

Palace, all the Barons of the different Provinces, who had been subject to his father Abaga, came and performed homage before him, and obeyed him, as was his due.¹ And after Argon was well established in the sovereignty he sent CASAN, his son, with 30,000 horse to the *Arbre Sec*, I mean to the region so-called, to watch the frontier. Thus then Argon got back the government. And you must know that Argon began his reign in the year 1286 of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Acomat had reigned two years, and Argon reigned six years; and at the end of those six years he became ill and died; but some say 'twas of poison.²

NOTE 1.—Arghún, a prisoner (see last note), and looking for the worst, was upheld by his courageous wife BULUGHÁN (see Prologue, ch. xvii.), who shared his confinement. The order for his execution, as soon as the camp should next move, had been issued.

BUKA the Jelair, who had been a great chief under Ábáká, and had resentments against Ahmad, got up a conspiracy in favour of Arghún, and effected his release as well as the death of ALINAK, Ahmad's commander-in-chief. Ahmad fled towards Tabriz, pursued by a band of the Karaunas, who succeeded in taking him. When Arghún came near and saw his uncle in their hands, he called out in exultation *Morio!*—an exclamation, says Wassáf, which the Mongols used when successful in archery,—and with a gesture gave the signal for the prisoner's death (10th August 1284).

Buka is of course the *Boga* of Polo; Alinak is his *Soldan*. The conspirators along with Buka, who are named in the history of Wassáf, are *Yesubuka*, *Gurgan*, *Aruk*, *Kurmishi*, and *Arkasun Noian*. Those named by Polo are not mentioned on this occasion, but the names are all Mongol. TAGÁJAR, ILCHIDAI, TUGHAN, SAMAGHAR, all appear in the Persian history of those times. Tagajar appears to have had the honour of a letter from the Pope (Nicolas IV.) in 1291, specially exhorting him to adopt the Christian faith; it was sent along with letters of like tenor addressed to Arghún, Gházán, and other members of the imperial family. Tagajar is also mentioned by the continuator of Abulfaraj as engaged in the conspiracy to dethrone Kaikhátu. ULATAI was probably the same who went a few years later as Arghún's ambassador to Cambaluc (see Prologue, ch. xvii.); and Polo may have heard the story from him on board ship.

(*Assem.* III. pt. 2, 118; *Mosheim*, p. 80; *Ilchan.*, passim.)

Abulfaragius gives a fragment of a letter from Arghún to Kúblái, reporting the deposition of Ahmad by the princes because he had "apostatized from the law of their fathers, and adopted that of the Arabs." (*Assemani*, u.s. p. 116.) The same historian says that Ahmad was kind and liberal to the Christians, though Hayton speaks differently.

NOTE 2.—Arghún obtained the throne on Ahmad's death, as just related, and soon after named his son Gházán (born in 1271) to the Government of Khorasan, Mazanderan, Kumis, and Rei. Buka was made Chief Minister. The circumstances of Arghún's death have been noticed already (*supra*, p. 369).