

In the reign of Naoshirwan, the celebrated son of Kobád, an embassy came to the Persian court from the Emperor of China, bringing splendid presents. Among these are mentioned a panther formed of pearls with eyes of rubies; a silk robe of ultramarine blue of extraordinary splendour on which was represented in gold the Persian monarch with his courtiers round him; and a golden box to contain this robe on which was figured the head of a woman veiled with long hair, through which her beauty shone like a ray of light through the darkness.¹

In the same reign (567) is mentioned that the King of Persia sent an embassy to Wuti, Emperor of the Cheu dynasty, perhaps to engage his aid against the Turks who were then become formidable upon the Bactrian frontiers, as we see in the extracts from Menander, in note viii.²

In 638 Yezdijerd III, the last of the Sassanid kings, when hard pressed in the uttermost corners of his dominions by the Saracens, sent an envoy to seek help from the Emperor of China, now the great and powerful Taitsung. The Persian prince, obliged to retire into Turkestan, met in Sogdiana his messenger returning with Taitsung's refusal of assistance. This embassy is mentioned both by Chinese and Arabian historians; by the former the unfortunate king is styled *Yisséssé*.³ The son of this king, called by the Chinese Piloussé; *i.e.*, Perozes or Firúz, established himself in Tokharistan, apparently under some subordination to the Chinese Government. In 661 he reported to China that the Arabs were again pressing him hard, and some years later and prays his Imperial Majesty to accept it" (*Pauthier, de l'Auth.*, p. 60).

¹ *Malcolm's History of Persia* (Fr. Trans.), i, 211; Masudi, *Prairies d'Or*, ii, 201. In the latter's version the long-haired beauty is not a picture, but a living damsel who carried the casket.

² *Deguignes*, ii, 385.

³ *Remusat, l'Acad.*, viii, p. 103; *St. Martin*, ii, 19; *Klap.*, *Tab. Hist.*, p. 208; *Pauth.*, *de l'Auth.*, pp. 17, 61. The reply of the Chinese Emperor is thus represented by the Arab historian, Tabari:—"It is just that kings should help one another; but I have gathered from your own ambassadors what manner of men are these Arabs, what their habits, their religion, and the character of their leaders. People who have such a faith and such leaders will carry all before them. Try, then, to make the best of things by gaining their good graces" (*Not. et Extraits*, ii, 365).