

STUDIES IN ISLAM

BY

THE REV. CANON SELL, D.D.

In the transliteration of Arabic names I have followed the rules of the Royal Asiatic Society, namely :—

<u>th</u>	<i>for</i>	ﺕ	t	<i>for</i>	ط
h	”	ﺕ	z	”	ظ
<u>kh</u>	”	ﺕ	‘	”	ع
<u>dh</u>	”	ﺕ	<u>gh</u>	”	غ
”	”	ﺕ	q	”	ق
q	”	ﺕ	,	”	ء

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CORRIGENDA

Page ii, *above* ¶ *insert* §

„ 2, line 17, *for* mazhab *read* madhhab

„ 15 „ 26 „ Ḥáfiẓ „ Ḥáfiẓ

„ 54 „ 1 „ has „ have

„ „ „ 23 „ rak'ata „ rak'ats

„ 255, last line, *after* § *insert* !

STUDIES IN ISLÁM

I

MYSTICISM IN ISLÁM

‘MYSTICISM means an immediate communion, real or supposed, between the human soul and the soul of the world, or the Divine Spirit. The hypothesis on which it rests is that there is a real affinity between the individual soul and the great immanent spirit.’¹ In the following pages I describe mysticism as it exists among a certain class of Muslims.

Writers with mystical tendencies appeared in the first century after the Hijra. Amongst the earliest mystics was Rábi‘a al-‘Adawiyya, a Palestinian woman, and Abú Hishám, who died A.D. 777. He was the first to whom the name of Šúfí was given. Rábi‘a taught the excellency of divine love, but did not enter into all the subtleties of later Šúfí teaching.² The real founder of Šúfíism (tasawwuf) is said to have been Abú Sa‘íd bin Abi‘l-Khayr, who was born A.D. 967.³ He is said to have been the first

¹ Dean Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, p. 234.

² A story is told about some theologians who came to visit her in her illness and sought to reconcile her to her chastisement. She said, ‘He is not sincere in his prayers, who does not, when he beholds the Lord, become totally unconscious of the fact that he is being chastized. His thought is of Him, not of it.’ She was asked if she hated the Devil. She replied, ‘My love for God leaves me no time to hate the Devil.’

³ The various theories about the origin of Šúfíism are given in Browne’s *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, pp. 418-24, and in *RASJ*, April 1906.

master of theosophic verses. He once met Avicenna and said of him, 'What I see, he knows.' The philosopher replied, 'What I know he sees.' His disciples wore a woollen garment and from the word *Şúf*, which means wool, they obtained the name *Şúffís*. The phrase 'he donned wool' (*labasa's-safa*) is used of a person who enters upon a monastic or contemplative life. His enemies denounced him to the *Khalífa*, and, as he was dragged, fettered, through the streets of Mecca, he said, 'This is one of the gifts of God; all He does is sweet.' The *Khalífa*, touched by his piety, set him free.

Another of the early founders of *Şúffísm* was *Dhu'n-Nún* (d. A.D. 860). He was a pupil of *Imám Málík*, the founder of the *Málíkí School* (*mazhab*) of law. He was the first to expound and explain *Şúffí* doctrines.

In course of time two branches were founded, one by *Bisťámí* (d. A.D. 874) and the other under *Junayd* (d. A.D. 909). The similarity of the views propounded by the *Şúffís* to those of the neo-Platonic philosophy, to which in its later more philosophic form *Şúffísm* owes much, proved attractive to the *Shí'ahs*, amongst whom there was a strong Gnostic element.

It was a reaction from the burden of a dry monotheism, of a rigid law and a stiffened ritual. The orthodoxy of the Faithful did not meet the needs of the more imaginative minds of some of the Eastern races, and *Şúffísm*, supplying this want, found a home amongst them. 'From the earliest times there has been an element in the Muslim church which

was repelled equally by traditional teaching and by intellectual reasoning. It felt that the essence of religion lay elsewhere: that the seat and organ of religion was in the heart.' ¹ Again, the great political movements and the tribal factions in the early history of Islâm gathered round divergent religious dogmas, a fact plainly seen in the very distinct theology of the *Shí'ahs*, the followers and the partisans of the *Khalífa* 'Alí. *Şúffísm* lent itself readily to the cause of the 'Alids, to whom the notion of the infusion of divine attributes into 'Alí and into the *Imáms*, his successors, was a most welcome idea. The allegorical explanation of religious duties and principles, ceremonial and moral, sometimes went so far as to substitute for these duties absolute devotion to the *Imám*, and to the sacred cause of the *Shí'ahs*. The preachers of this new doctrine travelled far and wide and mixed with men of all sorts and conditions. In this way ideas gleaned from Zoroastrians, Hindus, and Gnostics may have entered into *Şúffísm* and largely affected it. The third century A.H. found the *Zindíq* and the *Mu'tazila* controversies at their height. It was an earnest attempt to bring reason to bear on religious matters and resulted in a system of scholasticism. But from all this the Persian mind revolted. Reason and logic were no substitute for revelling in the sense of the beautiful, or for meditating on the love of God and the union of the soul with the divine.

The hard and fast system of Islâm, with its clear-cut dogmas and its idea of finality in doctrine and

¹ Macdonald, *Religious Attitude and Life in Islâm*, p. 159.

law, would seem the most unlikely place in which to find a system such as Ṣúffism, and, indeed, its strictly orthodox representatives look with suspicion on mysticism; but the Qur'án and the Traditions contain its germs. 'At one time they represent Alláh as having created the world once for all and as now removed to His seat in the 'arsh, or highest heaven, having left His creatures to work out their own salvation or condemnation by their own free will, according to the lights given them by the prophets; at another time they represent Him as the "Subtile Being," immanent and ever working in His creatures, the sum of all existence, the fulness of life, whereby all things move and exist, the omnipresent, not only predestinating, but originating all actions, dwelling in and communing with each individual soul.' ¹ The Ṣúffís gathered up ideas like these and taught that this closer communion with God, this looking behind the veil, this cultivation of the 'inner eye,' ² would enable them to see and understand much which was hidden from those who held that there was no real existence except that which was plain and evident to reason and sight.

