

For some months after the murder of Attabeg, there was discord between the Shah and the National Assembly, and dissatisfaction on the part of the people. In February, 1908, an attempt was made on the Shah's life by throwing a bomb at his automobile. He was uninjured though several men and horses were killed. He immediately went into retirement in the palace, until June 4th, when he suddenly came out and took up his residence in one of his gardens just outside and west of the city. Here he collected a large army in camp. Negotiations continued between the Shah and the Parliament, and the Shah captured and punished several prominent men. Finally the Shah ordered the Russian Colonel who was in charge of the Cossack regiment to bombard and destroy the Parliament building and all buildings known to be headquarters of Revolutionary secret societies. This was done on the forenoon of June 24, 1908, and by the Shah's permission much pillaging on a large scale was done that day and the next. Large and costly Persian rugs in the Parliament building were slashed into pieces small enough for a man to carry and great mirrors were shattered and each man took what he could get. Some of the plunderers worked on a larger scale and we saw them taking their spoils through the city by mule loads and wagon loads. Among the houses plundered were those of the Zil es Sultan, an uncle of Mohammed Ali Shah, and the Zarh ed Doleh whose wife was the Shah's aunt. In the Zil es Sultan's house were heirlooms of great value that had come down in the family through hundreds of years—carpets, pottery, and curios. These were ruthlessly destroyed or carried off. The Zarh ed Doleh had in his house perhaps the rarest and most valuable collection of Persian books and manuscripts in existence. They were all destroyed or carried away.