the valley of the Phasis with an army of 30,000 men. Dagisthalus in alarm withdrew, and Petra was relieved and revictualled. The walls were repaired hastily with sandbags, and the further defence was entrusted to a fresh garrison of 3000 picked soldiers. Mermeroes then, finding it difficult to obtain supplies for his large army, retired into Persarmenia, leaving only five thousand Persians in the country besides the garrison of Petra. This small force was soon afterwards surprised by the combined Romans and Lazi, who completely defeated it, destroying or making prisoners almost the entire number.

In the ensuing year, A.D. 550, the Persians took the field under a fresh general, Chorianes, who brought with him a considerable army, composed of Persians and Alans. The allied Romans and Lazi, under Dagisthseus and Gubazes, gave battle to this new foe on the banks of the Hippis (the Tschenikal?); and though the Lazi, who had insisted on taking the lead and fighting separately, were at the first encounter routed by the Persian horse, yet in the end Roman discipline and stubbornness triumphed. Their solid line of footmen, bristling with spears, offered an impervious barrier to the cavalry of the enemy, which did not dare to charge, but had recourse to volleys of missiles. The Romans responded with the same; and the battle raged for a while on something like even terms, the superior rapidity of the Asiatics being counterbalanced by the better protection which their shields gave to the Europeans, until at last, by a stroke of fortune, Rome obtained the victory. A chance arrow killed Chorianes, and his army instantly fled. There was a short struggle at the Persian camp; but the Romans and Lazi captured it. Most of the Persians were here put to the sword; the few who escaped quitted Lazica and returned to their own country.

Soon afterwards Dagisthseus was superseded by Bessas, and the siege of Petra was recommenced. The strength of the place had been considerably increased since the former attack upon it. A new wall of great height and solidity had been built upon a framework of wood in the place which Dagisthaeus had so nearly breached; the Roman mines had been filled up with gravel; arms, offensive and defensive, had been collected in extraordinary abundance; a stock of flour and of salted meat had been laid in sufficient to support the garrison of 3000 men for five years; and a store of vinegar, and of the pulse from which it was made, had likewise been accumulated. The Roman general began by attempting to repeat the device of his predecessor, attacking the defences in the same place and by the same means; but, just as his mine was completed, the new wall with its framework of wood sank quietly into the excavation, without suffering any disturbance of its parts, while enough of it still remained above the surface to offer an effectual bar to the assailants. It seemed hopeless to recommence the mine in this place, and elsewhere the nature of the ground made mining impossible; some other mode of attack had therefore to be adopted, or the siege must have been abandoned. Rome generally took towns by the battering-ram;

but the engines in use were of such heavy construction that they could not be dragged up an ascent like that upon which Petra stood. Bessas was in extreme perplexity, when some Hunnic allies, who happened to be in his camp, suggested a mode of constructing a ram, as effective as the ordinary one, which should nevertheless be so light that it could be carried on the shoulders of forty men. Three such machines were quickly made; and under their blows the wall would soon have given way, had not the defenders employed against them the terrible agency of fire, showering upon them from the walls lighted casks of sulphur, bitumen, and naphtha, which last was known to the Greeks of Colchis as "Medea's oil." Uncertain of succeeding in this attack, the Roman general gallantly led a scaling party to another portion of the walls, and, mounting at the head of his men, attempted to make good his footing on the battlements. Thrown headlong to the ground, but undeterred by his fall, he was about to repeat his attempt, when he found it needless. Almost simultaneously his troops had in two other places penetrated into the town. One band had obtained an entrance by scaling the rocks in a place supposed to be inaccessible; a second owed its success to a combination of accidents. First, it had happened that a gap had shown itself in the piece of the wall which sank into the Roman mine, and a violent struggle had ensued between the assailants and defenders at this place.

Then, while this fight was going on, the fire which the Persians were using against the Roman battering-rams had been by a shift of wind blown back upon themselves, and the wooden structure from which they fought had been ignited, and in a short time entirely consumed, together with its inmates. At sight of the conflagration, the Persians who stood in the gap had lost heart, and had allowed the Roman troops to force their way through it into Petra. Thus fell the great Lazic fortress, after a resistance which is among the most memorable in history. Of the three thousand defenders, seven hundred had been killed in the siege; one thousand and seventy were destroyed in the last assault. Only seven hundred and thirty were made prisoners; and of these no fewer than seven hundred and twelve were found to be wounded. The remaining five hundred threw themselves into the citadel, and there resisted to the last extremity, refusing all terms of capitulation, and maintaining themselves against an overwhelming force, until at last by sword and fire they perished to a man.

The siege of Petra was prolonged far into the winter, and the year A.D. 551 had begun ere the resistance ceased. Could the gallant defenders have maintained themselves for a few more weeks, they might not improbably have triumphed. Mermeroes, the Persian commander of two years previously, took the field with the commencement of spring, and, at the head of a large body of cavalry, supported by eight elephants, began his march to the coast, hoping to relieve the beleaguered garrison. Unfortunately he was too late. On his march he heard of the capture of Petra, and of its complete destruction by Bessas, who feared lest the Persians should again occupy the dangerous post. Mermeroes had no difficulty in establishing Persian rule through almost the whole of Lazica. The Romans did not dare to meet him in the field. Archssopolis, indeed, repulsed his attack; but no other important place in the entire country remained subject to the Empire. Qubazes and his followers had to hide themselves in the recesses of the mountains. Quartering his troops chiefly on the upper Phasis, about Kutais and its neighborhood, Mermeroes strengthened his hold on the country by building forts or receiving their submission, and even extended the Persian dominion beyond Lazica into Scymnia and Suania. Still Rome, with her usual tenacity, maintained a hold upon certain tracts; and Gubazes, faithful to his allies even in the extremity of their depression, maintained a guerilla war, and hoped that some day fortune would cease to frown on him.

Meanwhile, at Byzantium, fresh negotiations were in progress, and hopes were entertained of an arrangement by which all the differences between the two great powers would be satisfactorily adjusted. Isdigunas again represented his master at the Byzantine court, and conducted the diplomatic contest with skill and ability. Taxing Justinian with more than one infraction of the truce concluded in A.D. 545, he demanded the payment of a lump sum of two thousand six hundred pounds of gold, and expressed the willingness of Chosroes to conclude on these terms a fresh truce for five years, to take effect from the delivery of the money. With regard to the extent of country whereto the truce should apply, he agreed to an express limitation of its range--the settled provinces of both empires should be protected by it, but Lazica and the country of the Saracens should be excluded from its operation. Justinian consented to these terms, despite the opposition of many of his subjects, who thought that Rome degraded herself by her repeated payments of money to Persia, and accepted a position little better than that of a Persian tributary.