Ṣúffís rely on such verses as, 'Everything is perishing (hálik), except the face (reality) of Alláh' (Súratu'l-Qaṣaṣ xxviii. 88). 'Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face of Alláh' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 109). By adopting the Shí'ah principle of allegorical interpretation (ta'wíl) the Ṣúffís claimed

¹ Introduction to Whinfield's *Gulshan-i-Ráz*, p. viii.

² دل یافت دیدگاه که مقیم هوای تست The heart hath gotten an eye, always desiring Thee. *Diwān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīzī*.

that every verse of the Qur'án contained a meaning known only to the elect and the initiated, that is, to themselves.

The wars and tumults in the early days of Islām, the rationalistic tendencies of the 'Abbásid period and the stern dogmatism of orthodox Muslims were all conditions favourable to the growth and development of the mystical system of the Ṣúffís. With them the true object of life was to bring it into harmony with the divine will of Alláh, conceived of as a transcendental personality; to attain this end love was a most potent factor, and ecstasy its outward form.

The Arabian philosophers made known to their readers the Neo-Platonic philosophy, which they had learnt from Syrian Christians, and the Ṣúffís adapted Qur'anic terms to the new ideas they thus gained. 'The world of phenomena and man, everything else in fact but Alláh, they identified with Not-being, absolute nonentity, which like a mirror reflects Being.' ¹ According to their theory the Infinite includes all Being, evil as well as good; but as this is not consistent with the goodness of the Alláh of the Qur'án, evil is said to proceed from Not-being. ²

¹ 'Now a thing can only be known through its opposite—Light by Darkness, Good by Evil, Health by Sickness, and so on, hence Being could only reveal itself by Not-Being, and through the product of this admixture (to use a not very accurate expression), namely, the Phenomenal World. Thus Eternal Beauty manifests itself, as it were, by a sort of self-negation, and what we call "Evil" is a necessary consequence of this manifestation.' Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, p. 440.

² Introduction to *Gulshan-i-Ráz*, p. vii. Some of the early Christian Mystics held that 'Evil has no substance.' 'There is nothing,' says Gregory of Nyassa, 'which falls outside of the Divine Nature, except moral evil alone. And this, we may say paradoxically, has its being

As in man there is some spark of real Being, he would seem to be above all law, but this difficulty is got over by saying that he is now in the state of Contingent Being and so needs the discipline and restriction of law.

According to the Šúfís, souls existed before bodies, in which they are now imprisoned and in which condition, being separated from the joy they had in a pre-existent state, they look forward to the death of the body for their full manifestation, and the full fruition of all their aspirations. The Šúfís are fertile in reasons for eluding the authority of the text of the Qur'án, as regards the resurrection of the body, a dogma which conflicts with their view of the return of the soul to God. When a Šúfí says that God and he are one, he does not mean that the divine enters into the human by a kind of infusion (ḥalúl), nor does he say that two substances combine to make one (itiḥád), but that God and the soul are one in the sense that all that exists is God and nothing exists apart from Him.

'I,' 'We,' 'Thou,' 'He' are all one thing,

For in Unity is no duality.¹

They argue that if it was lawful for the burning bush to call itself God in the presence of Moses,² so man may surely do the same.

in not-being. For the genesis of moral evil is simply the privation of being. That which, properly speaking, exists is the nature of the good.' (Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 25.) So also in the *Gulshan-i-Ráz*, we read 'Being is purely good in whatever it be; if it contains evil it proceeds from other.'

من و ما و تو و او است یک چیز * که در وحدت نباشد هیچ تمیز¹
Gulshan-i-Ráz, line 449.

² And when he came to it (the bush), he was called to, "O Moses! Verily, I am thy Lord; therefore put off thy shoes, for thou art in the holy place of Towa." *Súratu Tá Há* xx. 11-12.

Come into the valley of peace, for at once
The bush will say to thee, 'Verily I am God.'
The saying 'I am God' was lawful for the bush,
Why should it be unlawful for a good man to
say so?¹

The reason given for the creation of the world is that God desired to manifest the mode of His existence in Himself, in accordance with the Tradition, 'I was a hidden treasure and I desired to be known, so I created the creation in order that I might be known.' It is the business of the Šúfí to find this treasure, to attain to the true knowledge of God and union with Him. This self-existence God manifests by the mode of His existence outside of Himself, just as the image of the sun is seen in water. Thus in the *Gulshan-i-Ráz* we read:—

Not-being is the mirror of absolute Being,

The shining of the Truth is reflected in it.

Not-being is the mirror, the world the reflection, and
man

Is as the eye reflected of the hidden person.²

So long as this phenomenal illusive existence remains, absolute Being is hid and the answer to 'Show Thyself to me' is, 'Thou shalt not see me,'³ Thus this Not-being is the evidence of Being.⁴ The Not-being is the mirror which reflects the Being. God alone is all, outside of Him is non-existence,

در آ درویش ایمن که ناگاه * درختی گویدت آئی انا الله¹

روا باشد انا الله از درختی * چرا نبود روا از نیک بخشی

عدم آئینه هستی هست مطلق * کز و پیدا ست عکس تابش حق²

عدم آئینه عالم عکس و انسان * چو چشم عکس دروی شخص پنهان

Gulshan-i-Ráz, lines 134, 140.

³ *Súratu'l-A'raf* vii. 189.

⁴ به بین آن نیستی کو عین هستیست⁴ *Gulshan-i-Ráz*, line 273.

an illusion, just as one seems to see a circle when a light is twirled round.

The whole world is an imaginary thing,
Like a point whirled round in a circle.

