

JRAS 1861

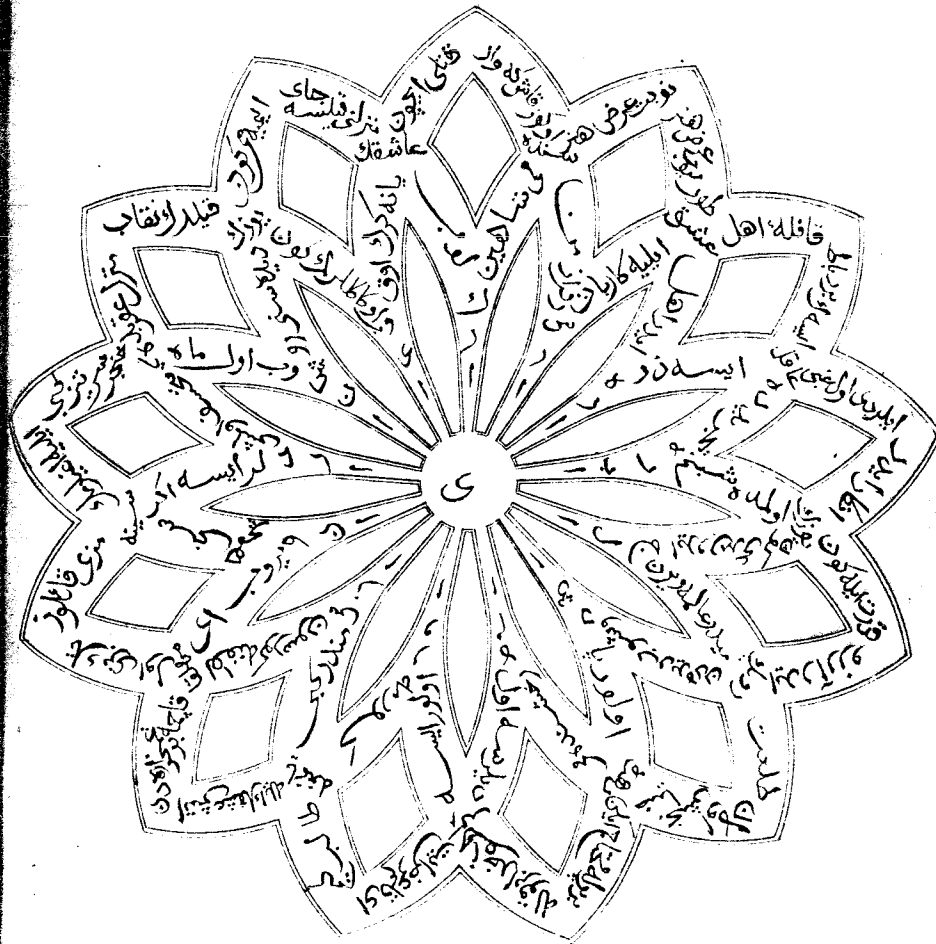
ART. XI.—*A Turkish Circle Ode,¹ by Shahin-Ghiray, Khan of the Crimea. With Translation, Memoir of the Author, and a brief Account of the Khanate of the Crimea, its Connexion with Turkey, and its Annexation by Catherine the Second of Russia. By J. W. REDHOUSE, Esq.*

[Read 9th March, 1861.]

غزل شاهین کرای

یار کلوب (عاشقک) منزلی قیلسه جای
 ایتیمیه می کون (یوزک) دیده سنی روشنای
 یانشوب اول ماه (یسا) خنجر سر تیزکی
 ایلیه اغیارمک (مسینه) سنی همچو نای
 یان ویروب ای (مهلقا) قاجمه بو غخواره دن
 اتش عشقک ایله (یانمغه) کورمه روای
 یاور اولسور ایسه (اکسر) لطف خدا بر قوله
 بر پوله محتاج ایکن (دهره) اولور پادشای
 یاش دوشوب دیده دن (روپک) ایدر ارزو
 قدرت ایله کون (یوزک) اولده شبنم ریای
 یاب ره تجریده (عاسقل) ایسهک بر رباط
 قافله اهل (عششق) ایلیه کاربان سرای
 یار سرفراز من (سندده) او کوز قاش که وار
 قتلی ایچون (عاشقک) یا نه کرک اوک و یای

*A Turkish Circle Ode
 by Shahin-Ghiray,
 Khan of the Crimea.*



¹ In this ode, as figured in the separate lithograph plate, the letter at the centre is the first and last letter of every distich; the letters in the radii are the penultimates of each distich, and, read inversely, follow the initial in the next succeeding distich. The words in the intersectional compartments are common to each of the intersecting verses. The ode begins and ends at the centre, through the radius which points directly upwards.

