the *coup d’œil* was splendid, and that the spectacle ap­proached nearer than any thing he had seen to the fancies formed in childhood of eastern grandeur. The two princi­pal Ameers were seated amid a group of elegantly attired figures, at the end of a lofty hall, spread with Persian car­petting, on their musnud, a slightly elevated cushion of French white satin, beautifully worked with flowers of silk and gold, the corners of which were raised by four massive and highly chased golden ornaments, resembling pine­apples, and, together with a long velvet pillow behind, covered with rich embroidery, presented a very grand ap­pearance. There was no tinsel or gaudy display of scarlet ; none of the incongruities seen at the Hindoo courts, of gor­geousness and dirt ; but a simple and becoming elegance, far surpassing any thing he had seen in India. The Ameers and their attendants were habited nearly alike, in tunics of fine white muslin, neatly prepared and plaited, so as to re­semble dimity, with sashes of silk and gold, wide Turkish trousers of silk tied at the ankle, chiefly dark blue, and Sindian caps made of gold brocade or embroidered velvet. “ A pair of Cashmere shawls,” adds Dr. Burnes, “ of great beauty, generally white, thrown negligently over the arm, and a Persian dagger at the girdle, richly ornamented with diamonds or precious stones, completed the dress and de­corations of each of the princes. All the officers in attend­ance, judging from their dress and manners, seemed to be of inferior rank. There was no crowding for places ; the rabble had been shut entirely out of doors ; and there was a degree of stillness and solemnity throughout the whole, and an order and decorum in the demeanour of each indi­vidual, which impressed one with a feeling of awe and re­spect. I could not have anticipated the brilliant collec­tion of jewels and armour that is in possession of these princes, and is of all things calculated most to surprise a European stranger.” Colonel Pöttinger mentions with ad­miration the profusion of pearls which they displayed ; the size of one which the prince carried in his hand, he declares was such as before be should have regarded as perfectly in­credible ; and a perfect emerald, suspended from the hilt of a dagger which one of the younger princes wore in his sash, was considerably larger than a pigeon’s egg. They had still this emerald in their possession when Dr. Burnes visited the court ; and the immense treasure which they have accumulated from the spoil of the country which they govern, consists in rubies, diamonds, pearls, and emeralds, with which their daggers, swords, and matchlocks are adorn­ed, or they are worn as rings and clasps, on different parts of their dresses. Many of these precious stones were pur­chased at reduced price, from the unfortunate princes of the Cabul monarchy and the nobility, when they were re­duced to ruin by the revolutions which took place in that kingdom ; and merchants are encouraged to visit Sinde from all parts, in consequence of the avidity of the princes to buy up the precious articles in which they deal. One or two Persian goldsmiths are employed at court, who con­tinue to display to the best advantage the jewellery of their masters ; and the art of inlaying letters of gold on steel has been brought to the greatest perfection by these artizans. The Ameers of Sinde are also remarkably curious in the qualities of swords and gun-barrels ; and they possess a more valuable collection of these articles than is to be met with in any other part of the world. The value of a sword is estimated by the age and fineness of the steel, or by the temper and watering. One which was shewn by Kurm Ali to Dr. Burnes, dated 1122, (a.d. 1708,) was valued at 2000 rupees, or about L.125. They have in their armoury swords that have been worn by almost every prince renown­ed in Asiatic story ; by Shah Abbas the Great, Nadir Shah, Ahmed Shah Doranee, besides other equally illustrious per­sonages. Their blades are generally embellished with in­scriptions in gold, of verses from the Koran, or short prayers

for aid and protection. They manage their swords with great skill ; and though they are not heavier than common English sabres, Dr. Burnes mentions that he has seen one of them cut a large sheep, with one stroke, in two pieces, a feat that depends on a certain mode of striking that re­quires great practice and dexterity.

The Ameers are passionately fond of hunting; and for this purpose large tracts of fertile land are enclosed to prevent the egress of the quadrupeds, and are converted into jungle; and once or twice a-month they visit their different game preserves to enjoy the pleasures of the chace, though the manner of killing the game in this country does not bear the appellation. Their mode of hunting does not at all par­take of the animation which belongs to that amusement in Europe. Their plan is to close up all the wells, except the one in front of their tents, to which, when the animals resort, be­ing compelled by dire necessity, they are then shot by the Ameers, amid the acclamations of their followers. They never hunt on horseback ; but sometimes, though rarely, go a deer shooting on camels, and none, except themselves, are permitted to fire at any game. There is rarely a sporting ex­cursion which does not cost the lives of two or three of their subjects, a matter of extremely little consequence in this ty­rannical country, either from their false aiming, or from the fury of the boars driven desperate. The mode in which those hunting excursions are conducted, marks the jealous policy of the tyrannical government. They are attended by large re­tinues; and they never previously announce in which direc­tion they mean to travel ; nor will any of the princes leave the other behind. They are afraid of leaving them this short interval for intrigue, and, perhaps, rebellion ; and it was by being left for two or three hours behind, that one of the princes succeeded in his late rebellion. Though related, they place no confidence in each other. They sleep in apartments peculiarly contrived for safety, with loaded arms laid beside their uneasy pillows ; though these pre­cautions are now somewhat relaxed, in consequence of the long era of nearly forty years’ tranquillity which the coun­try has enjoyed under the existing regime. There is no­thing like the spirit of independence among the courtiers or nobility of Sinde. They only retain their places by the most implicit obedience and the most fawning adulation to their superiors ; and their habitual propensity to flatter a European who is in favour at court, or even each other, is ludicrous ; scarcely two persons meet without indulging in the most fulsome strain of oriental flattery ; social life is burdened with this ceremonious formality, which is the mark of inferior civilization, and is common in Persia, Cabul, and generally among the semi-barbarous tribes of Asia.

The whole family of the Ameers are extremely strict, and mere bigots in their intolerant religion. With one or two exceptions, they have become Sheahs, or followers of Ali ; who hate the sect of the Soonees even more bitterly than Brahmins or Christians. They are remarkable for the intolerance with which they persecute the Hindus, form­ing a considerable proportion of their subjects, who are subjected to the most exasperating indignities, and often to the greatest cruelties ; they are forced to adopt the Maho­metan dress, and to allow their beards to grow. It is only lately that they have been allowed to ride on horseback, and it is only the few who are in the immediate service of govern­ment that are allowed the privilege and honour, as it is esteemed, of a saddle. Merchants of wealth and respecta­bility may be seen mounted on asses and mules, consider ed unclean animals, such as none but the vilest outcasts in other Asiatic countries can touch with impunity ; and they are obliged to descend and stand aside when any Mussel­man passes by. They are denied the free exercise of their religion ; the tom-tom can only be beat when special per­mission is granted ; and though images are placed in most of the temples at Hydrabad, the sound of music never