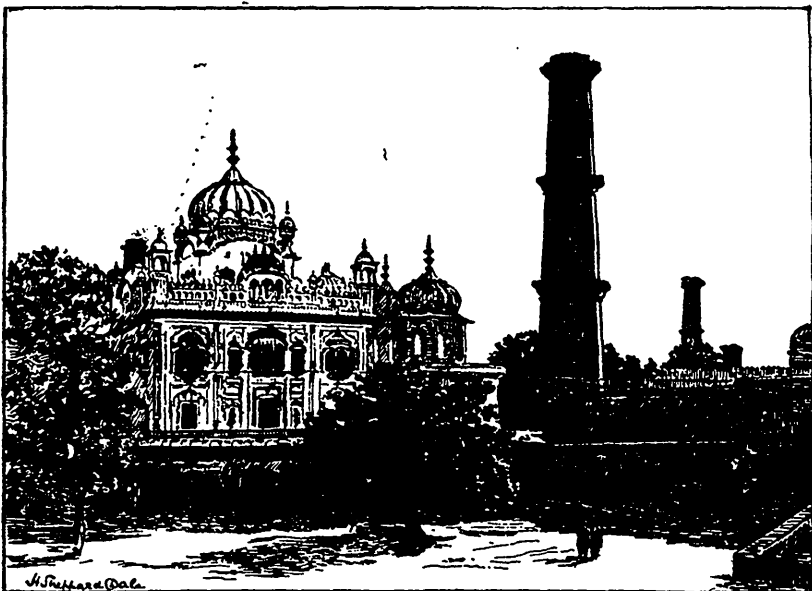


death. There is one sustained, harmonious, majestic sorrowfulness of pride in it, from the verse on the entrance which says that 'the pure of heart shall enter the Gardens of God,' to the small, delicate letters of sculptured Arabic upon the tombstone, which tell, with a refined humility, that Mumtazi-Mahal, the 'Exalted of the Palace,' lies here, and that 'Allah alone is powerful.'

"The garden helps the tomb, as the tomb dignifies the garden. It is such an orderly wilderness of rich vegetation as could only be had in Asia, broad flags of banana belting the dark tangle of banyan and bamboo, with the white pavements gleaming crosswise through the verdure. Yet if this magnificent Taj rose amid the sands of a dreary desert, the lovely edifice would beautify the waste, and turn it into a tender parable of the desolation of death, and the power of love, which



RANJIT SINGH'S SAMADH, LAHORE.

is stronger than death. Its magnitude astounds. The plinth of the Taj is over one hundred yards each way, and it lifts its golden pinnacles 244 feet into the sky. From a distance this lovely and ærial dome sits therefore above the horizon like a rounded cloud. And having paced about it, and saturated the mind with its extreme and irresistible loveliness, you enter reverently the burial-place of the Princess Arjamand, to find the inner walls of the monument as much a marvel of subtle shadow and chastened light, decked with delicate jewellery, as the exterior was noble and simple. On the pure surface of this Hall of Death, and upon the columns, panels, and trellis-work of the marble screens surrounding the tomb, are patiently inlaid all sorts of graceful and elaborate embellishments—flowers, leaves, berries, scrolls, and sentences—in jasper, coral, bloodstone, lapislazuli, nacre, onyx, turquoise, sardonyx, and even precious gems. Moreover,