Thus the peace of A.D. 551 did nothing towards ending the Lazic war, which, after languishing through the whole of A.D. burst out again with renewed vigor in the spring of A.D. 553. Mermeroes in that year advanced from Kutais against Telephis, a strong fort in the possession of Rome, expelled the commandant, Martinus, by a stratagem, pressed forward against the combined Roman forces, which fled before him from Ollaria, and finally drove them to the coast and cooped them up in "the Island," a small tract near the mouth of the Phasis between that stream and the Doconus. On his return he was able to reinforce a garrison which he had established at Onoguris in the immediate neighborhood of Archseopolis, as a means of annoying and weakening that important station. He may naturally have hoped in one or two more campaigns to have driven the last Roman out of the country and to have attached Lazica permanently to the empire of the great king.

Unluckily, however, for Persia, the fatigues which the gallant veteran had undergone in the campaign of A.D. 553 proved more than his aged frame could endure, and he had scarcely reached Kutais when he was seized with a fatal malady, to which he succumbed in the course of the winter. Chosroes appointed as his successor a certain Nachoragan, who is said to have been a general of repute, but who proved himself quite unequal to the position which he was called upon to fill, and in the course of two years ruined the Persian cause in Lazica. The failure was the more signal from the fact that exactly at the time of his appointment circumstances occurred which seriously shook the Roman influence over the Lazi, and opened a prospect to Persia transcending aught that she could reasonably have hoped. This was nothing less than a most serious quarrel between Gubazes, the Lazic king, and some of the principal Roman commanders--a quarrel which involved consequences fatal to both parties. Gubazes, disgusted with the negligence or incapacity of the Roman chiefs, had made complaint of them to Justinian; they had retaliated by accusing him of meditating desertion, and had obtained the emperor's consent to his arrest, and to the use of violence if he offered resistance. Armed with this mandate, they contrived in a little time to fasten a quarrel upon him; and, when he declined to do as they required, they drew their swords upon him and slew him. The Lazic nation was, naturally enough, alienated by this outrage, and manifested an inclination to throw itself absolutely into the arms of Persia. The Romans, dispirited at the attitude of their allies, and at variance among themselves, could for some months after Gubazes' death have offered but little resistance to an enterprising enemy. So demoralized were they that an army of 50,000 is said to have fled in dismay when attacked by a force of Persians less than a twelfth of their number, and to have allowed their camp to be

captured and plundered. During this critical time Nachoragan remained inactive in Iberia, and contented himself with sending messengers into Lazica to announce his near approach and to animate and encourage his party. The result was such as might have been expected. The Lazi, finding that Persia made no effort to take advantage of their abstention, and that Rome despite of it maintained possession of the greater portion of their country, came to the conclusion that it would be unwise to desert their natural allies on account of a single outrage, however monstrous, and agreed to renew their close alliance with Rome on condition that the murderers of Gubazes should be punished, and his brother, Tzathes, appointed king in his place. Justinian readily gave his consent; and the year A.D. 555 saw the quarrel ended, and the Lazi once more heartily in accord with, their Roman protectors.

It was when affairs were in this state, and he had exactly missed his opportunity, that Nachoragan took the field, and, advancing from Iberia into the region about Kutai's with an army amounting to 60,000 men,1 made preparations for carrying on the war with vigor. He was opposed by Martinus, Justin, and Babas, the two former of whom with the bulk of the Roman forces occupied the region on the lower Phasis, known as "the Island," while Babas held the more central position of Archseopolis. Nachoragan, after losing about 2,000 of his best troops in the vicinity of this last-named place, resolved to challenge the Romans to a decisive encounter by attacking the important post of Phasis at the mouth of the river. With some skill he succeeded in passing the Roman camp on the island, and in establishing himself in the plain directly south of Phasis before the Roman generals guessed his purpose. They, however, were able by a quick movement to throw themselves into the town, and the struggle became one between fairly balanced forces, and was conducted with great obstinacy. The town was defended on the south by an outer palisade, a broad ditch protected by sharp stakes and full of water, and an inner bulwark of considerable height but constructed wholly of wood. The Phasis guarded it on the north; and here a Roman fleet was stationed which lent its aid to the defenders at the two extremities of their line. The yards of the ships were manned with soldiers, and boats were hung from them containing slingers, archers, and even workers of catapults, who delivered their weapons from an elevation exceeding that of the towers. But Nachoragan had the advantage of numbers; his men soon succeeded in filling up part of the ditch; and the wooden bulwark could scarcely have long resisted his attacks, if the contest had continued to be wholly one of brute strength. But the Roman commander, Martinus, finding himself inferior in force, brought finesse and stratagem to his aid. Pretending to receive intelligence of the sudden arrival of a fresh Roman army from Byzantium, he contrived that the report should reach Nachoragan and thereby cause him to divide his troops, and send half of them to meet the supposed reinforcements. Then, when the Persian general nevertheless renewed his assault, Martinus sent secretly 5,000 men under Justin to a short distance from Phasis; and this detachment, appearing suddenly when the contest was going on at the wall, was naturally taken for the newly arrived army, and caused a general panic. The Persians, one and all, took to flight; a general sally was made by the Romans in Phasis; a rout and a carnage followed, which completely disheartened the Persian leader, and led him to give up his enterprise. Having lost nearly one-fourth of his army, Nachoragan drew off to Kutai's, and shortly afterwards, leaving the command of the Persians in Lazica to Vaphrizes, retired to winter quarters in Iberia.

The failure of Nachoragan, following closely upon the decision of the Lazi to maintain their alliance with Rome in spite of the murder of Gubazes, seems to have convinced the Persian monarch that, in endeavoring to annex Lazica, he had engaged in a hopeless enterprise, and

that it would be the most prudent and judicious course to yield to the inevitable, and gradually withdraw from a position which was untenable. Having meted out to Nachoragan the punishment usually assigned to unsuccessful commanders in Persia, he sent an ambassador to Byzantium in the spring of A.D. 556, and commenced negotiations which he intended to be serious. Diplomacy seems to have been as averse in the days of Chosroes as in our own to an undignified rapidity of proceeding. Hence, though there could be little to debate where both parties were substantially at one, the negotiations begun in May A.D. 556 were not concluded till after the commencement of the following year. A complete suspension of hostilities was then agreed upon, to extend to Lazica no less than to the other dominions of the two monarchs. In Lazica each party was to keep what it possessed, territory, cities, and castles. As this joint occupation was scarcely suitable for a permanent arrangement, it was provided that the two belligerents should, during the continuance of the truce, proceed to settle the terms on which a lasting peace might be established.