The influence of the divine upon the human, which brings about union, is called *faid*, or an emanation, an overflowing. This is caused either by *nidā*, or calling; by *jadhb*, or attraction. These emanations flow down from God each moment, calling the soul and attracting it to Himself. Union, then, means the receiving these emanations into oneself, the being drawn more and more by the ardour of the desire for them, by abandoning all else. The idea of *jadhb*, or attraction, is given by Shams-i-Tabrizi in this verse,

The motion of every atom is towards its origin,
A man comes to be the thing on which he is bent,
The soul and the heart by the attraction of wish and desire

Assume the qualities of the Beloved.¹

We have seen that the words, 'I am a hidden treasure and would fain be known,' lie at the basis of the *Ṣūfī* system, and that in creation God came forth from internal to external manifestation. It thus becomes a manifestation of Him produced by intelligence, which again is the only means by which man can reach his true ideal and final aim, the perfect knowledge of God. But man sprang from that intelligence which originated the universe and so to it he must return. This is the '*nazūl*,' or descent and the '*urūj*,' or the ascent which embrace the

چنین هردر باطل عودت است * هرچه بود میل کسی آن شود¹
جان و دل از جذبه میل و هوش * همصفت دلبر و جانان شود

whole of the life of a *Ṣūfī*. The truly spiritual man seeks by entering into some religious Order and by placing himself under a *Pīr*, or spiritual director,¹ to travel this upward road and at last attain to union with the-divine. But before we describe the *Tarīqat*, or spiritual path, there are a few other points to be noticed, as forming essential parts of *Ṣūfī* theories. All phenomenal illusions must be laid aside before there can be any hope of realizing the Absolute Being. The whole world must be looked upon as Not-being.

One day, when expounding his views, *Jalālu'd-Dīn* said, 'Thou seest nought, save that thou seest God therein.' A *darwish* came forward and said that the use of the term 'therein' indicated a receptacle, and that it might be argued that God would thus be comprehended, whereas He is incomprehensible. To this objection *Jalālu'd-Dīn* replied thus, 'He comprises all and in Him all things have their being. He is then the receptacle also, and comprises all existences, as the *Qur'ān* says, "He comprises all things." ' It is stated that the *darwish* was silenced and became an obedient disciple.

All created beings, then, being included in the category of Not-being, the perfect man strives to rise to the state of Contingent Being, where for a

¹ According to *Jalālu'd-Dīn Rūmī*, *Ṣūfīs* attach great importance to this office.

Having chosen this Director be submissive to him.
His hand is none other than the grasp of Allāh.

چون گرفتنی پیرهن تسلیم شو * دست او جز قبضه الله نیست
Mathnawī, Book I, Tale x.

time laws and creeds are needed for his guidance; but he does not remain there. He seeks to ascend to real Being and so to be free from all outward restraints, to be in no relation at all to right and wrong.

To the man of God right and wrong are alike,
The man of God has ridden away from Not-being.¹
I will be a lover of Not-being, not of existence,
For the beloved of Not-being is more blessed.²

Sense and reason cannot transcend phenomena, so they must be ignored in favour of the 'inner light.' This faculty is called *ṭaur*. 'In addition to reason man has a certain faculty by which he can understand hidden mysteries.' It is called by Shams-i-Tabrizi the 'eye of the heart,' which is constant in its desire for God and by Jalálu'd-Dīn the 'inward sense.'³ A modern Persian poet, Hálíf of Isfahán, writes, 'Open the eye of the heart, that thou mayest behold the spirit; that thou mayest see that which is not to be seen.'⁴ This idea is not peculiar to Ṣúfís. It was held by other mystics. It is what Hugo of St. Victor calls 'the eye of the soul,' a separate faculty by means of which there is immediate intuition of deity. Thus do the pure in heart see God. In such moments the soul is transported beyond sense and reason, to a state similar to that enjoyed by angelic natures. This faculty of *ṭaur* is

مرد خدا را چه خطا و صواب * مرد خدا گشت سوار از عدم
Diwán-i-Shams-i-Tabrizi, Ode viii.

بر عدم با هم نه بر موجود هست * ز آنکه معشوق عدم وافی ترست
Mathnawi, Book V, Tale ii.

³ For what is inspiration (وحی) but the speaking of the inward sense
Mathnawi, Book I, Story vi.

چشم دل باز کن که جان بینی * آنچه نادیدنیست آن بینی⁴

to be used to gain the knowledge of God, apart from whom there is no real existence. Before explaining further the use of this faculty, it is, however, necessary for us to give some idea of the Ṣúfí cosmogony.

Ṣúfís divide the works of God into two kinds—the perceived world and the conceived world. The former is the material visible world, familiar to us all; the latter is the invisible, spiritual world, and also the world of command, so called from the words of the Qur'án used in creation, *كن فكان* *Kun fa kán* 'Be, and it was.'

The first thing which issued forth was the Primal Element, called by some the primary intellect. Thus in the *Akhlāq-i-Jalāli* we read that 'the first principle which at the mandate, "Be and it was," issued by divine power from the chaotic ocean of inexistence was a simple and luminous essence, termed the Primary Intellect, and also by the great teachers of mysticism and investigation, the Muḥammadan Spirit.' It is said that the verse, 'And it was not the business of an hour, but even as the twinkling of an eye, or quicker still' (*Súratu'n-Nahl* xvi 79) refers to this creation of the Primal Element—the *Jauhar-i-awwál*. It has many other names, such as the Pen, the Spirit of Muḥammad, the Constructive Spirit, the Universal Reason (*'aql-i-kull*). It is the perfection of wisdom, is ever near to God, and is ever seeking Him. It is through the Primal Element that God's commands issue forth. Thus, as the Pen, it writes the commands of God. 'When the Qáf of His power breathed on the Pen, it cast thousands of pictures on the page of Not-being.' In

proof of this Ṣūfīs refer to the verse, 'N, by the Pen and what they write' (Súratu'l-Qalam xviii. 1). They say that 'N' represents the world of power, the 'Pen' the Primal Element, and that 'what they write' refers to the simple natures.