JRAS 1861

یایوب او کاکلرک کون (یوزک) قیلدک نقاب
 منزل عقیده (یا) منخسف اولمش در ای
 یار دلیر ایسه اکر (سینه) مزى قائلسوز
 تک بزى اول (مهلقا) لطفنه کورسون سزای
 یساز سمنسدر گمی (یا تمغه) طالب کیم
 ای قلم عرض ایت (اکر) دیلرسه اول های
 یا مه رخشنده می (دهره) ضیا بخش اولان
 طلعت (رویسک) می در عالمه ویرن جلای
 یا لچ ایدوب مدعی کون (یوزک) انکار ایدر
 ایلردی اول غمی (عاسقل) ایسه ذره رای
 یاره ایدر اهل (عشق) طور میوب عرض هنر
 نوبت عرض هنر (سنده) می شاهین کرای

TRANSLATION :—

“ Let but my beloved come and take up her abode in the mansion of her lover, and shall not thy beautiful face cause his eyes to sparkle with delight !

“ Or, would she but attack my rival with her glances, sharp-pointed as daggers, and, piercing his breast, cause him to moan, as a flute is pierced ere it emit its sighing notes.

“ Turn not away, my beauty ; nor flee from me, who am a prey to grief ; deem it not fitting that I be consumed with the fire of my love for thee.

“ If the grace of God favour one of His servants, that man, from a state of utter destitution, may become the monarch of the world.

“ Tears flow from my eyes by reason of their desire to reach thee ; for the sun of thy countenance, by an ordinance of the Almighty power, attracts to itself the moisture of the dew-drops.

“ If thou art wise, erect an inn on the road of self-negation ; so that the pilgrims of holy love may make thereof their halting-place.

“ O proud and noble mistress of mine ! with the eyebrows and

glances that thou possessest, what need of bow or arrow wherewith to slay thy lover ?

"Is it that thou hast loosed thy tresses and veiled therewith the sun of thy countenance ? Or is it that the moon has become eclipsed in the sign of Scorpio ?

"I am perfectly willing that my beloved should pierce my heart ; only let that beauty deem me worthy of her favour.

"Write, O pen ! that I am a candidate for the flames, even as a salamander ; declare it to be so, if that queen of beauty will it.

"Is it the silvery lustre of the moon that has diffused brightness over the face of nature ; or is it the sun of thy countenance that has illumined the world ?

"If any disputant should cavil, and deny the existence of thy beauty, would not thy adorer, hovering as a mote in its rays, suffice to convince the fool, if he had but common sense ?

"It is true that lovers do unremittingly dedicate their talents to the praise of their mistresses ; but has thy turn yet come, O Shāhīn-Ghirāy, so to offer thy tribute of laudation ?"

Shahin-Ghiray, the author of the ingenious ode here given, was the last khan of the Crimea, having been reinstated for a short time before the Empress Catherine the Second declared the annexation of the country to her own dominions.

On the occasion of the publication of this ode, a short biography of the author must have an interest of its own ; and this interest, in his particular case, is greatly increased by the important political scenes in which he took a part. He appears to have possessed considerable talent and to have been distinguished by his literary attainments ; but he was exceedingly weak and vain, and was utterly deficient in that political foresight and sound common sense which might have saved himself and his country from the degradation and annihilation to which the insatiable ambition of his crafty neighbour had long foredoomed them. The recollection of recent political events, also, may tend to give a somewhat higher degree of interest to the biography which involves the story of how and when the Crimea became subject to Russia.

The khanate of the Crimea was a branch of the western empire of the descendants of Jenghiz, as China formed their eastern empire.

After the conquest of Persia by a subsequent dynasty, the western khans of the house of Jenghiz remained in possession of the southern half of the modern Russia in Europe, with an indefinite frontier to the east of the river Volga. These dominions became divided into three khanates, viz., those of Kazan, Astrakhan, and the Crimea ; though, from their families being related, the reigning princes sometimes passed from one to the other of the three thrones. For a long period their yoke lay heavy on Russia, from whose dukes they exacted homage and tribute, and whose territories they devastated whenever hesitation or delay occurred in the payment of either, as also in their not unfrequent wars with one another.

