

PERSIA.

We have been favoured with the following letter, dated Bushire, August 10th:

A Persian merchant, who has lately returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, had been for some time endeavouring here to prove that he was one of the successors of Mahomet, and therefore had a right to demand of all true Mussulmans to mention him as such in their profession of faith; he had already collected a good number of followers, who secretly aided him in forwarding his views. On the evening of the 23rd of June last, I have been informed from a creditable source, four persons being heard at Shiraz repeating their profession of faith according to the form prescribed by the new impostor were apprehended, tried, and found guilty of unpardonable blasphemy. They were sentenced to lose their beards by fire being set to them. The sentence was put into execution with all the zeal and fanaticism becoming a true believer in Mahomet. Not deeming the loss of beards a sufficient punishment for the believers in the impostor, they were further sentenced on the next day to have their faces blacked and exposed throughout the city. Each of them was led by a Mirgazah (executioner), who had made a hole in his nose and passed through it a string, which he sometimes pulled with such violence that the unfortunate fellows cried out alternately for mercy from the executioner and for vengeance from Heaven. It is the custom in Persia on such occasions for the executioners to collect money from the spectators, and particularly from the shopkeepers in the bazaar. In the evening, when the pockets of the executioners were well filled with money, they led the unfortunate fellows to the city gate, and there told them

"The world was all before them where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide."

After which the Mollahs at Shiraz sent men to Bushire with power to seize the impostor, and take him to Shiraz, where, on being tried, he very wisely denied the charge of apostacy laid against him, and thus escaped from punishment.

"Persia", The Times (London), Nov 1, 1845, p. 5, 6th col, http://www.newspapers.com/clip/20214/first_known_mention_of_babibahai/

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Among the recent arrivals from India we find a letter dated Bushire, August 10th, from which we make the following curious extract:—"A Persian merchant, who has lately returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, had been for some time endeavouring here to prove that he was one of the successors of Mahomet, and therefore had a right to demand of all true Mussulmans to mention him as such in their profession of faith; he had already collected a good number of followers, who secretly aided him in forwarding his views. On the evening of the 23rd of June last, I have been informed from a creditable source, four persons being heard at Shiraz repeating their profession of faith according to the form prescribed by the new impostor were apprehended, tried, and found guilty of unpardonable blasphemy. They were sentenced to lose their beards by fire being set to them. The sentence was put into execution with all the zeal and fanaticism becoming a true believer in Mahomet. Not deeming the loss of beards a sufficient punishment for the believers in the impostor, they were further sentenced on the next day to have their faces blacked and exposed throughout the city. Each of them was led by a Mirgazah (executioner) who had made a hole in his nose and passed through it a string, which he sometimes pulled with such violence that the unfortunate fellows cried out alternately for mercy from the executioner and for vengeance from heaven. It is the custom in Persia on such occasions for the executioner to collect money from the spectators, and particularly from the shopkeepers in the bazaar. In the evening, when the pockets of the executioners were well filled with money, they led the unfortunate fellows to the city gate, and there told them

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"Persia", Bradford Observer (London), Nov 6, p. 7

"Mahometan Schism", Literary Gazette and Journal of the Belles, Letters, Arts, Sciences, etc., 15 Nov, 13th page, <http://books.google.com/books?id=UcdLAAAYAAJ&pg=PA757#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Mahometan Schism.—A new sect has lately set itself up in Persia, at the head of which is a merchant who had returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, and proclaimed himself a successor of the Prophet. The way they treat such matters at Shiraz appears in the following account (June 23): Four persons being heard repeating their profession of faith according to the form prescribed by the impostor, were apprehended, tried, and found guilty of unpardonable blasphemy. They were sentenced to lose their beards by fire being set to them. The sentence was put into execution with all the zeal and fanaticism becoming a true believer in Mahomet. Not deeming the loss of beards a sufficient punishment, they were further sentenced the next day to have their faces blacked, and exposed throughout the city. Each of them was led by a mirgazah (executioner), who had made a hole in his nose and passed through it a string, which he sometimes pulled with such violence that the unfortunate fellows cried out alternately for mercy from the executioner and for vengeance from heaven. It is the custom in Persia on such occasions for the executioners to collect money from the spectators, and particularly from the shopkeepers in the bazaar. In the evening, when the pockets of the executioners were well filled with money, they led the unfortunate fellows to the city-gate, and there turned them adrift. After which the mollahs at Shiraz sent men to Bushire with power to seize the impostor, and take him to Shiraz, where, on being tried, he very wisely denied the charge of apostacy laid against him, and thus escaped from punishment.

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"Mahometan Schism", Patriot (London), Nov 20, 1845, p. 7, (one example of an echo)

rested.

A new sect has lately set itself up in Persia, at the head of which is a merchant who had returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, and proclaimed himself a successor of the Prophet. Four of his disciples were seized by the "orthodox" authorities, and led by a string, attached to a hole in the nose, through the streets of Shiraz, their beards being first burnt off, and their faces blackened.

London Nonconformist, Nov 26, 1845, p. 11 (one example of an abridged echo)

A MODERN MAHOMET—We see by late London papers that a schism has lately taken place among the followers of Mahomet, and a new sect set itself up in Persia, at the head of which is a 'merchant who had returned from a pilgrimage' to Mecca, and proclaimed himself a suscessor of the prophet. The following account is given of the treatment of those followers of a 'new light.'

Four persons being heard repeating their profession of faith, according to the form prescribed by the impostor, were apprehended, tried and found guilty of unpardonable blasphemy. They were sentenced to lose their beards by fire being set to them.—The sentence was put into execution with all the zeal and fanaticism becoming a true believer in Mahomet. Not deeming the loss of beards a sufficient punishment, they were further sentenced the next day to have their faces blacked and exposed throughout the city. Each of them was led by a mirgazah, (executioner,) who had made a hole in his nose and passed through it a string, which he sometimes pulled with such violence that the unfortunate fellows cried out alternately for mercy from the executioner and vengeance from Heaven.—It is the custom in Persia, on such occasions, for the executioners to collect money from the spectators, and particularly from the shopkeepers in the bazaar. In the evening, when the pockets of the executioners were well-filled with money, they led the unfortunate fellows to the city gate, and there turned them adrift. After which the Mollahs at Shiraz sent men to Bushire with power to seize the impostor, and take him to Shiraz, where, on being tried, he very wisely denied the charge of apostacy laid against him, and thus escaped from punishment.—*N. Y. Mirror.*

"A Modern Mahomet", Boon's Lick Times, (USA) April 4, 1846, p. 1, <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83016957/1846-04-04/ed-1/seq-1/>