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### **The History Of Hindostan; From The Earliest Account Of Time, To The Death Of Akbar; Translated From The Persian Of Mahummud Casim Ferishta Of Delhi**

Together With A Dissertation Concerning the Religion and Philosophy of the Brahmins ; With An Appendix, Containing the History of the Mogul Empire, from its Decline in the Reign of Mahummud Shaw, to the present Times ; In Two Volumes

**Dow, Alexander**

**London, 1772**

Chap. VII. Observation - Education of Eastern princes - Genius of Aurungzebe - his attention to justice - Contempt of pomp - Austerity - Clemency - Knowledge - Public buildings - Encouragement to ...

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## A U R U N G Z E B E.

## C H A P. VII.

*Observations—Education of Eastern princes—Genius of Aurungzébe—His attention to justice—Contempt of pomp—Austerity—Clemency—Knowledge—Public buildings—Encouragement to letters—Charity—Skill in war—Learning—Manly exercises—Contenance—Accessibleness—Amusements—Ceremonies of reception—Creation of nobles—Business of the morning—noon—and evening—Observations.*

**T**HOUGH History loses half her dignity in descending to unimportant particulars, when she brings information, she cannot fail, even in her most negligent dress, to please. The singular good fortune and abilities of Aurungzébe stamp a kind of consequence on every circumstance, which contributed to raise him to a throne, which his merit deserved to possess without a crime. The line of his public conduct, in rising to the summit of ambition, has already been followed with some precision; but his private life, which prepared him for the greatness at which he had now arrived, remains still in the shade. To bring forward the objects which have hitherto lain distant and dim behind, will heighten the features of the picture, and perhaps recommend it to those who wish to see the glare of great transactions tempered with anecdote.





Unfavour-  
able educa-  
tion

The education of the natives of Asia is confined; that of young men of distinction always private. They are shut up in the haram from infancy till their seventh or eighth year; or, if they are permitted to come abroad, it is only under the care of eunuchs, a race of men more effeminate than the women whom they guard. Children, therefore, imbibe in early youth little female cunning and dissimulation, with a tincture of all those inferior passions and prejudices which are improper for public life. The indolence natural to the climate, is encouraged by example. They loll whole days on silken sophas; they learn to make nosegays of false flowers with taste, to bathe in rose-water, to anoint themselves with perfumes, whilst the nobler faculties of the soul lose their vigour, through want of cultivation.

of eastern  
princes.

Princes are permitted, at ten years of age, to appear in the hall of audience. A tutor attends them, who imposes upon them no restraint. They receive little benefit from his instructions, and they advance frequently into life without having their minds imbued with any considerable knowledge of letters. They are married to some beautiful woman at twelve, and it cannot be supposed that a boy, in possession of such an enchanting play-thing as a young wife, will give much attention to the dry study of grammar. The abilities of the princes of the house of Timur, it must be confessed, extricated, when they advanced in life, their minds from the effects of this ruinous mode of passing youth. The most of them were men of letters, and given to inquiry; but their attention to the education of their children, could not altogether supersede the inherent prejudices of their country.

Early genius  
of Aurung-  
zêbe.

Shaw Jehân was extremely anxious in training up his sons in all the literature and knowledge of the East. He delivered each of them into the hands of men of virtue as well as of letters; he raised





fed the tutors to dignities in the state, to impress awe upon their pupils, and to induce them to listen to their precepts. Aurungzêbe, however, was not fortunate in his master. His genius flew before the abilities of the teacher; and the latter, to cover his own ignorance, employed the active mind of the prince in difficult and unprofitable studies. Being naturally remarkably serious, he gave up his whole time to application. The common amusements of children gave him no pleasure. He was frequently known, whilst yet he was very young, to retire from the puerile buffoonery of his attendants, to the dry and difficult study of the Persian and Arabic languages. His assiduity prevailed over the dulness of his tutor, and he made a progress far beyond his years.

Time had established into an almost indispensable duty, that the emperor, with his assessors, the principal judges, was to sit for two hours every day in the hall of justice, to hear and decide causes. Shaw Jehân, who took great delight in promoting justice, frequently exceeded the usual time. Aurungzêbe, while yet but twelve years of age, stood constantly near the throne; and he made remarks, with uncommon sagacity, upon the merits of the causes which were agitated before his father. The emperor seemed highly pleased at abilities which afterwards ruined his own power. He often asked the opinion of his son, for amusement, upon points of equity, and he frequently pronounced sentence in the very terms of Aurungzêbe's decision.