Kazan first, and Astrakhan afterwards, had become, however, in their turn, subject to Russia before Peter the Great introduced his reforms. But, as the khans of the Crimea had voluntarily declared themselves vassals of Turkey shortly after the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Sultan, Muhammed the Second, this khanate had remained comparatively great and powerful, making its sword felt in Russia, in Poland, in Hungary, and even in Austria. One of the khans assisted in the humiliation of Peter the Great by the forces of the Grand Vizier, which Charles the Twelfth of Sweden would have so much desired to see changed into captivity or total destruction. The territory of the khanate stretched from the banks of the Pruth, which divided it from Moldavia, to those of the Don, with a varying frontier to the north, and including the steppes which lie between the lower Don, the Caspian, and the Caucasian mountains of Circassia. Important military positions were, however, occupied by Turkish fortresses on the rivers of these territories, and on the shores of the Crimea itself.

For a long while previous to the events recorded in the following biographical sketch, the khans of the Crimea had ceased to live at Baghcha-Seray, their capital, and had established their residence at Kichenev (Koshan), in Bessarabia. A dignitary called the kalgha, or lieutenant of the khan, still abode at Ak-Mesjid. He was the second personage in the hierarchy of the khanate, and the officer next in dignity to him was designated the nuru'-d-din. They were always members of the khan's family, and were appointed by him as he pleased.

The reigning family of these Crimean descendants of Jenghiz, had, for several centuries, borne the surname of Ghiray. The reason given by the native historians for the assumption of this name, is, that it was a custom among the Tatars to put their young princes out to be nursed during infancy and childhood, with one of the nomade tribes of the nation. One of these was the tribe of Ghiray. A prince who had

thus been nurtured by the Ghiray tribe, became khan, and his foster-father happened to return to the Crimea from a pilgrimage to Mecca, at the epoch when a son was born to the khan. The old foster-father went to pay his respects to his sovereign, and requested, as a special favour, that the child should receive the name of his tribe. The khan consented, and ordered, moreover, that for ever after his descendants should bear the name.

The title of *nuru'd-din*, mentioned above, was derived from another prince, who had been nursed by the tribe of that name somewhat later in point of time, and who was the first appointed to the dignity at its creation, which was posterior to that of the *kalgha*. This word *kalgha* again, signifies "he who remains," i.e., the dignitary left in charge, as regent, for the internal administration of affairs during the khan's absence in the field in pursuance of commands received from the sultan. The office was instituted at an earlier epoch than that of *nuru'd-din*, but after the Crimea had become connected with the Turkish empire.

Having premised thus much as to the ancient relations of the Crimea, we proceed to mention that the war between Russia and Turkey which ultimately led to the annexation of that peninsula to her dominions by the Empress Catherine the Second, and which brings our author, *Shahin-Ghiray* on the scene, was declared by the Sultan against Russia in the year 1768, on account of the proceedings of this latter power in respect of Poland, of her constructing a new fortress at Orel, of her intrigues with the inhabitants of the plains of the Kuban, and with those of Moldavia, Montenegro, &c. As before mentioned, the khans of the Crimea had long ceased to keep their court in the peninsula, and Russian gold, promises, and influence had already procured for the Empress numerous partisans in that part of the khan's dominions. When, therefore, the Turkish general, *Ibrahim Pasha*, wished to proceed from Kaffa to the defence of *Perekop*, he met with the greatest obstacles on the part of the local authorities, who wilfully neglected to prepare for him the necessary means of transport, carts, camels, &c. Out of his own means he at length managed, however, to procure a very insufficient quantity, and was thus enabled, by causing these to make several journeys across the country, to move his forces to the critical point in time to encounter the Russians and defeat them in their first attack on *Perekop* in 1770. This success caused the Tatars to incline again to their old allegiance; but the fit was of short duration, as the disasters which befel the Sultan's forces in the Danubian provinces soon induced the fickle race to desert the losing cause.

However, at the commencement of hostilities, *Krim-Ghiray*, who was then the khan, and a soldier of dauntless courage, as well as of consummate skill in handling irregular troops, and of inflexible severity in repressing their unsanctioned excesses, led a vast array of Tatar horsemen into the southern confines of Russia, and laid waste a large extent of country. The celebrated *Baron de Tott* accompanied this expedition, and conceived a high opinion of the khan. The baron's suspicions were aroused respecting a certain Greek physician, named *Siropulo*, who was the medical attendant of the khan, and who had been bribed by the Prince of Wallachia. *De Tott* strove to put the khan on his guard against this man, but in vain; and shortly after his return from his mission of devastation, the prince fell a victim to the poison administered by *Siropulo*, in March, 1769.

