



'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA, MĪRZĀ AḤMAD KHAN

'ALĀ'-AL-DAWLA, MĪRZĀ AḤMAD KHAN (d. 1329/1911), the son of Moḥammad Raḥīm Khan 'Alā'-al-dawla. According to Bāmdād (*Rejāl* I, p. 90) he was born in 1283/1866-67, but this date is doubtful since he accompanied the shah on the royal voyage to Europe in 1290/1873 (*E'temād-al-saltāna, Montażam-e Nāšeri*, Tehran, 1298-1300/1881-83, III, p. 328), and it is unlikely that a child of seven or eight would have been among his retinue. In 1298/1881 'Alā'-al-dawla's father formed the special Manšūr group of guards. 'Alā'-al-dawla, who at this time bore the titles of first brigadier (*sartīp-e awwal*) and special royal attendant (*pīškedmat-e kāšša*), was appointed as their chief; later he also became the leader of the Mahdīya guards (both these groups received military training similar to that given to the Cossacks; *ibid*, pp. 370, 372, 378, 379). After the death of his father he received the title 'Alā'-al-dawla (*ibid.*, p. 381). Under Moẓaffar-al-dīn Shah he became governor of various provinces: Kūzestān in 1314/1896-97, Gorgān in 1317/1899-1900, Māzandarān in 1319/1901-02, Kermānšāh in 1320/1902-03, and Fārs in the same year. In 1323/1905 he was the governor of Tehran; as a result of the Russo-Japanese war the price of sugar, imported from Russia, increased. 'Alā'-al-dawla decided to bring it down by force and bastinadoed two sayyed merchants (14 Šawwal 1323/12 December 1905; Y. Dawlatābādī, *Tārīk-emo'āšer yā ḥayāt-e Yaḥyā*, Tehran, 1328-31 Š./1949-52, II, p. 10). This became a pretext for riots in the bazaar and the beginnings of the constitutional movement; as a result 'Alā'-al-dawla was dismissed from his post. In 1325/1907 he was again appointed



governor of Fārs, but he was prevented from assuming his post by the protests of the people of the province. Intellectually and culturally, 'Alā'-al-dawla had no interest in the principles motivating the constitutional movement, but once the new government was established, he opposed the rule of Moḥammad-'Alī Shah, apparently in order to protect his own interests; moreover, he and his friends did not like the conditions prevailing at the court (Dawlatābādī, *Tārīk-emo'āšer* II, p. 244). For his part, the shah threatened him with execution (ibid., p. 245), and once had him severely bastinadoed (Kasravī, *Mašrūṭa* III, p. 508). In 1325/1907 'Alā'-al-dawla was arrested and sent into exile to Fīrūz Kūh along with Jalāl-al-dawla (the son of Żell-al-solṭān) and Sardār Maṣṣūr-e Raštī (Fatḥallāh Akbar), but he was soon allowed to return. In the same year a bomb was thrown into his house; he was suspect in the eyes of both government officials and the constitutionalists. In 1329/1911 he was asked for his unpaid taxes and as a result openly began to plot against Morgan Shuster, the then American advisor to the Ministry of Finance. When the Russian ultimatum for the dismissal of Shuster caused some agitation, the constitutionalists shot 'Alā'-al-dawla in front of his own house on 9 Du'l-ḥejja 1329/1 December 1911.

E'temād-al-salṭana characterizes him as an ill-mannered and obnoxious man (*Rūz-nāma-ye kāṭerāt*, ed. Ī. Afšār, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966, p. 102); in any case he seems to have been strong and resolute. In 1304/1886-87, while on a pilgrimage to Iraq, he refused to surrender his rifle to the Ottoman authorities at the Iraqi border (ibid, p. 466). In 1903 when he was governor of Fārs, he was asked to serve as host in Būšeher for Lord Curzon, who had sailed up the Persian Gulf with a number of British warships. Since Curzon did not come ashore, 'Alā'-al-dawla thought it would be a sign of weakness to meet him on board and did not go to see him (M. Maḥmūd, *Tārīk-erawābeṭ-e siāsī-e Īrān o Engelīs*, Tehran, 1344-45 Š./1965-66, VI, pp. 1709, 1738). Apparently this brought about his dismissal from the governorship of Fārs (ibid, p. 1745).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Given in the text.