An interval of five years elapsed before the happy result, for which both parties had expressed themselves anxious, was accomplished. It is uncertain how Chosroes was occupied during this period; but there are some grounds for believing that he was engaged in the series of Oriental wars whereof we shall have to speak presently. Success appears to have crowned his arms wherever he directed them; but he remained undazzled by his victories, and still retained the spirit of moderation which had led him in A.D. 557 to conclude the general truce. He was even prepared, after five years of consideration, to go further in the line of pacific policy on which he had then entered, and, in order to secure the continuance of his good relations with Rome, was willing to relinquish all claim to the sovereignty of Lazica. Under these circumstances, ambassadors of the highest rank, representing the two powers, met on the frontier between Daras and Nisibis, proclaimed the power and explained the motives of their respective sovereigns, and after a lengthy conference formulated a treaty of peace. The terms, which are given at length by a writer of the succeeding generation, may be briefly expressed as follows: (1) the Persians were to withdraw from Lazica, to give up all claim to it, and to hand over its possession to the Romans; (2) they were in return to receive from Rome an annual sum of 30,000 pieces of gold, the amount due for the first seven years being paid in advance; (3) the Christians in Persia were guaranteed the full and free exercise of their religion, but were forbidden to make converts from the disciples of Zoroaster; (4) commercial intercourse was to be allowed between the two empires, but the merchants were restricted to the use of certain roads and certain emporia; (5) diplomatic intercourse was to be wholly free, and the goods of ambassadors were to be exempt from duty; (6) Daras was to continue a fortified town, but no new fortresses were to be built upon the frontier by either nation, and Daras itself was not to be made the headquarters of the Prefect of the East, or to be held by an unnecessarily large garrison; (7) all disputes arising between the two nations were to be determined by courts of arbitration; (8) the allies of the two nations were to be included in the treaty, and to participate in its benefits and obligations; (9) Persia was to undertake the sole charge of maintaining the Caspian Gates against the Huns and Alans; (10) the peace was made for a period of fifty years. It has been held that by this treaty Justinian consented to become a tributary of the Persian Empire; and undoubtedly it was possible for Oriental vanity to represent the arrangement made in this light. But the million and a half, which Rome undertook to pay in the course of the next fifty years, might well be viewed by the Romans as an outlay for which they received an ample return in the cession to them of the Persian part of

Lazica, and in the termination of their obligation to contribute towards the maintenance of the Caspian Gates. If there was any real danger of those results following from the Persian occupation of Lazica which both nations anticipated, the sum must be considered to have been one of the best investments ever made by a State. Even if we believe the dangers apprehended to have been visionary, yet it cannot be viewed as an exorbitant price to have paid for a considerable tract of fertile country, a number of strong fortresses, and the redemption of an obligation which could not with honor be disowned.

To Chosroes the advantage secured by the treaty was similar to that which Rome had obtained by the peace of A.D. 532. Being no longer under any necessity of employing his forces against the Romans in the north-west, he found himself free to act with greatly increased effect against his enemies in the east and in the south. Already, in the interval between the conclusion of the general truce and of the fifty years' peace, he had, as it seems, invaded the territories of the Ephthalites, and, with the help of the Great Khan of the Turks, inflicted upon this people, so long one of Persia's most formidable enemies, a severe defeat. According to Tabari, he actually slew the Ephthalite monarch, ravaged his territory, and pillaged his treasures. About the same time he had also had a war with the Khazars, had overrun their country, wasted it with fire and sword, and massacred thousands of the inhabitants. He now entertained designs against Arabia and perhaps India, countries on which he could not hope to make an impression without earnest and concentrated effort. It was doubtless with the view of extending his influence into these quarters that the Persian monarch evacuated Lazica, and bound his country to maintain peace with Rome for the next half-century.

The position of affairs in Arabia was at the time abnormal and interesting. For the most part that vast but sterile region has been the home of almost countless tribes, living independently of one another, each under its own sheikh or chief, in wild and unrestrained freedom. Native princes have seldom obtained any widely extended dominion over the scattered population; and foreign powers have still more rarely exercised authority for any considerable period over the freedom-loving descendants of Ishmael. But towards the beginning of the sixth century of our era the Abyssinians of Axum, a Christian people, "raised" far "above the ordinary level of African barbarism" by their religion and by their constant intercourse with Rome, succeeded in attaching to their empire a large portion of the Happy Arabia, and ruled it at first from their African capital, but afterwards by means of a viceroy, whose dependence on the Negus of Abyssinia was little more than nominal. Abraha, an Abyssinian of high rank, being deputed by the Negus to re-establish the authority of Abyssinia over the Yemen when it was shaken by a great revolt, made himself master of the country, assumed the crown, established Abyssinians in all the chief cities, built numerous churches, especially one of great beauty at Sana, and at his death left the kingdom to his eldest son, Yaksoum. An important Christian state was thus established in the Great Peninsula; and it was natural that Justinian should see with satisfaction, and Chosroes with some alarm, the growth of a power in this quarter which was sure to side with Rome and against Persia, if their rivalry should extend into these parts. Justinian had hailed with pleasure the original Abyssinian conquest, and had entered into amicable relations with both the Axumites and their colonists in the Yemen. Chosroes now resolved upon a counter movement. He would employ the quiet secured to him by the peace of A.D. 562 in a great attack upon the Abyssinian power in Arabia. He would drive the audacious Africans from the soil of Asia, and would earn the eternal gratitude of the numerous tribes of the desert. He would extend Persian

influence to the shores of the Arabian Gulf, and so confront the Romans along the whole line of their eastern boundary. He would destroy the _point d'appui_ which Rome had acquired in South-western Asia, and so at once diminish her power and augment the strength and glory of Persia.

The interference of Chosroes in the affairs of a country so distant as Western Arabia involved considerable difficulties; but his expedition was facilitated by an application which he received from a native of the district in question. Saif, the son of Dsu-Yezm, descended from the race of the old Homerite kings whom the Abyssinians had conquered, grew up at the court of Abraha in the belief that that prince, who had married his mother, was not his step-father, but his father. Undeceived by an insult which Masrouq, the true son of Abraha and successor of Yaksoum, offered him, Saif became a refugee at the court of Chosroes, and importuned the Great King to embrace his quarrel and reinstate him on the throne of his fathers. He represented the Homerite population of Yemen as groaning under the yoke of their oppressors and only waiting for an opportunity to rise in revolt and shake it off. A few thousand Persian troops, enough to form the nucleus of an army, would suffice; they might be sent by sea to the port of Aden, near the mouth of the Arabian Gulf, where the Homerites would join them in large numbers; the combined forces might then engage in combat with the Abyssinians, and destroy them or drive them from the land. Chosroes took the advice tendered him, so far at any rate as to make his expedition by sea. His ships were assembled in the Persian Gulf; a certain number of Persian troops were embarked on board them; and the flotilla proceeded, under the conduct of Saif, first to the mouth of the Gulf, and then along the southern coast of Arabia to Aden. Encouraged by their presence, the Plomerites rose against their foreign oppressors; a war followed, of which the particulars have been disfigured by romance; but the result is undoubted--the Abyssinian strangers were driven from the soil of Arabia; the native race recovered its supremacy; and Saif, the descendant of the old Homerite kings, was established, as the vassal or viceroy of Chosroes, on the throne of his ancestors. This arrangement, however, was not lasting. Saif, after a short reign, was murdered by his body-guard; and Chosroes then conferred the government of Yemen upon a Persian officer, who seems to have borne the usual title of Marzpan, and to have been in no way distinguished above other rulers of provinces. Thus the Homerites in the end gained nothing by their revolt but a change of masters. They may, however, have regarded the change as one worth making, since it gave them the mild sway of a tolerant heathen in lieu of the persecuting rule of Christian bigots.