Krim-Ghiray was succeeded by *Devlet-Ghiray*, who was present with the Turkish army in Bessarabia and to the east of the Dneister during the unfortunate campaign of 1769, when *Choczim* was taken by the Russians. In consequence, he was dismissed from his dignity on the 2nd March, 1770, and *Kaplan-Ghiray* named to succeed him. *Kaplan-Ghiray* was present at the battle of *Kartal*, or *Kaghul*, gained by the Russians on the 1st of August, 1770, over the Grand Vizier, near the Danube, and in the vicinity of *Isakehi*. He afterwards undertook to protect the fortress of *Isma'il*, but that fortress fell also. This was about the time when a separate Russian army attacked *Perekop* and was defeated by the Turkish general, *Ibrahim Pasha*, as above mentioned.

We then find it related that *Kaplan-Ghiray* went to the Crimea, as the Russians had thus possessed themselves of all his territories out of its boundaries. The *Nogay Tatars* had already openly declared for Russia; and when *Kaplan-Ghiray* arrived at his capital, he gathered the chiefs of his people together, informed them of the reverses of the Turks, as also of the defection of the *Nogays*, finishing by propounding the opinion that the best course for them all to take, was to sign a declaration of allegiance and send it to the Empress, under whose sway they might hope to live in peace and prosperity. The advice was accepted, and the declaration having been drawn up, *Kaplan-Ghiray* signed it first; the others were engaged in collecting signatures to it, when intelligence arrived that the Sultan had appointed *Selim-Ghiray* to the dignity of khan, and that a special messenger waited at Kaffa to conduct the deposed prince to Constantinople. This incident caused the postponement for the moment of the treacherous design upon which the Tatar chiefs were now generally bent.

Selim-Ghiray made his appearance in due time, and, proceeding to

Baghcha-Seray, gave himself up for the moment to a life of pleasure and vain display. As soon, however, as he received intelligence that the Russians were preparing for another attack on Perekop, he was seized with a jealous desire to secure for himself the glory of repulsing them. Without waiting to concert measures with the Turkish general, who had returned to Kaffa to hasten preparations, Selim-Ghiray collected what forces he could, and advanced at once to succour the beleaguered place. On his approach, a considerable portion of the garrison marched out towards the south to meet him with the customary honours; and in this interval a body of traitors introduced the Russians into the fortress, and the key of the Crimea was lost on the 24th of June, 1771. Selim-Ghiray returned in haste and confusion to his capital; but fear and treason were at work there also. He felt it impossible to hold his ground; and therefore, proceeding to the coast, embarked with a few followers for Constantinople. The Russians soon made themselves masters of the Turkish fortresses in the peninsula, Yeni-Kal'a, Kertch, Kaffa, Sudak, and Ghuzleva.

The Russian general now proclaimed the independence of the Crimea, declared the fugitive khan to have forfeited the throne, and caused Sahib-Ghiray to be elected in his place, who appointed his brother, Shahin-Ghiray, the author of our ode and subject of our memoir, as kalgha, with another brother, Bahadir-Ghiray, as nuru'-ddin. The Turkish general, at Kaffa, making a show of resistance, Shahin-Ghiray went against him with a large body of Tatars, publicly declared that they had made terms with the Russians, and requested the pasha to withdraw peaceably from the Crimea on pain of having the Tatars against him also. On learning this, numbers of the Turkish forces abandoned the general and went on board ship. The subordinate pasha, who was the special titular commandant of Kaffa, Kertch, and Yeni-Kal'a, and was jealous of his commander-in-chief, also withdrew with his troops and landed at Sinope, in Asia Minor. The pasha, still determined not to abandon his post, was attacked and beaten on the 13th of July, 1771, and sent prisoner to St. Petersburg.

On the other hand, Selim-Ghiray, having reached Constantinople, was, after a while, formally deposed as wanting in capacity, and Maksud-Ghiray named to the vacant dignity. He, too, appointed his own kalgha and nuru'-ddin, who were all present in the camp of the grand-vizier at Shumla. A double set of dignitaries was thus called into existence, one set in the Crimea being the nominees of Russia, and the others, representing their ancient and legitimate suzerain, were prepared to re-occupy the continental dominions of their race as soon as the war should cease.

During the following autumn and winter, negotiations were carried on between the two camps on the Danube, first for an armistice, and next for peace. Russia demanded that the Tatars should be declared independent, and that the fortresses of Kertch and Yeni-Kal'a should remain in her hands as guarantees of that independence. The Turkish Government, however, refused to agree to those terms.