The final end and aim of all is man, who by a process of evolution is at last arrived at. This process is shown in the following verses:—

I died as inanimate matter and arose a plant.
I died as a plant and rose again as an animal.
I died as an animal and arose a man,
Why then should I fear to become less by dying?
I shall die once again as a man
To rise an angel perfect from head to foot.
Let me, then, become non-existent, for non-existence
Sings to me in loudest tones: 'To Him we shall
return.'¹

Thus the final end of all creation was man.

There is no other final cause beyond man,
It is disclosed in man's own self.
That which was made last, consider to be first,
The last which was made was the soul of Ādam.²

از جمادی مردم و نامی شدم * وز نما مردم بحیون سرزدم¹
مردم از حیوانی و آدم شدم * پس چه ترسم کی ز مردن کم شدم
حمله دیگر بمیرم از بشر * تا برآرم از ملائکه بال و پر
پس عدم گردم چون ارغنون * گویدم کانا الیه راجعون

Mathnawi, Book III, Tale xvii. The English version is from Whinfield's *Mathnawi*, p. 159. See also a similar passage in Book IV, Tale ix and in the *Gulshan-i-Rāz*, lines 317-339. In the latter passage man's journey is described from the lowest point, through the vegetative, animal and human grades, up to the highest point of obliteration of all consciousness and perception of the external phenomenal world and immersion in the sea of divine glory.

نه آخر علت غائی در آخر * همی گردد بذات خویش ظاهر²
هر آنچه آید بآخر پیش می بین * در آخر گشت پیدای نفس آدم

Gulshan-i-Rāz, lines 263, 261.

So also Browning, who says:—

Thus He dwells in all,
From life's minute beginnings, up at last
To man—the consummation of this scheme
Of being, the completion of this sphere of life.

Man is complete when he has gained intelligence, but intelligence was the Primal Element; so it is the beginning and the end, the first and the last, and thus the mystic circle is complete. If man would be perfect he must rise up to the Primal Element and fulfil the words: 'From Him was the origin and to Him is the return.' It is this which is the aim and object of the traveller's journey. Thus Jalālu'd-Dīn¹ says:—

From realms of formlessness, existence doth take
form,
And fades again therein. 'To Him we must return.'²

Ṣūfīs claim for man the privilege of displaying the divine attributes. This is a sacred deposit committed to him. 'Verily we proposed a deposit to the heavens and to the earth and to the mountains between them, but they refused the burden and we entrusted it to man.'³

Just as the universe is the mirror of God, so the heart of man is the mirror of the universe. The Ṣūfī who would know God or know the truth must look into his own heart. In order to avoid sin and

¹ It is interesting to note that the great Ṣūfī poets, Sanā'ī, 'Attār and Jalālu'd-Dīn were all Sunnis. The Ṣūfīs were not separate sects, but as devotees of mystical tendencies are found amongst both Sunnis and Shī'ahs.

صورت از بی صورتی آمد برون * بار شد کانا الیه راجعون²
Mathnawi, Book I, Tale v.

³ *Súratu'l-Mūminūn* xxiii. 72.

error and to gain holiness and wisdom, he must turn his eye inward, for

All the earth I wandered over seeking still the beacon
bright,
Never tarried in the day time, never sought repose at
night,
Till I heard a reverend preacher all the mystery
declare,
Then I looked within my own bosom, and 'twas shining
brightly there.

We have already stated that the function of the Primal Element was to receive from God and to convey what was so received to the world. Thus it includes both the saintly and the prophetic offices. Some hold that each of these functions of the Primal Element needs an exponent, that Muḥammad is the prophetic exponent and that Al-Mahdi, the last of the Imāms, will be the saintly one. Others say that the Primal Element and Muḥammad are identical, and that, therefore, both offices are vested in him. This idea throws light on expressions which seem to consider prophets and Imāms as almost divine.

As man, then, sprang originally from the Primal Element, the Ṣūfī seeks to return to it. On the one side of the circle is nazūl or descent, which includes the whole process of development until man becomes possessed of reasonable powers; on the other side, is 'urūj or ascent, which includes each stage from the first dawn of the reasoning powers of man until he is finally absorbed in the Primal Element. This is the Origin and the Return of man. The ascent is called the Ṭarīqat, or road, in passing progressively from stage to stage

(*Maqāmāt*) of which the traveller gains in each one an increasing knowledge of the mystical dogmas of Ṣūfism. Before setting out upon the journey he must be possessed of the spirit of humanity and acquire capacity. These are referred to, according to Ṣūfīs, in the verse, 'And when I had fashioned him and breathed my spirit into him.'¹ The words, 'when I had fashioned him,' refer to the capacity bestowed for purifying one's self from all qualities and dispositions. The words, 'breathed my spirit into him,' refer to the gift of the spirit of humanity. The moral ideal of the Ṣūfī is unselfishness, patience, humility trust in God and single-hearted obedience to His will. This is the real fruit of progression on the Ṭarīqat, but it is gained only by spiritual meditation which prepares the Ṭálīb for the rich ecstatic experiences.

If the man who desires to gain truth is in real earnest and striving to control his desires, he is called a Ṭálīb, a seeker. If the Ṭálīb feels drawn onward he is majdhūb, or attracted and becomes a Muríd, or disciple, and attaches himself to some Pír, or spiritual director. He must now submit without a murmur to all that may await him and yield implicit obedience.² In the words of Ḥáfz he must be absolutely submissive,

His hand I stay not, though his falchion slay me.
So, too, Madame Guyon,

Be not angry, I resign
Henceforth, all my will to Thine,

¹ Sūratu'l-Hijr xv. 29.

² This is why he is called in the *Mathnawī* (Book I, Story i) 'the son of the time present' (ابن الوقت), because he regards neither the days past nor the days to come, but is a passive instrument moved by the divine impulse of the moment.