His attention  
to justice;

When he was, in his early youth, appointed to the government of a province, he was obliged, by his office, to imitate, though in miniature, the mode of the court. He had his hall of audience, he presided in his court of justice; he represented royalty in all its forms, except in its pomp and magnificence, to which the natural austerity of his manners had rendered him an enemy. He exhib-

contempt of  
pomp and  
flattery;





hibited, upon every occasion, an utter aversion to flatterers: he admitted not, into his presence, men of dissolute manners. The first he thought insulted his judgment, the latter disgraced him as the guardian of the morality, as well as of the property, of the people. Musicians, dancers, and singers, he banished from his court, as foes to gravity and virtue. Mimics, actors, and buffoons, he drove from his palace, as an useless race of men.

Affects plain-  
ness in dress.

His dress was always plain and simple. He wore, upon festival days only, cloth of gold, adorned with jewels. He, however, changed his dress twice a-day, being remarkably cleanly in his person. When he rose in the morning, he plunged into the bath, and then retired for a short time to prayers. Religion suited the serious turn of his mind; and he at last became an enthusiast through habit. In his youth he never stirred abroad on Friday; and should he happen to be in the field, or on a hunting party, he suspended all business and diversions. Zealous for the faith of Mahommed, he rewarded proselytes with a liberal hand, though he did not chuse to persecute those of different persuasions in matters of religion.

His austeri-  
ty, and love

He carried his austerity and regard for morality into the throne. He made strict laws against vices of every kind. He was severe against adultery and fornication; and against a certain unnatural crime, he issued various edicts. In the administration of justice, he was indefatigable, vigilant, and exact. He sat almost every day in judgment, and he chose men of virtue, as well as remarkable for their knowledge in the law, for his assessors. When the cause appeared intricate, it was left to the examination of the bench of judges, in their common and usual court. They were to report upon such causes as had originated before the throne; and the emperor,





peror, after weighing their reasons with caution, pronounced judgment, and determined the suit.

In the courts of the governors of provinces, and even often on the benches on which his deputies sat in judgment, he kept spies upon their conduct. Though these were known to exist, their persons were not known. The princes, his sons, as well as the other viceroys, were in constant terror; nor durst they exercise the least degree of oppression against the subject, as every thing found its way to the ears of the emperor. They were turned out of their office upon the least well-founded complaint; and when they appeared in the presence, the nature of their crime was put in writing into their hands. Stript of their estates and honours, they were obliged to appear every day at court, as an example to others; and after being punished for some time in this manner, according to the degree of their crime, they were restored to favour; the most guilty were banished for life.

Capital punishments were almost totally unknown under Aurungzêbe. The adherents of his brothers, who contended with him for the empire, were freely pardoned when they laid down their arms. When they appeared in his presence, they were received as new subjects, not as inveterate rebels. Naturally mild and moderate through policy, he seemed to forget that they had not been always his friends. When he appeared in public, he clothed his features with a complacent benignity, which pleased all. Those who had trembled at his name, from the fame of his rigid justice, when they saw him, found themselves at ease. They could express themselves, in his presence, with the greatest freedom and composure. His affability gave to them confidence; and he secured to himself their esteem by the strict impartiality of his decisions.

His clemency;

His





Knowledge  
of affairs.

His long experience in business, together with the acuteness and retentiveness of his mind, rendered him master even of the detail of the affairs of the empire. He remembered the rents, he was thoroughly acquainted with the usages of every particular district. He was wont to write down in his pocket-book, every thing that occurred to him through the day. He formed a systematical knowledge of every thing concerning the revenue, from his notes, to which, upon every necessary occasion, he recurred. The governors of the provinces, and even the collectors in the districts, when he examined either, on the state of their respective departments, were afraid of misrepresentation or ignorance. The first ruined them for ever; the latter turned them out of their offices.

Public build-  
ings.