Certain matters remained unsettled, too, between the Russians and their *protégés*, the Tatars in the Crimea. To obtain such terms as might be found possible, Sahib-Ghiray sent his brother Shahin-Ghiray to St. Petersburg, accompanied by a number of chiefs and notables of the nation. There, a compact was drawn up stipulating that, in the event of peace being concluded between Russia and the Sultan, the Tatar nation would acknowledge itself subject to the Empress. Shahin-Ghiray was induced to sign this paper, but the Tatar chiefs and notables refused to forego their independence. They quitted St. Petersburg in disgust, leaving Shahin there, and returned to communicate the terms which had been proposed for their acceptance. These tidings exasperated the nation in the highest degree; but, as all the fortified places were in the hands of the Russians, they could only wait in hopes that a return of peace between the two empires would rid them of their now hated liberators. Some time after, Shahin-Ghiray left St. Petersburg with the intention of returning to the Crimea, but the exasperation of the people against him was so strong that his friends dissuaded him from the attempt. He could not even procure an interview with his brother, the khan; but was constrained to remain at Pultowa until the conclusion of peace.

In the ensuing campaign of 1773 on the Danube (the whole of 1772 having passed in fruitless negotiations), Maksud-Ghiray and his kalgha, Bakht-Ghiray, were unsuccessful; but the latter having gained a marked preference over the titular khan, Maksud quitted the camp of the grand vizier in disgust. In 1774, again, although Bakht-Ghiray served faithfully, the Turkish arms, under their various generals, were, on the whole, extremely unfortunate; and at length, their principal army under the grand vizier, being shut up in the intrenched camp of Shumla, while the Russians occupied the whole of the open country between the Danube and the Balkan mountains, overtures for peace were made, and on the 21st of July the treaty of Kaynarja was signed, which, among other stipulations, secured the independence of the Tatars of the Crimea, of Bessarabia, and of the Kuban, as well as the possession of the fortresses of Kertch and Yeni-Kal'a by Russia in full sovereignty. Devlet-Ghiray had, however, been named generalissimo for Turkey in the Crimea; he had departed on this expedition, raised

the Nogay Tatars and Circassians, landed in the Crimea, and made some progress in gaining over the inhabitants to the cause of their former suzerain, when orders arrived from Constantinople for him to desist from further endeavours, in consequence of the peace that had been signed.

In the autumn of the same year a deputation of Tatar chiefs from the Crimea came to Constantinople to request that they might be again recognized as subjects of the Sultan, and that the khan, Sahib-Ghiray, should be confirmed in his dignity as the representative of the ancient suzerain. It was felt that the request was contrary to the terms of the new treaty; but it was hoped that Russia would not object to the Sultan's being acknowledged as the spiritual chief of the Sunni world, but, as such, permit him to send the usual diploma and congratulatory letter to the khan. Application was made in this sense to the Russian field-marshal Romanzow, who, perceiving therein the germ of that anarchy among the Tatars, which would inevitably lead to the annexation of their country by the Empress, at once agreed to the proposal, and Sahib-Ghiray was forthwith acknowledged by the Sultan as khan of the Crimea, his letters of spiritual investiture being sent to him by a dignitary from Constantinople.

In 1775, however, Sahib-Ghiray arrived unexpectedly at Constantinople, and complained that Devlet-Ghiray had again raised the standard of sedition, and incited the Tatars to rebellion against him on the plea that he was a creature of Russia, and that their independence was not a matter of their own choice. Before long, two brothers of Devlet-Ghiray, whom he had named respectively his kalgha and nuru'd-din, came also to Constantinople with a numerous suite of Tatar chiefs and princes, as a solemn deputation, to explain that the nation was altogether dissatisfied with the clause of the treaty which gave their fortresses to Russia, and with Sahib-Ghiray, in whose time so many indignities had been inflicted on them by the invaders; also, that Sahib-Ghiray, becoming aware of the public ill-will towards him, had fled, leaving the throne vacant; that Devlet-Ghiray, on the invitation of the people, had consented to act, *pro tem.*, as khan, until the commands of the Sultan could be made known, he having on a former occasion been honoured with that dignity; and, finally, that unless the Russians should entirely evacuate the country, the population were determined to emigrate to such part of the Sultan's dominions as His Majesty, in his clemency, should designate.

On the arrival of this deputation, Sahib-Ghiray requested to be allowed to retire into private life. He selected Rodosto as his residence; and a pension, with an estate, having been assigned to him there, he

lived in the environs for upwards of thirty years, and died at Chatalja in 1822.