I consent that thou depart,
 Tho' thine absence breaks my heart,
 Go, then, and for ever too,
 All is right that thou wilt do.

This absolute submission gains its reward, which she describes thus :—

This was just what Love intended.
 He was now no more offended.
 Soon as I became a child,
 Love returned to me and smiled.
 Never strife shall more betide,
 'Twixt the Bridegroom and the Bride.

FitzGerald in a free translation has caught the spirit of 'Umar *Khayyám's* verse which, under the metaphor of a chess board and chess men, makes submission not even an effort of the will, but looks on human beings as mere automata, moved by fate and at last hurled into non-existence.

'Tis all a chequer-board of nights and days
 Where destiny with men for pieces plays ;
 Hither and thither moves and mates and slays,
 And one by one back in the closet lays.

Sinful desires, sorrow and pain lie at the root of Self, and self is an illusion ; but the entire negation of Self clears the way for the apprehension of the truth that there is no existence save that of God, who is the only Reality ; all else is illusion. Life and its pleasures veil the truth from the eye of man. These must be set aside before the vision of the One is seen. This is what is meant by passing from negation to affirmation, from ignorance to knowledge. The initial stage is now passed and the man becomes a *Sálík*, or traveller, whose whole time and thought are given up to *sulúk*, and the

prosecution of this mystical journey.¹ This he must do until he completes the upward ascent of the circle and arrives at the perfect stage.

An important condition of entering on the journey is to think on the mercies of God and to ignore reason, which cannot discern the true light. It is only as man closes up all his intellectual apprehensions and ceases to strive to know, that he attains to the real knowledge of that which transcends the mind of man.

The stages² of the mystical journey are eight in number, service, love, abstraction, knowledge, ecstasy, the truth, union, extinction.³ It is not easy to fix the words of *Ṣúfí* poets and to say to which stages they refer ; but the ideas relating to all are there, though in no systematic order. Generally speaking, the second stage is the popular one with the poets, who delight in descriptions of God and man as the Beloved and the Lower. The *Ṣúfí* seeks for a type of heavenly love and finds it in earthly love. Beauty 'stands upon the threshold of the mystical world' and so earthly love, idealized in the frenzy of *Majnún* for *Layla* and the passion of

¹ In the *Lawá'ih* this advice is given,
 'O *Sálík* in the way idle talk reject,
 All roads save that to Unity reject.'

² They are not official grades, like those of the *Ismá'ilians* and the *Druses*, but just stages on the road to holiness and true knowledge.

³ St. Augustine arranges the ascent of the soul in seven stages. The last, union, which he calls 'the vision and contemplation of Truth,' is not a step but the goal of the journey. Of the blessedness of this state he says : 'I entered and beheld with the mysterious eye of my soul, the light that never changes, above the eye of my soul, above my intelligence. It was something altogether different from any earthly illumination.' (Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, p. 131). In the *Mantiqu'at-Tayr*, the poet 'Attár describes the seven stages as seven valleys. They are respectively valleys of the Quest, of Love, of Knowledge, of Detachment, of Unity, of Bewilderment and of Annihilation.

Zulaykha for Yūsuf, seems to him the nearest resemblance to the highest of all love, that of the soul for God. This is the key to ma'rifat, or spiritual knowledge, and so the basis of the highest life. 'The eye brings with it only what it longs to see,' and the man is blind to the deep things of the mystic life until the inner eye is made intelligent by love. Thus Hâtif, a modern poet, says, 'By love many things will be made easy which in the sight of Reason are very difficult.'¹

Jāmī in the *Lawā'ih* speaks of love as a special grace of devout souls, a grace reason cannot find, and says:—

Oh, may it bring the dawn of certitude,

And put to flight the darksome hours of doubt.

Human love symbolizes the divine, the tavern is an oratory, intoxication the confusion caused by the sight of the Divine, the locks of the beloved are the visible attributes of God in nature² which like the curls on the face partly hide and partly reveal it. In the *Diwān-i-Hāfiz* we read, 'I said to him, "Knowest thou what the claim of the curls of the Beloved means?"' He said, "Hāfiz makes a complaint of the long and dark night of separation," that is, these chains bind the soul not yet worthy of the full light.

No doubt Šūfīs often press the language of the poets too far, and show a faulty exegesis, for not all their poems are mystical. Whilst words bearing

هود آسان ز عشق کاری چند * که بود پیش عقل بس دشوار¹

² The varied pictures I have drawn on space,
Behold what fair and goodly sights they seem!
One glimpse I gave them of my glorious face.

The last line is literally, 'I showed them a hair's point of my curl' سر موی از زلف خرد نمودم—

an allegorical signification were often used to veil what to the devout Muslim would otherwise have been heresy, they often express just the mind of a man of pleasure, fond of a Bohemian life. Anyhow, Hāfiz has not the credit of being a man of ascetic life. He delighted 'to float luxuriously between heaven and earth, and this world and the next, on the wings of a poetical expression, that might serve indifferently for either.'¹

The ordinary theologian cannot enter on the mystic path, for he is still in the bondage of dogmas and so wanders about in darkness.² He cannot grasp the full meaning of the Unity. When it is fully realized it leads the Šūfī to annihilate self in the absolute Truth, to become eternal in the Absolute, to be made one with the One and to abstain from evil, or, as Hāfiz says:—

Hāfiz, when preaching unity with unitarian pen,

Blot out and cancel every page that tells of spirits and
of men.

The ordinary theologian is in the bondage of taqlīd, that is, enslaved to dogmas and to creeds, believing blindly what has been believed by those who have preceded him. Now, the Šūfī gains his knowledge of divine things by direct intuition, and not through ordinary theological instruction, nor by scholastic methods which deal with the attributes

¹ FitzGerald, quoted in Leaf's *Versions from Hāfiz*, p. 17, where the whole subject is discussed.

² کلامی کو ندارد ذوق توحید * بتاریکی در است از غیم تقلید²
Gulshan-i-Rāz, line 108.

