

### The Armenians of Calcutta.

In the prosperity of the Mogul Empire, the Armenians carried on a traffic by land with India, which considerably increased soon after Shah Abbas the first deprived them of their own Prince, and redeemed them from Turkish slavery. The Persian Monarch, by address and the fortune of his arms, gradually drew the Armenians from Ararat, or Old Julfa, to the suburbs of Ispahan, consigned them to the protection of the Queen mother, and bestowed on them the site of that city known this-day to the Armenians by the name of new Julfa. Shah Abbas died, in 1629, after a reign of fifty years over Khorasan, and above forty-two over all Persia. The Monarch, before his decease, had the satisfaction to see that the Armenians, by their unwearied mercantile industry, increased the glory of his reign and the splendour of Ispahan.

Above two hundred years ago the Armenians first entered the Persian Gulph and carried on a trade from Surat to Persia, and from Persia to Venice, in consequence of which the manufacturers of India are this day known in Venice by the name of *Persiana*. In process of time more bold adventurers, allured by the hope of gain, left the Persian territories by the way of Gombroon, and connected themselves with the English on the Peninsula of India. The first conspicuous Armenian who conferred with the English on Political subjects was Coja Phanoos Kalender, a merchant of eminency, and an inhabitant of Ispahan: he, on the behalf of the Armenian nation, received from the English Company considerable encouragement and several distinct privileges for himself. The following extract I present to the reader as immediately connected with my designs:

“Whenever forty or more of the Armenian nation shall become inhabitants in any of the garrisons, cities or towns belonging to the Company in the East-Indies, the said Armenians shall not only have and enjoy the free use and exercise of their religion, but there shall be also allotted to them a parcel of ground, to erect a Church thereon for the worship and service of God in their own way. And that we will also, at our own charge, cause a convenient Church to be built of timber, which afterwards the said Armenians may alter and build with stone, or other solid materials, to their own good liking. And the said Governor and Company will also allow fifty pounds per annum during the space of seven years, for the maintenance of such priest, or minister, as they shall chuse to officiate therein.” Given under the Company’s larger Seal, &c. &c. June 22d, 1688.

The Armenians gradually came from Guzerat and Surat, to Benares and Behar: about one hundred and fifty years ago they formed a settlement at Sydadab in consequence

of a Phirmaund from the Mogul: when the Dutch settled at Chinsurah in 1625, they were followed by the Armenians: the Armenian Chiefs who joined the Dutch were of the Markar family from Shosh — a family, which, if we are to believe the yet-speaking marbles, were “favoured by Kings and Viceroy’s.” St. John’s Church at Chinsurah was founded by this family in 1695, and is the oldest Church the Armenians have in Bengal.

On the establishment of Calcutta, 1689, the Armenians, as well as the Portuguese, accepted the invitations of Charnock, and placed themselves under the protection of his Government: Kenanentch Phanoos was permitted to purchase the ground where the Church now stands, and which was used as their burying-ground until the year 1724, when the present Church was founded by national contribution under the auspices of the Aga Nazar: the steeple was added by the Huzoormall family in 1734: the architect was Cavond, an Armenian from Persia. In the year 1763 the Church was repaired and embellished by the deceased Aga Petrus Aratoon: in 1790 it was again considerably improved by the late highly respectable Aga Chackick Arackel, who presented the clock, and built houses for the clergy. The Church is called *St. Nazareth’s Church*, in honour of the founder. Previous to the year 1724 the Armenians performed divine service in a temporary Chapel about one hundred yards to the south of *St. Nazareth’s Church*.

The connection of the Armenians with the English re-ounds to the national honour of both parties, as we see in the grant made to Phanoos Kaleuder. The Marker family enjoyed the smiles of Kings and of their Lieutenants. Coja Serhaud was conjoined with Mr. Surman and Mr. Stephenson in the English embassy to the Imperial Court of Delhi in 1715. Our contemporaries have seen the great grandson of Phanoos Kaleuder, the late Aga Chackick Arackel, distinguished by the Honourable Company, who transmitted to him a miniature of the King of England.

Under the Mogul Government the Armenians had access to public offices, as many of them were very opulent merchants highly respected by the Omrahs, among whom they had such considerable influence, that the Greeks were induced to solicit their patronage, under which they were first introduced into Calcutta, and both people, until very lately, went under the general appellation of *Urmannee*. The Greeks, for their patronage, paid to the Armenian Church one Arcot rupee for every bale of merchandise they received from Dacca, Sylhet, Bandana, Assam, Patna, and Moorshedabad.

## The Armenian Church.

In Memory of  
**MRS. BARTIS WESKIN**  
 who Departed this Life  
 the 18th of Nov.  
 1781  
 Aged 70 years.

**ANN HICK**  
 the Wife of  
 Samuel Hick  
 who departed this Life on  
 Monday October 19th  
 1795  
 Aged 39 yrs. 6 m. 1 d.  
 Much regretted by  
 All who knew her

To the Memory of  
**MARCAR ISAAC**  
 Armenian of Smyrna  
 who departed this Life  
 On the 27th January 1808  
 Aged 31 years.

**FRANCIS D'SOZA**  
 Deceased the 18th of March  
 Aged 10 years  
 1808.

Sacred  
 to the Memory of  
**CATCHICK MOSES ARACKEL, ESQUIRE**  
 who departed  
 this Life on the 24th  
 January 1812—Aged 21 yrs.

## The Armenian Burial-Ground.

**GEORGE HAMSON**  
 He Died on the 9th February  
 Aged 50 years,  
 1809

Here Lies the Body of  
**AUBCAR KHAW CHATOOR**  
 who died 11th April 1813  
 Aged 14 Months.