According to some writers, Chosroes also, in his later years, sent an expedition by sea against some portion of Hindustan, and received a cession of territory from an Indian monarch. But the country of the monarch is too remote for belief, and the ceded provinces seem to have belonged to Persia previously. It is therefore, perhaps, most probable that friendly intercourse has been exaggerated into conquest, and the reception of presents from an Indian potentate metamorphosed into the gain of territory. Some authorities do not assign to Chosroes any Indian dominion; and it is at least doubtful whether he made any expedition in this direction.

A war, however, appears certainly to have occupied Chosroes about this period on his north-eastern frontier. The Turks had recently been advancing in strength and drawing nearer to the confines of Persia. They had extended their dominion over the great Ephthalite kingdom, partly by force of arms, partly through the treachery of Katulphus, an Ephthalite chieftain; they had received the submission of the Sogdians, and probably of other tribes of the Transoxianian region, previously held in subjection by the Ephthalites; and they aspired to be

acknowledged as a great power, the second, if not the first, in this part of Asia. It was perhaps rather with the view of picking a quarrel than in the hope of any valuable pacific result, that, about the close of A.D. 567, Diza-bul, the Turkish Khan, sent ambassadors to Chosroes with proposals for the establishment of free commercial intercourse between the Turks and Persians, and even for the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and alliance between the two nations. Chosroes suspected the motive for the overture, but was afraid openly to reject it. He desired to discourage intercourse between his own nation and the Turks, but could devise no better mode of effecting his purpose than by burning the Turkish merchandise offered to him after he had bought it, and by poisoning the ambassadors and giving out that they had fallen victims to the climate. His conduct exasperated the Turkish Khan, and created a deep and bitter hostility between the Turks and Persians. It was at once resolved to send an embassy to Constantinople and offer to the Greek emperor the friendship which Chosroes had scorned. The embassy reached the Byzantine court early in A.D. 568, and was graciously received by Justin, the nephew of Justinian, who had succeeded his uncle on the imperial throne between three and four years previously. A treaty of alliance was made between the two nations; and a Roman embassy, empowered to ratify it, visited the Turkish court in the Altai mountains during the course of the next year (A.D. 569), and drew closer the bonds of friendship between the high contracting powers. But meanwhile Dizabul, confident in his own strength, had determined on an expedition into Persia. The Roman ambassador, Zemarchus, accompanied him on a portion of his march, and witnessed his insulting treatment of a Persian envoy, sent by Chosroes to meet him and deprecate his attack. Beyond this point exact information fails us; but we may suspect that this is the expedition commemorated by Mirk-hond, wherein the Great Khan, having invaded the Persian territory in force, made himself master of Shash, Ferghana, Samarkand, Bokhara, Kesh, and Nesf, but, hearing that Hornisdas, son of Chosroes, was advancing against him at the head of a numerous army, suddenly fled, evacuating all the country that he had occupied, and retiring to the most distant portion of Turkestan. At any rate the expedition cannot have had any great success; for shortly afterwards (A.D. 571) we find Turkish ambassadors once more visiting the Byzantine court, and entreating Justin to renounce the fifty years' peace and unite with them in a grand attack upon the common enemy, which, if assaulted simultaneously on either side, might (they argued) be almost certainly crushed. Justin gave the ambassadors no definite reply, but renewed the alliance with Dizabul, and took seriously into consideration the question whether he should not yield to the representations made to him, and renew the war which Justinian had terminated nine years previously.

There were many circumstances which urged him towards a rupture. The payments to be made under the fifty years' peace had in his eyes the appearance of a tribute rendered by Rome to Persia, which was, he thought, an intolerable disgrace. A subsidy, not very dissimilar, which Justinian had allowed the Saracenic Arabs under Persian rule, he had already discontinued; and hostilities had, in consequence, already commenced between the Persian and the Roman Saracens. The successes of Chosroes in Western Arabia had at once provoked his jealousy, and secured to Rome, in that quarter, an important ally in the great Christian kingdom of Abyssinia. The Turks of Central Asia had sought his friendship and offered to combine their attacks with his, if he would consent to go to war. Moreover, there was once more discontent and even rebellion in Armenia, where the proselytizing zeal of the Persian governors had again driven the natives to take up arms and raise the standard of independence. Above all, the Great King, who had warred with such success for twenty

years against his uncle, was now in advanced age, and seemed to have given signs of feebleness, inasmuch as in his recent expeditions he had individually taken no part, but had entrusted the command of his troops to others. Under these circumstances, Justin, in the year A.D. 572, determined to renounce the peace made ten years earlier with the Persians, and to recommence the old struggle. Accordingly he at once dismissed the Persian envoy, Sebocthes, with contempt, refused wholly to make the stipulated payment, proclaimed his intention of receiving the Armenian insurgents under his protection, and bade Chosroes lay a finger on them at his peril. He then appointed Marcian to the prefecture of the East, and gave him the conduct of the war which was now inevitable.

No sooner did the Persian monarch find his kingdom seriously menaced than, despite his advanced age, he immediately took the field in person. Giving the command of a flying column of 6000 men to Adarman, a skilful general, he marched himself against the Romans, who under Marcian had defeated a Persian force, and were besieging Nisibis, forced them to raise the siege, and, pressing forward as they retired, compelled them to seek shelter within the walls of Daras, which he proceeded to invest with his main army. Meanwhile Adarman, at the head of the troops entrusted to him, crossed the Euphrates near Circesium, and, having entered Syria, carried fire and sword far and wide over that fertile province. Repulsed from Antioch, where, however, he burnt the suburbs of the town, he invaded Coelesyria, took and destroyed Apamea, and then, recrossing the great river, rejoined Chosroes before Daras. The renowned fortress made a brave defence. For about five months it resisted, without obtaining any relief, the entire force of Chosroes, who is said to have besieged it with 40,000 horse and 100,000 foot. At last, on the approach of winter, it could no longer hold out; enclosed within lines of circumvallation, and deprived of water by the diversion of its streams into new channels, it found itself reduced to extremity, and forced to submit towards the close of A.D. 573. Thus the great Roman fortress in these parts was lost in the first year of the renewed war; and Justin, alarmed at his own temerity, and recognizing his weakness, felt it necessary to retire from the conduct of affairs, and deliver the reins of empire to stronger hands. He chose as his coadjutor and successor the Count Tiberius, a Thracian by birth, who had long stood high in his confidence; and this prince, in conjunction with the Empress Sophia, now took the direction of the war.