So also in the *Rubā'iyāt* we read
Some look for truth in creeds and forms and rules;
Some grope for doubt or dogmas in the schools;
But from behind the veil a voice proclaims
Your road lies neither here nor there, O fools.

of quantity, quality, and relation. He purifies his soul from sensible forms and images, so that from all intellectual apprehensions and all operations of the mind he may

Dismiss cares and be clean of heart,

Like the face of a mirror on which there is no reflection,

When it becomes clear of images, all images are contained in it.¹

Even contemplation of the external works of nature will not give the light. Šúfis even go so far as to set aside any external religious revelation. Indeed, indifference to all forms of religion is a cardinal Šúfi dogma.²

Thus Shams-i-Tabrīzi:—

While my loved phantom dwells in the pagoda's bound,

'Twere mortal sin, should I the Ka'ba compass round.

The Ka'ba is but a church, if there His trace be lost;

The church my only Ka'ba, while He there is found.³

So Jalálu'd-Dīn:—

Say not that all these creeds are false,

The false ones capture hearts by the scent of truth.

Say not they are all erroneous thoughts,

There is thought in the world void of reality.

اندیشها رها کن و دل ساده شو تمام * چون روی آینه که بنقش و نگار نیست¹
چون ساده شد از نقش همه نقشا دروست

Diwān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīzi, Ode xiii.

² In the seventh tale of the second book of the *Mathnawī* it is said that Moses heard a shepherd praying thus, 'O God shew me where Thou art that I may become Thy servant, clean Thy shoes, dress Thy hair and fetch Thee milk.' Moses rebuked the man for his foolish prayer. He was ashamed and ran away. God then rebuked Moses, saying, 'To each race I have given different ways of praising me. It is not the words I care for, but the spirit in which they are said. Various are the ways of devotion but if genuine all are accepted.'

در تنگده تا خیال معشوقه ماست * رفتن بطواف کعبه از عین خطاست³

گر کعبه از و بوی ندارد گنش است * با بوی وصال او گنش کعبه ماست

Diwān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīzi, p. 238.

He who says everything is true is a fool;

He who says all is false is a knave.¹

So also Ḥāfiz:—

Between the love of the cloister and that of the tavern
there is no difference,

For wherever love is, there is the face of the Beloved.

Wherever the pious works of the Muslim hermitage
display their beauty.

There are the bells of the Christian convent and the
name of the cross.

Jalálu'd-Dīn Rūmi says:—

Cross and Christian, from end to end

I surveyed; He was not on the cross.

I went to the idol temple, to the ancient pagoda,

No trace was visible there.

I bent the reins of search to the Ka'ba,

He was not in that resort of old and young.

But it was all of no avail, for the loved one came
not into view, until he could say:—

I gazed into my own heart;

There I saw him, He was nowhere else.

In the whirl of its transport my spirit was tossed,

Till each atom of separate being I lost.²

Jānī says:—

O Lord, none but thyself can fathom thee,

Yet every mosque and church doth harbour Thee.

In thus setting aside all external revelations and
in removing from the mind all impressions from

پس نگو کاین جمله دینها باطلند * باطلان بر بوی حق دام داند¹
پس مگو جمله خیالست و ضلال * بی حقیقت نیست در عالم خیال
آنکه گوید جمله حقست احمقیست * و آنکه گوید جمله باطل او حقیقت

Mathnawī, Book II, Tale xi.

چلیپا و نصرانیان سر بسر * بیهمدم اندر چلیپا نمود
به بت خانه رفتم بدیر کهن * در وهیج رنگی هویدا نبود
بکعبه کشیدم عنان طلب * در آن مقصد پیر و پیرا نبود
نگه کردم اندر دل خویشتن * در آن جاش دیدم دگر نبود
حقیقت چنان مست و حیران شدم * که از هستیم ذره پیدا نبود

outward phenomena, all names and words are set aside, the heart reflects each new created form, and is illuminated with divine glory. This is set forth in a striking allegory by Jalālu'd-Dīn, the greatest of all the Ṣūfī poets. A Sultān held an audience of Chinese and of Greek painters, who both claimed superiority. The Sultān gave to the two parties houses on opposite sides of the street, in order that the skill of both might be seen at the same time. The Chinese painted their house with many colours and in a most gorgeous manner, while the Greeks used no paint but simply burnished and polished the house allotted to them. When all was ready the Sultān went to inspect the work and much admired the beauty of the house painted by the Chinese. He then turned to the house of the Greeks, and

Just as the Greeks have put their curtain back,
Down glides a sunbeam through the rifted clouds,
And, lo, the colours of that rainbow house
Shine, all reflected on those glassy walls,
That face them, rivalling : the sun hath painted,
With lovelier blending, on that stony mirror
The colours spread by man so artfully.
Know, then, O friend ! Such Greeks the Ṣūfīs are,
Owning nor book nor master, and on earth
Having one sole and simple task to make
Their hearts a stainless mirror for their God.
Is thy heart clear and argent as the Moon ?
Then imaged there may rest, innumerable,
The forms and lines of heaven.¹

The fact is that reason is considered helpless in such a case ; if the heart is cleansed ' from the stain of being ' it is right with God. All is then well

¹ *Maḥnawī*, Book I, Tale xiv.

and the inner light is seen, light and life are found, certainty takes the place of doubt and love for ever rules the man. Just as the motion of an atom is towards its origin, a man becomes the thing on which he is bent.¹ Under the direction of the Pīr, the neophyte will be shown all this and be guided aright.

