

levelled with the ground]. And since that time he has had no successor; and there was an end to all his villainies.<sup>1</sup>

Now let us go back to our journey.

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NOTE 1.—The date in Pauthier is 1242; in the G. T. and in Ramusio 1262. Neither is right, nor certainly could Polo have meant the former.

When Mangku Kaan, after his enthronement (1251), determined at a great *Kurultai* or Diet, on perfecting the Mongol conquests, he entrusted his brother Kúblái with the completion of the subjugation of China and the adjacent countries, whilst his brother Hulaku received the command of the army destined for Persia and Syria. The complaints that came from the Mongol officers already in Persia determined him to commence with the reduction of the Ismailites, and Hulaku set out from Karakorum in February, 1254. He proceeded with great deliberation, and the Oxus was not crossed till January, 1256. But an army had been sent long in advance under "one of his Barons," Kitubuka Noyan, and in 1253 it was already actively engaged in besieging the Ismailite fortresses. In 1255, during the progress of the war, ALA'UDDIN MAHOMED, the reigning Prince of the Assassins (mentioned by Polo as Alaodin), was murdered at the instigation of his son Ruknuddin Khurshah, who succeeded to the authority. A year later (November, 1256) Ruknuddin surrendered to Hulaku. [Bretschneider (*Med. Res.* II. p. 109) says that Alamút was taken by Hulaku, 20th December, 1256.—H. C.] The fortresses given up, all well furnished with provisions and artillery engines, were 100 in number. Two of them, however, Lembeser and Girdkuh, refused to surrender. The former fell after a year; the latter is stated to have held out for *twenty years*—actually, as it would seem, about fourteen, or till December, 1270. Ruknuddin was well treated by Hulaku, and despatched to the Court of the Kaan. The accounts of his death differ, but that most commonly alleged, according to Rashiduddin, is that Mangku Kaan was irritated at hearing of his approach, asking why his post-horses should be fagged to no purpose, and sent executioners to put Ruknuddin to death on the road. Alamút had been surrendered without any substantial resistance. Some survivors of the sect got hold of it again in 1275-1276, and held out for a time. The dominion was extinguished, but the sect remained, though scattered indeed and obscure. A very strange case that came before Sir Joseph Arnould in the High Court at Bombay in 1866 threw much new light on the survival of the Ismailis.

Some centuries ago a *Dai* or Missionary of the Ismailis, named Sadruddín, made converts from the Hindu trading classes in Upper Sind. Under the name of *Khojas* the sect multiplied considerably in Sind, Kach'h, and Guzerat, whence they spread to Bombay and to Zanzibar. Their numbers in Western India are now probably not less than 50,000 to 60,000. Their doctrine, or at least the books which they revere, appear to embrace a strange jumble of Hindu notions with Mahomedan practices and Shiah mysticism, but the main characteristic endures of deep reverence, if not worship, of the person of their hereditary Imám. To his presence, when he resided in Persia, numbers of pilgrims used to betake themselves, and large remittances of what we may call *Ismail's Pence* were made to him. Abul Hassan, the last Imám but one of admitted lineal descent from the later Shaikhs of Alamút, and claiming (as they did) descent from the Imám Ismail and his great ancestor 'Ali Abu Tálib, had considerable estates at Meheláti, between Kúm and Hamadán, and at one time held the Government of Kermán. His son and successor, Shah Khalilullah, was killed in a brawl at Yezd in 1818. Fattah 'Ali Sháh, fearing Ismailite vengeance, caused the homicide to be severely punished, and conferred gifts and honours on the young Imám, Agha Khan, including the hand of one of his own daughters. In 1840 Agha Khan, who