

A Short Chapter in the History of Bâbeeism in Persia. By Rev. Austin H. Wright, M.D., Missionary in Persia.

“As I formerly informed you,” says Dr. Wright [in a previous communication, giving an account of the rising up in Persia, some eight or ten years ago, of a religious impostor who pretended to be the only medium of access to God for mankind, and assumed the name of Bâb,—evidently a revival of the old Ismâ’ilian heresy of the middle ages,—for which the reader is referred to the *Literary World* for June 14, 1851], “Bâb himself was shot at Tabreez. The sect, however, did not die with him. It became more daring than ever, and last summer an attempt was made by some of the sect upon the life of the Shâh. He was out on a hunting excursion, when several persons approached him under pretence of making a representation. He reined up his horse, when one of the party discharged a pistol at him. A few small shot grazed his side. In an instant, the attendants of the king fell upon the assassins, killed one of them, and seized several others. An investigation was then entered upon, and Bâbees were seized in every direction. It is stated in the Government Gazette, published at Tehrân, that thirty-two persons were convicted, at the capital, of participation, more or less, in the design on the king’s life. Of these, six were sentenced to imprisonment for life, and the remainder were handed over to the doctors of the law, the nobles of the State, merchants, mechanics, &c., to be executed. The following is a literal translation from a number of the Persian newspaper.

“‘Mollah Sheikh ’Aly, who was the chief of this erring sect, and who regarded himself as the deputy of Bâb, and assumed the title of August Majesty, and who was the originator of this great iniquity [the attempt on the king’s life], was pronounced worthy of death by the learned doctors, according to the sacred law, and was

executed by them. Sayid Hassan, of Khorassan, who was one of the guilty adherents of this sect, was killed by the princes of the realm, with swords, balls, knives and daggers. Mollah Zain-ul-Âbideen, of Yezd, was first shot with a pistol by the exalted in rank the minister of finance, in his zeal for the faith, and in his attachment to the State, and afterwards was cut to pieces by the great ministers and high secretaries, with pistols, knives and daggers,' etc.

"The others were put to death in a manner similar to that described above.

"Orders were issued and forwarded to the governors of all the provinces in the kingdom, directing them to seize and send to the capital all persons suspected of holding Bâbee sentiments. Many were seized, and it is said that hundreds were executed. There was, however, no official, reliable account of the executions published, except what I have given you in the above translation.

"No one now dares to avow Bâbeeism. By doing so, he would be sure to lose his head.

"For a long time after the attempt on his life, the Shâh was extremely timid, and rarely ventured to appear in public. Even now, he is said to be extremely suspicious.'