The events here narrated were the occasion of much angry discussion between the Turkish Government and the Russian ambassador. The former, to mark their determination, sent to Devlet-Ghiray the diploma of investiture as Khan of the Crimea. The Russians, however, were far from idle. They were taking measures to gain partisans among the Tatar chiefs, and were gradually completing their preparations for the execution of their ultimate object, the seizure and incorporation of the Crimea in their own territories. They raised seditions against Devlet-Ghiray Khan, and eventually sent a large military force to seize his person. Upon this he could offer no further resistance, and, quitting the peninsula, sailed to Constantinople. Arrived there, he was, after a while, sent to reside on an estate at Viza in Rumelia, where he died in 1780.

On the flight of Devlet-Ghiray, the influence of Russia was exerted to procure the election of Shahin-Ghiray to the vacant dignity, who, it will be recollected, had been sent to St. Petersburg as a negotiator by his brother, the former khan, Sahib-Ghiray, and who had shown himself to be an easy tool in the hands of the Empress's ministers. He was accordingly elected khan; upon which the Russians placed a kind of resident at his Court, who became his principal counsellor, and by whose advice he sent a deputation to St. Petersburg, to request that the Empress would deign to take the Crimea under her special protection. A convention was entered into by which Catherine accepted the protectorate, and Shahin-Ghiray acknowledged himself her vassal. In consequence, the Russians commenced the construction of some new fortifications between Kertch and Yeni-Kal'a, intelligence of which reached Constantinople at the same time as the customary deputation which came to notify the election of the new khan, and to request that his letters of investiture might be transmitted to him from the Sultan.

The Turkish Government, looking upon the acts of Russia as infringements of the independence of the Crimea, refused to acknowledge Shahin-Ghiray, and named the former khan, Selim-Ghiray, as the Sultan's spiritual representative in the peninsula. Selim set out to take possession.

The Russians had now begun to subject the Tatar youth of the Crimea to the laws of the conscription, and to quarter their troops upon Tatar families without regard to the customs which preserved the women's apartments inviolate. These acts drove the people to

desperation. They assembled tumultuously, besieged the house of the Russian general, vociferating that they wished him and his troops to quit their country, and to take his nominee, Shahin-Ghiray, with him. Furious encounters ensued; blood flowed on both sides, and aid was asked from the Sultan by the Tatars, who now bitterly repented of having allowed themselves to be beguiled. It was resolved at Constantinople to send at once a few ships of war and a few thousand troops to watch affairs in the Crimea; and, both in Rumelia and in Asia, matters were put on a war footing, for fear that Russia should appear resolved to proceed to extremities. A memorandum was also addressed to all the friendly Powers, calling their attention to the unwarrantable interference exercised by Russia in the Crimea, in direct contravention to the independence of that country.

Russia was then in great difficulties; and, although she desisted not for a day from her machinations among the Tatars, Catherine instructed her ambassador to deny the existence of the convention which conferred the protectorate upon her, and to explain away the remaining subjects of complaint, while he continued to urge the request that the Sultan should confirm Shahin-Ghiray in his spiritual dignity.

On the arrival of the Turkish squadron, and more especially on the landing of Selim-Ghiray, the Russians introduced more troops into the Crimea for the apparent protection of their nominee, Shahin-Ghiray, but in reality to possess themselves more and more of the strongholds of the country. They were attacked by the Tatars, exactly as Russia had wished; and then it was that General Proskowski was ordered to advance with an army, still proclaiming that he came to put down resistance to the rightful khan, Shahin-Ghiray. Much fighting ensued; but Selim-Ghiray and his adherents were too weak to prevail against the other party and the Russian bayonets and artillery, so that at length he found himself compelled to bid adieu to the Crimea, and, returning to Constantinople, he died about eight years afterwards at his paternal estate in the neighbourhood of Viza, in Rumelia.

Again the Russian ambassador made a request that the Sultan should recognise the validity of Shahin-Ghiray's election as khan, and send him the necessary letters of spiritual investiture. The Turkish Government was obdurate; and as Catherine had now surmounted several of her difficulties, she authorized her representative to avow the convention of the protectorate, and declare that she was prepared to act upon it. Thereupon Turkey gave orders to complete the

preparations for war, and was on the very point of proceeding to open hostilities, when, by express instructions from his Court, the ambassador of France offered his mediation in the quarrel. Long discussions and angry recriminations followed; but ultimately the counsels of France prevailed, and in 1779 the Convention of Aynali-Kavak was signed and ratified, which provided, among other things, that Russia should withdraw all her troops from the Crimea within three months; that, when the Crimean authorities should notify that the Russians had entirely retreated beyond Perekop, and should send a deputation to ask, in the manner agreed upon, for the usual confirmation, the Sultan should grant the letters of investiture to Shahin-Ghiray; and furthermore, that, in case of future disturbances among the Tatars, the necessary steps should be taken in conjunction by Russia and Turkey, nothing being done by one party without consulting the other. Soon after, the deputation arrived to demand the letter of investiture for Shahin-Ghiray, and a high Turkish functionary was despatched with it, agreeably to the usual form of ceremonial.