The traveller must know his origin, must purify himself from all notions of self, and then he will pass from stage to stage and his journey will be one long revelation, leading him on from the mazes of Contingent Being to the Necessary Being and away from all darkness and defect.²

The effect of love at last reaches man, but only those who have the spirit of humanity and the capacity realize its full effect. Some gain philosophic wisdom only ; some become religious in the ordinary sense and follow the traditional systems ; but some become intoxicated with divine love.³ Such are the true travellers, and in them the effect increases, until they get freedom from all dogma and all ritual and even from existence itself. The desire of such an one so grows that it is said of him, ' The ocean-hearted, mighty drinker, who at one draught drinks up existence and so obtains release from affirmations

جَنَبِشِ هَر ذَرَّةٔ بَا مِلْ خُودِ اَسْتُ * هَر چِهٖ بُوْدِ مِیْلِ کَسِی اَنْ شُوْدِ¹

Diwān-i-Shams-i-Tabrīzī, p. 254.

² ' Behind the whole corporeal universe there lies another universe, an ideal or spiritual universe. This is the real universe ; that which we see with our physical eyes is, considered apart from it, but a shadow or reflection, so it is the knowledge of the reality, and not the image, that the soul needs, for her nature belongs essentially to that which is real and deathless.' Bonner, *The Nineteenth Century*, September 1927, p. 338.

³ *Gulshan-i-Rāz*. یکی از یک حرامی گشته عاشق³

and negations and becomes free from all need of worship and ceremony, now seizes the skirt of the Ancient of the wine-house.¹ The 'Ancient' is the Pír by whom the Muríd, or disciple, has been initiated, and under whose training he at length arrives at this exalted state. The Šúfí values the Qur'án as a divine revelation, but in practice he substitutes the voice of the Pír, his spiritual director.

But all that takes time and he must commence at the first stage, that of servitude. He becomes an 'Ábid, a servant. At this stage the honour of man lies in his being under compulsion, not in his possession of free will.

The next stage is that of love, 'the Sovereign Alchemy which transmutes the base metal of humanity into the Divine Gold.' Jalálu'd-Dín says :—

Love Him whom saints and prophets all have loved ;
Through whom alone we all have lived and moved.²

But to realize this love perfectly, all notions of time and space must be set aside.

Straightway lift yourself above time and space,
Quit the world and be yourself a world to yourself.³

The outward forms of religion and custom no longer bind the traveller. Distinction between the creeds passes away. The authority of law is over the 'I,' but

When 'I' and 'thou' remain not in the midst,

¹ *Gulshan-i-Ráz*, line 836.

عشق آن بگزین که جمله انبیا * یافتند از عشق او کار و کیا
Mathnawí, Book I, Tale i.

یکی راه بر تو از کون و مکان * جهان بگذار و خود در خود جهان شو
Gulshan-i-Ráz, line 299.

What is mosque, what is synagogue, what is fire temple ?¹

The idea of 'I' and 'we' is for this lower worldly state, where praise and prayer ascend to God ; but the higher state is this :—

Immersed in the Beloved we shall be,
When in one soul shall we be 'I' and 'thee.'²

Jámí in the poem called *Salámán and Absál* says :—

Love is only
Perfect when itself transcends
Itself, and, one with that it loves,
In undivided Being blends.

Having thus learnt to throw off forms, looking forwards to the true union, the traveller can advance one stage more. He becomes a Záhíd, or abstracted. Contemplation and silence are now his duty. He must not respond to any earthly love, for the 'lover of God must be silent.'³ This entire abstraction is called tajríd, literally, a stripping off, and, in Šúfí language, a turning away from self and all else, the mortification of all desires, sensual and intellectual. It is only as this abstraction is persevered in and made perfect that the light of divine guidance shines upon the path, and the Sálík rises to this high dignity.

The light then comes and the next stage, that of Ma'rifat, or knowledge, is entered upon. It is by the light of the truth that truth is known. The

من و تو چون نماند در میان * چه مسجد چه کنشت چه دیر خانه
Gulshan-i-Ráz, lines 504-5.

تامن و توها همه یک جان شوند * عاقبت مستغرق جانان شوند
Mathnawí.

چون عاشق اوست خاموش پاش
4

traveller has no real existence of his own, it is only by the communicated knowledge of the existence of God that he can know Him. 'Beside Him is no knower or known.' The true knowledge of God is now revealed to the traveller, who learns the reality of that for which he has so long been seeking.¹

We have already seen that God created the worlds in order to manifest forth His glory. 'The first thing created was 'Aql, or Reason; Logos, the unspoken Thought, then the spoken Word. From this 'Aql, or Logos, emanated the 'aql-i-kull, or Universal Soul, the sum of all the divine attributes, called the 'ayān-i-thābita.' The light of these divine ideas then shone upon the darkness of Not-being and each atom of Not-being reflected one of them. Heaven and the Angels, for instance, reflected the attributes of mercy and hell, and the devils the attributes of terror. At last the soul of man, which reflects all the attributes, merciful and terrible, was created. 'Man is thus a microcosm, or recapitulation of the whole universe. On the one side he is luminous with the light of the merciful attributes, but on the other he is black with the darkness of the terrible ones, reflected in his essential Not-being.' He is thus created 'half to rise and half to fall' and has power to refuse the evil and choose the good. It is the object of the 'Arif, or Gnostic, to penetrate into this divine scheme and to understand how

¹ This mystic knowledge differs from ordinary knowledge ('ilm). It is the direct knowledge of God, gained not by human reason, but by revelation, or through apocalyptic visions. As a light from above it flashes into the heart. It may be compared with the gnosis of the theosophy of Hellenism. The Ṣūfī who gains the knowledge is now an 'Arif—one who knows.

divine power can be exercised without impugning divine goodness. The difficulty of the existence of evil, and the apparent contradiction of absolute sovereignty and free will face him, as it does all men, but through ma'rifat, or gnosis, he learns to understand it all and to reconcile the apparently irreconcilable.¹

This high knowledge leads on to Ḥāl, or wajd, which is a state of ecstasy. Ḥāl is defined to be 'a state which occurs to the heart spontaneously and without effect, like grief or fear, or desire or joy, and which ceases as soon as the natural dispositions of the soul manifest themselves.' Ḥāl is a state of feeling which God causes to pass over the heart; it comes and goes as God wills; it is often transient, but, if God wills, it may abide permanently.