The first need was to obtain a breathing-space. The Persian king having given an opening for negotiations, advantage was taken of it by the joint rulers to send an envoy, furnished with an autograph letter from the empress, and well provided with the best persuasives of peace, who was to suggest an armistice for a year, during which a satisfactory arrangement of the whole quarrel might be agreed upon. Tiberius thought that within this space he might collect an army sufficiently powerful to re-establish the superiority of the Roman arms in the east; Chosroes believed himself strong enough to defeat any force that Rome could now bring into the field. A truce for a year was therefore concluded, at the cost to Rome of 45,000 aurei; and immense efforts were at once made by Tiberius to levy troops from his more distant, provinces, or hire them from the lands beyond his borders. An army of 150,000 men was, it is said, collected from the banks of the Danube and the Rhine, from Scythia, Pannonia, Moesia, Illyricum, and Isauria; a general of repute, Justinian, the son of Germanus, was selected to command them; and the whole force was concentrated upon the eastern frontier but, after all these preparations, the Caesar's heart failed him, and, instead of offering battle to the enemy, Tiberius sent a second embassy to the Persian head-quarters, early in A.D. 575, and besought an extension of the truce. The Romans desired a short term of peace only,

but wished for a general suspension of hostilities between the nations; the Persians advocated a longer interval, but insisted that the truce should not extend to Armenia. The dispute continued till the armistice for a year had run out; and the Persians had resumed hostilities and threatened Constantina before the Romans would give way. At length it was agreed that there should be peace for three years, but that Armenia should be exempt from its operation. Rome was to pay to Persia, during the continuance of the truce, the sum of 30,000 aurei annually.

No sooner was the peace concluded than Chosroes put himself at the head of his army, and, entering Armenia Proper, proceeded to crush the revolt, and to re-establish the Persian authority throughout the entire region. No resistance was offered to him; and he was able, before the close of the year, to carry his arms into the Roman territory of Armenia Minor, and even to threaten Cappadocia. Here Justinian opposed his progress; and in a partial engagement, Kurs (or Cursus), a leader of Scythians in the Roman service, obtained an advantage over the Persian rear-guard, captured the camp and the baggage, but did not succeed in doing any serious damage. Chosroes soon afterwards revenged himself by surprising and destroying a Roman camp during the night; he then took and burnt the city of Melitene (Malatiyeh); after which, as winter was approaching, he retired across the Euphrates, and returned into his own country. Hereupon Justinian seems to have invaded Persian Armenia, and to have enriched his troops with its plunder; according to some writers, he even penetrated as far as the Caspian Sea, and embarked upon its waters; he continued on Persian soil during the whole of the winter, and it was not till the spring came that he re-entered Roman territory (A.D. 576).

The campaign of A.D. 576 is somewhat obscure. The Romans seem to have gained certain advantages in Northern Armenia and Iberia, while Chosroes on his part carried the war once more into Armenia Minor, and laid siege to Theodosiopolis, which, however, he was unable to take. Negotiations were upon this resumed, and had progressed favorably to a certain, point, when news arrived of a great disaster to the Roman arms in Armenia, which changed the face of affairs and caused the Persian negotiators to break up the conference. Tam-chosro, a Persian general, had completely defeated the Roman army under Justinian. Armenia had returned to its allegiance. There seemed every reason to believe that more was to be gained by arms than by diplomacy, and that, when the three years peace had run out, the Great King might renew the general war with a prospect of obtaining important successes.

There are no military events which can be referred to the year A.D. 577. The Romans and Persians amused each other with alternate embassies during its course, and with negotiations that were not intended to have any result. The two monarchs made vast preparations; and with the spring of A.D. 578 hostilities recommenced. Chosroes is accused of having anticipated the expiration of the truce by a period of forty days; but it is more probable that he and the Romans estimated the date of its expiration differently. However this was, it is certain that his generals, Mebodes and Sapoes, took the field in early spring with 20,000 horse, and entering the Roman Armenia laid waste the country, at the same time threatening Constantina and Theodosiopolis. Simultaneously Tamchosro, quitting Persarmenia, marched westward and plundered the country about Amida (Diarbekr). The Roman commander Maurice, who had succeeded Justinian, possessed considerable military ability. On this occasion, instead of following the ordinary plan of simply standing on the defensive and endeavoring to repulse the invaders, he took the bolder course of making a counter movement. Entering Persarmenia, which he found denuded of troops, he carried all before him, destroying the forts, and plundering the

country. Though the summer heats brought on him an attack of fever, he continued without pause his destructive march; invaded and occupied Arzanene, with its stronghold, Aphumon, carried off the population to the number of 10,090, and, pressing forwards from Arzanene into Eastern Mesopotamia, took Singara, and carried fire and sword over the entire region as far as the Tigris. He even ventured to throw a body of skirmishers across the river into Cordyene (Kurdistan); and these ravagers, who were commanded by Kurs, the Scythian, spread devastation over a district where no Roman soldier had set foot since its cession by Jovian. Agathias tells us that Chosroes was at the time enjoying his summer villeggiatura in the Kurdish hills, and saw from his residence the smoke of the hamlets which the Roman troops had fired. He hastily fled from the danger, and shut himself up within the walls of Ctesiphon, where he was soon afterwards seized with the illness which brought his life to a close.

Meanwhile Kurs, unconscious probably of the prize that had been so near his grasp, recrossed the Tigris with his booty and rejoined Maurice, who on the approach of winter withdrew into Roman territory, evacuating all his conquests excepting Arzanene. The dull time of winter was, as usual, spent in negotiations; and it was thought that a peace might have been concluded had Chosroes lived. Tiberius was anxious to recover Daras, and was willing to withdraw the Roman forces wholly from Persarmenia and Iberia, and to surrender Arzanene and Aphumon, if Daras were restored to him. He would probably have been content even to pay in addition a sum of money. Chosroes might perhaps have accepted these terms; but while the envoys empowered to propose them were on their way to his court, early in the year A.D. 579, the aged monarch died in his palace at Ctesiphon after a reign of forty-eight years.

21. Administration of Persia of Chosroes I

A general consensus of the Oriental writers marks the reign of the first Chosroes as a period not only of great military activity, but also of improved domestic administration. Chosroes found the empire in a disordered and ill-regulated condition, taxation arranged on a bad system, the people oppressed by unjust and tyrannical governors, the military service a prey to the most scandalous abuses, religious fanaticism rampant, class at variance with class, extortion and wrong winked at, crime unpunished, agriculture languishing, and the masses throughout almost the whole of the country sullen and discontented. It was his resolve from the first to carry out a series of reforms--to secure the administration of even-handed justice, to put the finances on a better footing, to encourage agriculture, to relieve the poor and the distressed, to root out the abuses that destroyed the efficiency of the army, and to excise the gangrene of fanaticism which was eating into the heart of the nation. How he effected the last named object by his wholesale destruction of the followers of Mazdak has been already related; but it appeared unadvisable to interrupt, the military history of the reign by combining with it any account of the numerous other reforms which he accomplished. It remains therefore to consider them in this place, since they are certainly not the least remarkable among the many achievements of this great monarch.