In 1781, Shahin-Ghiray having pushed the display of his Russian tendencies to an imprudent length, having issued a proclamation for the suppression of all religious and charitable institutions and the confiscation of the estates and property by which they were supported, having given strict orders for a kind of conscription by which the young men of the nation were forced to enter the army, and having caused a number of persons to be publicly executed who had raised their voices against these innovations, a conspiracy against him was formed, and his two brothers joined in it. When their measures were complete, they attacked the khan's palace, and Shahin-Ghiray, finding himself without support, fled to the sea-coast, where he embarked. The Tatars immediately elected his elder brother, Bahadir-Ghiray, as khan in lieu of the fugitive prince, and the new ruler named his third brother, Arslau-Ghiray, as his kalgha. These events were immediately communicated officially to the Turkish Government, and the customary request made for the letter of investiture to be sent in the name of the new khan. Prince Potemkin, the Russian general at Yeni-Kal'a, was also unofficially informed of what had taken place.

Shahin-Ghiray, however, had also sailed to Yeni-Kal'a, and made his own statement to the Russian general, who immediately placed about a dozen ships at his disposal. These were manned by Russian and Tatar adherents of Shahin, and were sent to the various ports of the Crimea to collect signatures to a petition calling on the Russian general to put down the rebellion and reinstate Shahin on the throne.

They were also ordered to blockade the coast, and put a stop to all maritime commerce, seizing whatever might belong to the party that had usurped the government.

Immediately that the proceedings of these cruisers became known at Constantinople, the Turkish Government protested against them as a direct and flagrant violation of the principle of the convention lately concluded. To these complaints the answer was returned from Russia that, rather than suffer Shahin-Ghiray to be thus dispossessed of the throne, the Empress was ready to recommence hostilities. She was enabled to hold this decisive language, because she had just entered into an alliance with Austria. In consequence, the Turkish Government was forced to refrain from acting, though it continued to protest against the arbitrary proceedings of Russia.

Meanwhile positive orders were sent to the general to reinstate Shahin-Ghiray. The Russian forces were again marched into various towns and places of the Crimea, and Prince Potemkin himself following shortly afterwards to Baghcha-Seray, overturned the new government and replaced Shahin on the throne. Shahin caused his brother, Bahadir-Ghiray, to be cast into prison; and, instigated thereto by the Russians, sent to the Turkish Pasha of Oczakoff to demand the cession of that fortress as having anciently belonged to the khanate of the Crimea.

The Turkish Government now fairly took the alarm and prepared for eventualities, without a wish to hasten the crisis by a declaration of war. Catherine, however, by her cajoleries, and by what may be termed a bribe in money, having succeeded in attaching the King of Sweden to her interests, saw that the occasion was favourable for the completion of her long-cherished scheme of annexing the Crimea to her dominions. She resolved to take advantage of the slightest pretext that might offer, and her functionaries were not long in finding one. The Turkish Pasha of Soghujak, a fortress on the coast of Circassia, and, at that time, the head-quarters of the Turkish establishments on those shores, had sent one of his officers with a small detachment to Taman, situated on the Asiatic side of the strait of Yeni-Kal'a. The Russian general compelled Shahin-Ghiray to send a messenger to demand the withdrawal of this force, on the plea that the country depended on the Crimea, and that, consequently, Turkey had no right to hold a post in the territory. The Turkish subaltern foolishly and unjustly caused the messenger to be put to death, thereby giving the Russians the very pretext they desired. They obtained from Shahin-Ghiray a forced requisition to clear his dependent territory of Taman of the presence of the intrusive

Turkish forces, and to inflict a due punishment on the murderers of his messenger. At the same time, under pretence that Turkey was threatening the Crimea, the Russian generals were ordered to occupy with their forces the principal posts in the peninsula. Prince Potemkin established his head-quarters at Kara-Su, at which place he convened an assembly of the principal Tatar chiefs and princes. He then informed them that the independence of their country was at an end, and that they must henceforward look upon the Empress as their sovereign, and take the oath of allegiance to her; that those who did so, and chose to remain in the country, would have the free and public exercise of their religion, while those who preferred it would be allowed to leave and go where they would. Similar scenes were enacted in all the chief towns. Thousands of families fled to Turkey. A body of about 10,000 took the route overland to Kil-burun, in order to pass over to Okzakoff. From want of boats they were forced to encamp for several days; and the Russians, in order to establish a quarrel with the Turkish governor of that fortress, went so far as to send him a demand for a heavy indemnity for the grass which the cattle of these fugitives had eaten, and for the bushes they had burnt in their passage across the uninhabited steppes of their own country, from which they were being driven.

