

wars and calamities, the fertility of the province is such that the city of Tabriz now numbers nearly two hundred thousand souls, and is the commercial metropolis of Persia, while the province contains two million inhabitants, and the population is four times as dense as that of Persia as a whole. Ruins are found in many parts of Azerbaijan, but they do not give the impression of a country whose population and resources have irrevocably declined, but rather of a country which has suffered and recovered. If war and calamity are the chief causes of depopulation and the fall of nations, it is remarkable that Tabriz has lasted so steadily, and that Azerbaijan is so prosperous and populous in comparison with the rest of Persia.

A comparison of the four provinces of Khorasan, Azerbaijan, Kirman, and Seyistan is instructive. Khorasan, as Curzon tells us in his exhaustive work on Persia, has suffered from war more severely than has any other province of Persia. Its northern portion, where the rainfall is heaviest, and where the greatest amount of fighting has taken place, is to-day one of the most prosperous portions of Persia. It contains numerous ruins, but they are by no means such impressive features as are those farther south. The southern and drier part of the province is full of ruins, and has suffered great depopulation. Azerbaijan, which, as we have seen, has suffered from war more than any province except Khorasan, is the most prosperous and thickly settled part of Persia. The relative abundance of its water supply renders its future hopeful. Seyistan has suffered from wars, but less severely than the two preceding provinces. Nevertheless, it has been depopulated to a far greater extent. Its