Persia, until the time of Anushirwan, had been divided into a multitude of provinces, the satraps or governors of which held their office directly under the crown. It was difficult for the monarch to exercise a sufficient superintendence over so large a number of rulers, many of them remote from the court, and all united by a common interest. Chosroes conceived the plan of forming four great governments, and entrusting them to four persons in whom he had confidence, whose duty it should be to

watch the conduct of the provincial satraps to control them, direct them, or report their misconduct to the crown. The four great governments were those of the east, the north, the south, and the west. The east comprised Khorassan, Seistan, and Kirman; the north, Armenia, Azer-bijan, Ghilan, Koum, and Isfahan; the south, Fars and Ahwaz; the west, Irak, or Babylonia, Assyria, and Mesopotamia.

It was not the intention of the monarch, however, to put a blind trust in his instruments. He made personal progresses through his empire from, time to time, visiting each province in turn and inquiring into the condition of the inhabitants. He employed continually an army of inspectors and spies, who reported to him from all quarters the sufferings or complaints of the oppressed, and the neglects or misdoings of those in authority. On the occurrence of any specially suspicious circumstance, he appointed extraordinary commissions of inquiry, which, armed with all the power of the crown, proceeded to the suspected quarter, took evidence, and made a careful report of whatever wrongs or malpractices they discovered.

When guilt was brought home to incriminated persons or parties, the punishment with which they were visited was swift and signal. We have seen how harsh were the sentences passed by Chosroes upon those whose offences attacked his own person or dignity. An equal severity appears in his judgments, where there was no question of his own wrongs, but only of the interests of his subjects. On one occasion he is said to have executed no fewer than eighty collectors of taxes on the report of a commission charging them with extortion. Among the principal reforms which Chosroes is said to have introduced was his fresh arrangement of the taxation. Hitherto all lands had paid to the State a certain proportion of their produce, a proportion which varied, according to the estimated richness of the soil, from a tenth to one-half. The effect was to discourage all improved cultivation, since it was quite possible that the whole profit of any increased outlay might be absorbed by the State, and also to cramp and check the liberty of the cultivators in various ways, since the produce could not be touched until the revenue official made his appearance and carried off the share of the crop which he had a right to take. Chosroes resolved to substitute a land-tax for the proportionate payments in kind, and thus at once to set the cultivator at liberty with respect to harvesting his crops and to allow him the entire advantage of any augumented production which might be secured by better methods of farming his land. His tax consisted in part of a money payment, in part of a payment in kind; but both payments were fixed and invariable, each measure of ground being rated in the king's books at one dirhem and one measure of the produce. Uncultivated land, and land lying fallow at the time, were exempt; and thus the scheme involved, not one survey alone, but a recurring (annual) survey, and an annual registration of all cultivators, with the quantity of land under cultivation held by each, and the nature of the crop or crops to be grown by them. The system was one of much complication, and may have pressed somewhat hardly upon the poorer and less productive soils; but it was an immense improvement upon the previously existing practice, which had all the disadvantages of the modern tithe system, aggravated by the high rates exacted and by the certainty that, in any disputed case, the subject would have had a poor chance of establishing his right against the crown. It is not surprising that the caliphs, when they conquered Persia, maintained unaltered the land system of Chosroes which they found established, regarding it as, if not perfect, at any rate not readily admitting of much improvement.

Besides the tax upon arable lands, of which we have hitherto spoken, Chosroes introduced into into Persia various other

imposts. The fruit trees were everywhere counted, and a small payment required for each. The personality of the citizens was valued, and a graduated property-tax established, which, however, in the case of the most opulent, did not exceed the moderate sum of forty-eight dirhems (about twenty-seven shillings). A poll-tax was required of Jews and Christians, whereof we do not know the amount. From all these burdens liberal exemptions were made on account of age and sex; no female paid anything; and males above fifty years of age or under twenty were also free of charge. Due notice was given to each individual of the sum for which he was liable, by the publication in each province, town, and village, of a tax table, in which each citizen or alien could see against his name the amount about to be claimed of him, with the ground upon which it was regarded as due. Payment had to made by instalments, three times each year, at the end of every four months.

In order to prevent the unfair extortion, which in the ancient world was always, with reason or without, charged upon collectors of revenue, Chosroes, by the advice of the Grand Mobed, authorized the Magian priests everywhere to exercise a supervision over the receivers of taxes, and to hinder them from exacting more than their due. The priests were only too happy to discharge this popular function; and extortion must have become rare under a system which comprised so efficient a safeguard.

Another change ascribed to Chosroes is a reform of the administration of the army. Under the system previously existing, Chosroes found that the resources of the state were lavishly wasted, and the result was a military force inefficient and badly accoutred. No security was taken that the soldiers possessed their proper equipments or could discharge the duties appropriate to their several grades. Persons came before the paymaster, claiming the wages of a cavalry soldier, who possessed no horse, and had never learned to ride. Some, who called themselves soldiers, had no knowledge of the use of any weapon at all; others claimed for higher grades of the service than those whereto they really belonged; those who drew the pay of cuirassiers were destitute of a coat of mail; those who professed themselves archers were utterly incompetent to draw the bow. The established rates of pay varied between a hundred dirhems a year and four thousand, and persons entitled to the lowest rate often received an amount not much short of the highest. The evil was not only that the treasury was robbed by unfair claims and unfounded pretences, but that artifice and false seeming were encouraged, while at the same time the army was brought into such a condition that no dependence could be placed upon it. If the number who actually served corresponded to that upon the rolls, which is uncertain, at any rate all the superior arms of the service fell below their nominal strength, and the lower grades were crowded with men who were only soldiers in name.

As a remedy against these evils, Chosroes appointed a single paymaster-general, and insisted on his carefully inspecting and reviewing each body of troops before he allowed it to draw its pay. Each man was to appear before him fully equipped and to show his proficiency with his weapon or weapons; horse soldiers were to bring their horses, and to exhibit their mastery over the animals by putting them through their paces, mounting and dismounting, and performing the other usual exercises. If any clumsiness were noted, or any deficiency in the equipment, the pay was to be withheld until the defect observed had been made good. Special care was to be taken that no one drew the pay of a class superior to that whereto he really belonged--of an archer, for instance, when he was in truth a common soldier, or of a trooper when he served not in the horse, but in the foot.

A curious anecdote is related in connection with these military reforms. When Babek, the new paymaster, was about to hold his first review, he issued an order that all persons belonging to the army then present in the capital should appear before him on a certain day. The troops came; but Babek dismissed them on the ground that a certain person whose presence was indispensable had not made his appearance. Another day was appointed, with the same result, except that Babek on this occasion plainly intimated that it was the king whom he expected to attend. Upon this Chosroes, when a third summons was issued, took care to be present, and came fully equipped, as he thought, for battle. But the critical eye of the reviewing officer detected an omission, which he refused to overlook--the king had neglected to bring with him two extra bow-strings. Chosroes was required to go back to his palace and remedy the defect, after which he was allowed to pass muster, and then summoned to receive his pay. Babek affected to consider seriously what the pay of the commander-in-chief ought to be, and decided that it ought to exceed that of any other person in the army. He then, in the sight of all, presented the king with four thousand and one dirhems, which Chosroes received and carried home. Thus two important principles were thought to be established--that no defect of equipment whatsoever should be overlooked in any officer, however high his rank, and that none should draw from the treasury a larger amount of pay than 4,000 dirhems (L112. of our money).

