

Kipchak, under the command of Nogai, passed Derbend into the province of Shirwan. They were at first successful, but afterwards defeated. In December, Hulaku, at the head of a great army, passed Derbend, and routed the forces which met him. Abaka, son of Hulaku, was sent on with a large force, and came upon the opulent camp of Barka beyond the Terek. They were revelling in its plunder, when Barka rallied his troops and came upon the army of Abaka, driving them southward again, across the frozen river. The ice broke and many perished. Abaka escaped, chased by Barka to Derbend. Hulaku returned to Tabriz and made great preparations for vengeance, but matters were apparently never carried further. Hence Polo's is anything but an accurate account of the matter.

The following extract from Wassáf's History, referring to this war, is a fine sample of that prince of rigmarole :

"In the winter of 662 (A.D. 1262-1263) when the Almighty Artist had covered the River of Derbend with plates of silver, and the Furrier of the Winter had clad the hills and heaths in ermine; the river being frozen hard as a rock to the depth of a spear's length, an army of Mongols went forth at the command of Barka Aghul, filthy as Ghúls and Devils of the dry-places, and in numbers countless as the rain-drops," etc. etc. (*Golden Horde*, p. 163 *seqq.*; *Ilchan*. I. 214 *seqq.*; *Q. R.* p. 393 *seqq.*; *Q. Makrizi*, I. 170; *Hammer's Wassáf*, p. 93.)

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW BARCA AND HIS ARMY ADVANCED TO MEET ALAU.

‡ (BARCA advances with 350,000 horse, encamps on the plain within 10 miles of Alau; addresses his men, announcing his intention of fighting after 3 days, and expresses his confidence of success as they are in the right and have 50,000 men more than the enemy.)

CHAPTER XXVII.

HOW ALAU ADDRESSED HIS FOLLOWERS.

‡ (ALAU calls together "a numerous parliament of his worthies" * and addresses them.)

* "*Il asenble encore sez parlemant de grand quantités des buens homes.*"