His public buildings partook of the temper of his own mind. They were rather useful than splendid. At every stage, from Cabul to Aurungabâd, from Guzerat to Bengal, through the city of Agra, he built houses for the accommodation of travellers. These were maintained at the public expence. They were supplied with wood, with utensils of cookery, with a certain portion of rice and other provisions. The houses which his predecessors had erected on by-roads, were repaired; bridges were built on the small rivers; and boats furnished for passing the large.

Encourage-  
ment to let-  
ters.

In all the principal cities of India, the emperor founded universities; in every inferior town he erected schools. Masters, paid from the treasury, were appointed for the instruction of youth. Men of known abilities, honour, and learning, were appointed to examine into the progress which the learners made, and to prevent indolence and inattention in the masters. Many houses for the reception of the poor and maimed were erected; which were endowed with a revenue from the crown. The emperor, in the mean time, collected all the books which could





be found on every subject; and, after ordering many copies of each to be made, public libraries were formed, for the convenience of learned men, who had access to them at pleasure. He wrote often to the learned in every corner of his dominions, with his own hand. He called them to court; and placed them, according to their abilities, in offices in the state; those, who were versed in the commentaries on the Coran, were raised to the dignity of judges, in the different courts of justice.

Aurungzêbe was as experienced in war, as he was in the arts of peace. Though his personal courage was almost unparalleled, he always endeavoured to conquer more by stratagem than by force. To succeed by art threw honour upon himself; to subdue by power acquired to others fame. Such was his coolness in action, that, at the rising and setting sun, the times appointed for prayer, he never neglected to attend to that duty, though in the midst of battle. Devout to excess, he never engaged in action without prayer; and for every victory, he ordered a day of thanksgiving, and one of festivity and joy.

Skill and  
courage in  
war.

In the art of writing, Aurungzêbe excelled in an eminent degree. He wrote many letters with his own hand; he corrected always the diction of his secretaries. He never permitted a letter of business to be dispatched, without critically examining it himself. He was versed in the Persian and Arabic; he wrote the language of his ancestors the Moguls, and all the various dialects of India. In his diction he was concise and nervous; and he reduced all dispatches to a brevity and precision, which prevented all misconstruction and perplexity.

Learning.

Though not remarkable for his strength of body, he was extremely active in the exercises of the field. He was an excellent archer,

Skill in the  
manly exer-  
cises.





archer, he threw the lance with grace; and he was so good a horseman, that few men durst follow him in the chace. He understood the use of fire-arms so well, that he shot deer on full speed from his horse. When he wandered over the country in pursuit of game, he did not forget the concerns of the state. He examined the nature of the soil, he enquired even of common labourers concerning its produce. He understood, and, therefore, encouraged agriculture. He issued an edict, that the rents should not be raised on those who, by their industry, had improved their farms. He mentioned, in the edict, that such practice was at once unjust and impolitic; that it checked the spirit of improvement, and impoverished the state: "And what joy," said he, "can Aurungzêbe have in possessing wealth in the midst of public distress?"

Chastity.

Though he entertained many women, according to the custom of his country, it was only for state. He contented himself with his lawful wives, and these only in succession; when one either died or became old. He spent very little time in the apartments of his women. He rose every morning at the dawn of day, and went into the bathing-chamber; which communicated with a private chapel, to which he retired for half an hour, to prayers. Returning into his apartments from chapel, he spent half an hour in reading some book of devotion; and then went into the haram to dress. He entered the chamber of justice generally about seven o'clock; and there sat with the judges, read petitions, and decided causes till nine. Justice was dispensed in a summary manner; and rewards and punishments were immediate; the disputes, which were not clear, having been already weighed by the judges in their own court.





The people in general had access into the chamber of justice; and there they had an opportunity of laying their grievances and distresses before their sovereign. Aurungzêbe ordered always a sum of money to be placed by his side on the bench; and he relieved the necessitous with his own hand. Large sums were in this manner expended every day; and, as the court was open to all, the unfortunate found, invariably, a resource in the Imperial bounty.

Accessibilities to all.

The emperor retired at nine to breakfast; and continued for an hour with his family. He then came forth into a balcony, which faced the great square. He sat there to review his elephants, which passed before him in gorgeous caparisons. He sometimes amused himself with the battles of tygers and leopards, sometimes with those of gazelles, elks, and a variety of ferocious animals. On particular days, squadrons of horse passed in review. The fine horses of his own stables were also brought, at times, before him, with all their magnificent trappings, mounted by his grooms, who exhibited various feats of horsemanship. The balcony in which he sat was called THE PLACE OF PRIVACY, as it looked from the haram, and the ladies saw every thing from behind their screens of gauze.