The encouragement of agriculture was an essential element in the system of Zoroaster; and Chosroes, in devoting his attention to it, was at once performing a religious duty and increasing the resources of the state. It was his earnest desire to bring into cultivation all the soil which was capable of it; and with this object he not only issued edicts commanding the reclamation of waste lands, but advanced from the treasury the price of the necessary seed-corn, implements, and beasts to all poor persons willing to carry out his orders. Other poor persons, especially the infirm and those disabled by bodily defect, were relieved from his privy purse; mendicancy was forbidden, and idleness made an offence. The lands forfeited by the followers of Mazdak were distributed to necessitous cultivators. The water system was carefully attended to; river and torrent courses were cleared of obstructions and straightened; the superfluous water of the rainy season was stored, and meted out with a wise economy to those who tilled the soil, in the spring and summer.

The prosperity of a country depends in part upon the laborious industry of the inhabitants, in part upon their numbers. Chosroes regarded Persia as insufficiently peopled, and made efforts to increase the population by encouraging and indeed compelling marriage. All marriageable females were required to provide themselves with husbands; if they neglected this duty, the government interfered, and united them to unmarried men of their own class. The pill was gilt to these latter by the advance of a sufficient dowry from the public treasury, and by the prospect that, if children resulted from the union, their education and establishment in life would be undertaken by the state. Another method of increasing the population, adopted by Chosroes to a certain extent, was the settlement within his own territories of the captives whom he carried off from foreign countries in the course of his military expeditions. The most notorious instance of this policy was the Greek settlement, known as Rumia (Rome), established by Chosroes after his capture of Antioch (A.D. 540), in the near vicinity of Ctesiphon.

Oriental monarchs, in many respects civilized and enlightened, have often shown a narrow and unworthy jealousy of foreigners. Chosroes had a mind which soared above this petty prejudice. He encouraged the visits of all foreigners, excepting only the barbarous Turks, readily received them at his court, and

carefully provided for their safety. Not only were the roads and bridges kept in the most perfect order throughout his territories, so as to facilitate locomotion, but on the frontiers and along the chief lines of route guard-houses were built and garrisons maintained for the express purpose of securing the safety of travellers. The result was that the court of Chosroes was visited by numbers of Europeans, who were hospitably treated, and invited, or even pressed, to prolong their visits.

To the proofs of wisdom and enlightenment here enumerated Chosroes added another, which is more surprising than any of them. He studied philosophy, and was a patron of science and learning. Very early in his reign he gave a refuge at his court to a body of seven Greek sages whom a persecuting edict, issued by Justinian, had induced to quit their country and take up their abode on Persian soil. Among the refugees was the erudite Damascius, whose work De Principiis is well known, and has recently been found to exhibit an intimate acquaintance with some of the most obscure of the Oriental religions. Another of the exiles was the eclectic philosopher Simplicius, "the most acute and judicious of the interpreters of Aristotle." Chosroes gave the band of philosophers a hospitable reception, entertained them at his table, and was unwilling that they should leave his court. They found him acquainted with the writings of Aristotle and Plato, whose works he had caused to be translated into the Persian tongue. If he was not able to enter very deeply into the dialectical and metaphysical subtleties which characterize alike the Platonic Dialogues and the Aristotelian treatises, at any rate he was ready to discuss with them such questions as the origin of the world, its destructibility or indestructibility, and the derivation of all things from one First Cause or from more. Later in his reign, another Greek, a sophist named Uranius, acquired his especial favor, became his instructor in the learning of his country, and was presented by him with a large sum of money. Further, Chosroes maintained at his court, for the space of a year, the Greek physician, Tribunus, and offered him any reward that he pleased at his departure. He also instituted at Gondi-Sapor, in the vicinity of Susa, a sort of medical school, which became by degrees a university, wherein philosophy, rhetoric, and poetry were also studied. Nor was it Greek learning alone which attracted his notice and his patronage. Under his fostering care the history and jurisprudence of his native Persia were made special objects of study; the laws and maxims of the first Artaxerxes, the founder of the monarchy, were called forth from the obscurity which had rested on them for ages, were republished and declared to be authoritative; while at the same time the annals of the monarchy were collected and arranged, and a "Shah-nameh," or "Book of the Kings," composed, which it is probable formed the basis of the great work of Firdausi. Even the distant land of Hindustan was explored in the search after varied knowledge, and contributed to the learning and civilization of the time the fables of Bidpai and the game of chess.

Though a fierce persecutor of the deluded followers of Mazdak, Chosroes admitted and practised, to some extent, the principles of toleration. On becoming king, he laid it down as a rule of his government that the actions of men alone, and not their thoughts, were subject to his authority. He was therefore bound not to persecute opinion; and we may suppose that in his proceedings against the Mazdakites he intended to punish their crimes rather than their tenets. Towards the Christians, who abounded in his empire, he certainly showed himself, upon the whole, mild and moderate. He married a Christian wife, and allowed her to retain her religion. When one of his sons became a Christian, the only punishment which he inflicted on him was to confine him to the palace. He augumented the number of the Christians in his dominions by the colonies which he brought in from abroad. He allowed to his

Christian subjects the free exercise of their religion, permitted them to build churches, elect bishops, and conduct services at their pleasure, and even suffered them to bury their dead, though such pollution of the earth was accounted sacrilegious by the Zoroastrians. No unworthy compliances with the established cult were required of them. Proselytism, however, was not allowed; and all Christian sects were perhaps not viewed with equal favor. Chosroes, at any rate, is accused of persecuting the Catholics and the Monophysites, and compelling them to join the Nestorians, who formed the predominant sect in his dominions. Conformity, however, in things outward, is compatible with a wide diversity of opinion; and Chosroes, while he disliked differences of practice, seems certainly to have encouraged, at least in his earlier years, a freedom of discussion in religious matters which must have tended to shake the hereditary faith of his subjects. He also gave on one occasion a very remarkable indication of liberal and tolerant views. When he made his first peace with Rome, the article on which he insisted the most was one whereby the free profession of their known opinions and tenets in their own country was secured to the seven Grecian sages who had found at his court, in their hour of need, a refuge from persecution.