Shahin-Ghiray now saw clearly, when too late, the true nature of the Empress whose tool he had so long been. He was informed that his presence in the Crimea was no longer wanted, as the country would henceforward be administered in Catherine's name by her own officers. To soothe him, however, and quell all idea of opposition on his part, a splendid annual pension was conferred upon him, and a suitable place of abode was assigned to him in Russia, to which he was forthwith removed.

To give a show of reason to these transactions in the eyes of Europe, Catherine, though no single act of warfare or of reprisals had yet occurred on the part of Turkey, published a long manifesto, in which she threw all the blame on the Sultan's Government, and announced to the world that, to indemnify herself for past losses, and also with the view to prevent further disputes with Turkey, she had definitely annexed to her dominions the Crimean peninsula and the plains of the Kuban. To the Tatars, also, she addressed a proclamation, promising them the free exercise of their religion, and all the privileges enjoyed by her ancient happy and fortunate subjects; but requiring on their part a similarly implicit obedience in future to her supreme commands.

The Tatars finding they were, in reality, reduced to the same

state of slavery as the hereditary Russian serfs, soon commenced preparations to free themselves from the thralldom. Potemkin, however, penetrated their designs, attacked them before these were matured, and quenched the last embers of Tatar freedom in the blood of upwards of thirty thousand men, women, and children, massacred in this ruthless onslaught.

The King of France protested against these acts as subversive of the terms of the convention of Aynali-Kavak, the fruit of his mediation. The alliances, however, into which Catherine had entered with the other Powers of Europe at this period, gave her such a preponderance, that Turkey felt it would be folly to act on the provocation, and contented herself with endeavouring to complete her preparations, so as to be ready to profit by future contingencies, if favourable to her views.

Bahadir-Ghiray had been thrown into prison by his brother Shabin, when the latter returned to power by the assistance of Potemkin's bayonets. But when, seven months later, Shabin-Ghiray was deposed and sent into Russia, Bahadir found the means to escape from confinement and fled to the Nogay Tatars on the plains of the Kuban, where he took up his abode unmolested. Seven years later, when all hope of the Crimea becoming again an independent state, or a dependency of Turkey, was utterly relinquished, he was invited to Constantinople. An estate was conferred upon him at Rodosto, together with a suitable pension, and he died there two years afterwards, in the year 1791.

As to the unfortunate Shabin-Ghiray, the more immediate subject of the present memoir, the pension assigned to him was soon allowed to fall into arrears, and he found himself the object of the scorn and contempt of his captors. Stung with this treatment, he preferred to risk whatever might befall him among his co-religionaries in Turkey, though he well knew that his former acts could not plead in his favour with the Court whose interests he had so grossly and so blindly betrayed. On his arrival in Turkey, in 1789, he was at once ordered to be sent in exile to the Island of Rhodes, where instructions were received to execute him as a traitor to his sovereign, and as the main cause of the success of all the perfidious designs of the Empress Catherine and her unscrupulous agents.

Seventy years had elapsed since the annexation of the Crimea to Russia, when, in 1854, the allied forces invaded the peninsula and commenced the siege of Sebastopol. The feelings exhibited by the population after so long a subjugation, are a strong proof that the success of Russia in her intrigues arose from the ignorance of the Tatar

chiefs, which allowed them to be tempted by her promises, and that the bulk of the people is Turkish at heart to the present hour. The wholesale emigration still going on, by which these Tatars are now abandoning the land conquered by their forefathers five hundred years ago, is confirmatory of the same inference. But the tide of Russia's fortune, though it may occasionally meet with a temporary check, is yet on the flow, and the void left by the Tatar emigration will ultimately be filled with another race, whose ears and eyes are on the stretch towards what is as yet talked of as the ultimate prize, but which, if ever attained, will be, in reality, considered a mere stepping-stone to universal dominion—the seven-billed, sea-girt, imperial city of Constantine.