Amusements.

An hour being spent at this amusement, the emperor, generally about eleven o'clock, made his appearance in the great hall of audience. There all the nobles were ranged before the throne, in two lines, according to their dignity. Ambassadors, viceroys, commanders of armies, Indian princes, and officers, who had returned from various services, were introduced in the following form: The Meer Hajib, or the lord in waiting, ushers each into the presence. At the distance of twenty yards from the throne, the person to be presented is commanded by one of the mace-

His mode of receiving.

bearers





bearers to bow three times very low; raising his hand each time from the ground to his forehead. The mace-bearer, at each bow, calls out aloud, that such a person salutes the EMPEROR OF THE WORLD. He is then led up, between the two lines of the nobles, to the foot of the steps which ascend to the throne; and there the same ceremony is again performed. He then moves slowly up along the steps, and, if he is a man of high quality, or much in favour, he is permitted to make his offering to the emperor himself, who touches one of the gold roupees; and it being laid down, the lord of the privy-purse receives the whole. The emperor sometimes speaks to the person introduced: when he does not, the person retires, keeping his face toward the sovereign, and performs the same ceremonies at the same places as before.

and creating  
the nobles.

The introduction of an officer, when he is raised into the rank of Omrahs, is the same with that already described. When he retires from the steps of the throne, the emperor gives his commands aloud to clothe him with a rich dress, ordering a sum of money, not exceeding a lack of roupees, to be laid before him. He is, at the same time, presented with two elephants, one male and one female, caparisoned, two horses with rich furniture, a travelling bed elegantly decorated, a complete dress, if once worn by his Imperial majesty the more honourable, a sword studded with diamonds, a jewel for the front of his turban. The ensigns of his rank are also laid before him; fifes, drums, colours, silver maces, silver bludgeons, spears, the tails of peacocks, silver fish, silver dragons, with his titles engraved, with a parchment containing his patent of dignity, and the Imperial grant of an estate.

The business  
of the morn-  
ing,

The hall of audience in the city of Delhi, was called Chelsit-toon, or Hall of Forty Pillars, as the name imports. In the square





square which opened to the hall, the cavaliers, or soldiers of fortune, who wanted to be employed in the Imperial service, presented themselves completely armed on horseback, with their troop of dependents. The emperor sometimes reviewed them; and, after they had exhibited their feats of military dexterity before him, they were received into pay. The Mansebdárs, or the lower rank of nobility, presented themselves in another square; artizans, with their most curious inventions, occupied a third, and they were encouraged according to the utility and elegance of their work. The huntsmen filled a fourth court. They presented their game, consisting of every species of animals and beasts common in the empire.

Aurungzêbe, about one o'clock, retired into the Guffel Châna, or bathing-chamber, into which the great officers of state were only admitted. There affairs of inferior concern, such as the disposal of offices, were transacted. At half past two o'clock, he retired into the haram to dine. He spent an hour at table, and then, in the hot season, slumbered on a sofa for half an hour. He generally appeared at four, in the balcony above the great gate of the palace. A mob of all kinds of people assembled there before him; some to claim his bounty, others to prefer complaints against the officers of the crown. He retired at six, into the chapel to prayers; and, in half an hour, he entered the Guffel Châna, into which, at that hour, the members of the cabinet were only admitted. He there took their advice upon all the important and secret affairs of government; and from thence orders were issued to the various departments of the state. He was often detained till it was very late in this council, as conversation was mixed with business; but about nine, he generally retired into the haram.

Such is the manner in which Aurungzêbe commonly passed his time; but he was not always regular. He appeared not

noon, and evening.

Observation.





some days in the chamber of justice ; and other days there was no public audience. When the particular business of any department required extraordinary attention, that of others was from necessity postponed. Particular days were set apart for auditing the accounts of the officers of the revenue, some for reviewing the troops ; and some were dedicated to festivity. Though Aurungzêbe bore all the marks of an enthusiast in his private behaviour, he did not stop the progress of business by many days of thanksgiving ; for he often declared, that, without using the means, it were presumptuous to hope for any benefit from prayer.

A P P E N D I X

APPEN-