In his domestic relations Chosroes was unfortunate. With his chief wife, indeed, the daughter of the great Khan of the Turks, he seems to have lived always on excellent terms; and it was his love for her which induced him to select the son whom she had borne him for his successor on the throne. But the wife who stood next in his favor displeased him by her persistent refusal to renounce the religion of Christ and adopt that of her husband in its stead; and the quarrel between them must have been aggravated by the conduct of their child, Nushizad, who, when he came to years of discretion, deliberately preferred the faith of his mother to that of his father and of the nation. With this choice Chosroes was naturally offended; but he restrained his anger within moderate limits, and was content to punish the young prince by forbidding him to quit the precincts of the palace. Unhappy results followed. Nushizad in his confinement heard a rumor that his father, who had started for the Syrian war, was struck with sickness, was not likely to recover, was dead. It seemed to him a golden opportunity, of which he would be foolish not to make the most. He accordingly quitted his prison, spread the report of his father's death, seized the state treasure, and scattered it with a liberal hand among the troops left in the capital, summoned the Christians throughout the empire to his aid, assumed the title and state of king, was acknowledged by the whole of the southern province, and thought himself strong enough to take the offensive and attempt the subjugation of Irak. Here, however, he was met by Phabrizus (Firuz?), one of his father's generals, who completely defeated his army in a pitched battle. According to one account, Nushizad fell in the thick of the fight, mortally wounded by a chance arrow. According to another, he was made prisoner, and carried to Chosroes, who, instead of punishing him with death, destroyed his hopes of reigning by inflicting on him a cruel disfigurement.

The coins of Chosroes are very numerous, and offer one or two novel and curious types. The most remarkable have on the obverse the head of the king, presenting the full face, and surmounted by a mural crown with a low cap. The beard is close, and the hair arranged in masses on either side. There are two stars above the crown, and two crescents, one over either shoulder, with a star and crescent on the dress in front of each shoulder. The kings wears a necklace, from which hang three pendants. On the reverse these coins have a full-length figure of the king, standing to the front, with his two hands resting on the hilt of his straight sword, and its point placed between his feet. The crown worn resembles that on the obverse; and there is a star and crescent on either side of the head. The legend on the obverse is _Khusludi afzum_,

"May Chosroes increase;" the reverse has, on the left _Khusludi_, with the regnal year; on the right, a longer legend which has not yet been satisfactorily interpreted.

The more ordinary type on the coins of Chosroes I. is one differing but little from those of his father, Kobad, and his son, Hormazd IV. The obverse has the king's head in profile, and the reverse the usual fire-altar and supporters. The distinguishing mark of these coins is, in addition to the legend, that they have three simple crescents in the margin of the obverse, instead of three crescents with stars.

A relic of Chosroes has come down to us, which is of great beauty. This is a cup composed of a number of small disks of colored glass, united by a gold setting, and having at the bottom a crystal, engraved with a figure of the monarch. As late as 1638 it was believed that the disks of glass were jacynths, garnets, and emeralds, while the stone which forms the base was thought to be a white sapphire. The original owner of so rare a drinking-vessel could (it was supposed) only be Solomon; and the figure at the bottom was accordingly supposed to represent the Jewish king. Archaeologists are now agreed that the engraving on the gem, which exactly resembles the figure upon the peculiar coins above described, represents Chosroes Anushirwan, and is of his age. There is no sufficient reason to doubt but that the cup itself is one out of which he was accustomed to drink.

It is the great glory of Anushirwan that the title which his subjects gave him was "the Just." According to European, and especially to modern ideas, this praise would seem to have undeserved; and thus the great historian of the Byzantine period has not scrupled to declare that in his external policy Chosroes was actuated by mere ambition, and that "in his domestic administration he deserved the appellation of a tyrant." Undoubtedly the punishments which he inflicted were for the most part severe; but they were not capricious, nor uniform, nor without reference to the character of the offence. Plotting against his crown or his person, when the conspirators were of full age, treasonable correspondence with the enemy, violation of the sanctity of the harem, and the proselytism which was strictly forbidden by the laws, he punished with death. But, when the rebel was a mere youth, he was content to inflict a disfigurement; whence the offence was less, he could imprison, or confine to a particular spot, or simply banish the culprit from his presence. Instances on record of his clemency to offenders, and others which show that, when his own interests were at stake, he steadily refused to make use of his unlimited power for the oppression of individuals. It is unlikely that Anushirwan was distinguished as "the Just" without a reason; and we may safely conclude from his acknowledged title that his subjects found his rule more fair and equitable than that of any previous monarch.

That the administration of Chosroes was wise, and that Persia prospered under his government, is generally admitted. His vigilance, his activity, his care for the poor, his efforts to prevent or check oppression, are notorious, and cannot be gainsaid. Nor can it be doubted that he was brave, hardy, temperate, prudent, and liberal. Whether he possessed the softer virtues, compassion, kindliness, a tender and loving heart, is perhaps open to question. He seems, however, to have been a good husband and a good father, not easily offended, and not over-severe whence offence was given him. His early severities against his brothers and their followers may be regarded as caused by the advice of others, and perhaps as justified by state policy. In his later life, when he was his own master, he was content to chastise rebellion more mildly.

Intellectually, there is no reason to believe that Chosroes rose very high above the ordinary Oriental level. The Persians, and even many Greeks, in his own day, exalted

him above measure, as capable of apprehending the most subtle arguments and the deepest problems of philosophy; but the estimate of Agathias is probably more just, and this reduces him to a standard about which there is nothing surprising. It is to his credit that although engaged in almost perpetual wars, and burdened moreover with the administration of a mighty empire, he had a mind large enough to entertain the consideration also of intellectual problems, and to enjoy and take part in their discussion; but it could scarcely be expected that, with his numerous other employments, he should really sound to their utmost depths the profundities of Greek thought, or understand the speculative difficulties which separated the various schools one from another. No doubt his knowledge was superficial, and there may have been ostentation in the parade which he made of it; but we must not deny him the praise of a quick, active intellect, and a width of view rarely found in an Oriental.

It was not, however, in the field of speculative thought, but in that of practical effort, that Chosroes chiefly distinguished himself and gained his choicest laurels. The excellence of his domestic administration has been already noticed. But, great as he was in peace, he was greater in war. Engaged for nearly fifty years in almost uninterrupted contests, he triumphed in every quarter, and scarcely experienced a reverse. Victorious over the Romans, the Abyssinians, the Ephthalites, and the Turks, he extended the limits of his empire on all sides, pacified the discontented Armenia, crushed internal revolt, frustrated the most threatening combinations, and established Persia in a position which she had scarcely occupied since the days of Darius Hystaspis. Personally engaged in above a score of fights, by the admission of his enemies he was never defeated but once; and there are circumstances which make it probable that this single check was of slight importance. The one real failure that can be laid to his charge was in another quarter, and involved no military, but only a political blunder. In recoiling from the difficulties of the Lazic war, Chosroes had not to deplore any disgrace to his arms, but simply to acknowledge that he had misunderstood the temper of the Lazic people. In depreciation of his military talents it may be said that he was never opposed to any great general. With Belisarius it would certainly seem that he never actually crossed swords; but Justinian and Maurice (afterwards emperor), to whom he was opposed in his later years, were no contemptible antagonists. It may further be remarked that the collapse of Persia in her struggle with Rome as soon as Chosroes was in his grave is a tolerably decisive indication that she owed her long career of victory under his guidance to his possession of uncommon military ability.