



AFŠĀR, ḤĀJJĪ BĀBĀ

AFŠĀR, ḤĀJJĪ BĀBĀ, court physician under Moḥammad Shah Qājār. His real name is unknown, since Ḥājji Bābā is a name usually given to a child in memory and honor of his grandfather or great-grandfather. Son of an officer in ‘Abbās Mīrzā’s army, he was sent in 1226/1811 together with a number of others to study medicine and chemistry in England at the expense of the crown prince and under the supervision of Sir Harford Jones (*Yādgār* 1/5, pp. 30-35). During eight years of residence in England, probably part of which was spent at Oxford, he seems to have been seriously engaged in studies, though he did not acquire a degree (*Yaḡmā* 6/8, pp. 184, 318). On his return to Tabrīz he began to practice medicine in the court under Dr. C. Coemick and occasionally was sent as interpreter in the company of Persian missions abroad (e.g., he was included in Kōsrow Mīrzā’s embassy to St. Petersburg in 1245/1829-30). After the accession of Moḥammad Shah to the throne in 1250/1834, Ḥājji Bābā (then known as Mīrzā Bābā) secured the position of chief physician (*ḥakīmbāšī*) to the shah, who throughout his reign suffered from severe gout. According to *Maṭraḥ al-anzār*, Ḥājji Bābā “had complete control over the shah’s constitution.” Ḥājji Bābā died in Ša‘bān 1258/1842-43 (Moḥammad Ḥasan Khan E‘temād-al-salṭana, *Mer’āt al-boldān*, Tehran, 1294/1877, I, p. 580). His three sons later held official positions (*Jahān-e now* 3, p. 571). His brother Ja‘far-qolī Beg was trained as a mining engineer in Russia (*Yādgār* 1/7, p. 11). Ḥājji Bābā’s acquaintance with various foreigners seems to be the source of certain negative rumors about him (E. Rā‘īn [tr.], *Anjomanhā-ye serrī dar enqelāb-e mašrūṭiyat-e Īrān*, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966, p. 94). Stuart maintains that Ḥājji Bābā was extremely annoyed at Morier’s use of his name for the title of



his novel *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan*.

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