Happy that time when we leave ourselves,
When we shall be rich in deepest poverty.²

The next stage is that of Ḥaqīqat, the Truth. This is called by some the stage of saintship, as being that at which saints and prophets arrive. It has its most perfect and complete example in Muḥammad, who is the Saint and Prophet, *par excellence*.

¹ 'The 'Arif, or Gnostic, had passed through many grades and a long course of discipline under various Pīrs, or spiritual directors, ere he had attained to the Gnosis, which viewed all existing religions as more or less faint utterances of that great underlying Truth with which he had finally entered into communion.' (Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, p. 421). Dhu'l-Nūn, a Copt or Nubian by race, was an early exponent of this doctrine of Ma'rifat. He is said to have been a student of Greek wisdom, but he was regarded by orthodox Muslims as a free-thinker (zindīq). See *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ix, p. 12.

² *Gulshan-i-Rāz*, line 690.

Individual saints are, as it were, his members,
For he is the whole and they are the parts.¹

The next stage is that of Waṣl, or union with God. 'By the help of God's grace I am now become safe, because the unseen King says to me, "Thou art the soul of the world."' God is the world and the Ṣūfī at this stage becomes identical with the divine essence and can say with Maṣṣūr Hallāj, 'I am God.'² He now ignores all separate existence, and nothing remains but real Being.

Thus Jalālu'd-Dīn :—

There is no 'two' unless you are a worshipper of form;
Before Him who is without form all becomes one.

Thus Ma'arri :—

Thy beauty is the medicine of their care,
Union with thee their hope that kills despair,
Unless with loving hands thou lead them on,
Their souls will go the way their hearts have gone.

Sa'dī says that the pinnacle of union cannot be reached until individual existence (selfhood) is destroyed (Ode lxii. 10), and that he who loses his heart in the street of the Beloved will find it again in the light of the Beloved's face : in other words, the Ṣūfī, who loses his (phenomenal) self in God, in the light of the Divine Reality will find his real self.

The following passage from the *Gulshan-i-Rāz* describes this stage more fully :—

The glory of the 'Truth' admits of no duality,
In that glory is no 'I,' nor 'we,' nor 'thou.'

وجود اولیا او را چو حضور * که او کلیست و ایشان همچو جزو¹

¹ Manṣūr Hallāj was beheaded in A.H. 309 for this saying, which was looked upon as heresy. Before his execution he was subjected to the most frightful tortures. For an excellent account of this remarkable man see Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, pp. 426-36.

'I,' 'we,' 'thou,' and 'He' are all one thing,
For in unity there is no distinction of persons.¹

The verse of the Qur'ān, 'Oh! thou soul which art at rest, return to thy Lord, pleased and pleasing Him : enter thou among my servants, and enter thou my Paradise' (Súratu'l-Fajr lxxxix. 27-30) is interpreted to mean that God and the blessings of His presence are to be found in the heart of the believer. Thus Jalālu'd-Dīn says :—

The Prophet said, that God hath declared,
I am not contained in aught above or below.
I am not contained in earth, or sky, or even
In highest heaven, know this for a surety, O beloved !
I am contained in the believer's heart !
If you seek me, search in such hearts.²

He also said :—

The heart is love's register,
The Book (Qur'ān) is not better than it.³

In Ṣūfī language the heart is a non-material essence, which like a mirror reflects the reality of all things.

This union with God is sometimes based on the verse 'He is the first and the last : the Seen and the Hidden' (literally, the exterior and the interior)

جناب حضرت حق را دوئی نیست * در آن حضرت من و ما و توئی نیست¹
من و ما و تو و او هست یک چیز * که در وحدت نباشد هیچ تمیز
Gulshan-i-Rāz, lines 448-9.

گفت پیغمبر که حق فرموده است * من ننگم هیچ در بالا و پست²
در زمین و آسمان و عرش نیز * من ننگم این یقین دان ای عزیز
در دل مومن نغمه ای عجز * گر مرا جوئی در آن دلها طلب
Mathnawi, Book I, Tale viii.

There is a tradition to the same effect.

قلوب المومنین عرش الله تعالی

The hearts of believers are the throne of God.

دل دفتر عشق است * کتابی به آیین نیست³

(Súratu'l-Ḥadīd lvii. 3). Šúfīs explain the term exterior (zāhir) to be everything that appears, so that all things are God; but the orthodox say that the terms 'exterior and interior' are only proofs of His existence nōt of His nature.

Jalálu'd-Dīn describes how the emancipated man is exalted above heaven and earth and rises to a state past all description. It was:—

Ecstasy and words beyond all ecstatic words,
Immersion in the glory of the Lord of glory,
Immersion from which escape was none
Except as ocean, no one knew him more.¹

A favourite illustration is that of a number of candles, each of which gives light; but the full light of all cannot be divided into separate parts. One light and one only is diffused.

He also says, 'If the highest and most glorious unity, which is God Himself, is to be united on the Soul, it must be through oneness.' At this stage the desire for heaven may be a hindrance to the perfect man.

What have we to do with desire for the highest heaven
When our journey is to the rose-garden of unity.

Ghazālī defines this absorption as a state when 'a man is so utterly absorbed that he perceives nothing of what is passing around, yet while absent, as it were, from all things whatsoever, he is journeying to his Lord and then *in* his Lord.'

The next and final stage is Faná, or extinction.

حال و قالی از ورای حال و قال * غرق گشته در جمال ذوالجلال¹
غرقة نی که خلاصی باشدش * یا بجز دریا کسی بشناسدش

Mathnawi, Book I, Tale vii.

This is known as *hulūl* by which in the present life God enters into the human soul. The idea is based on the old Persian belief about reincarnation and to the Neo-Platonic theories on the subject.

Now 'man, the final product of this evolutionary chain, returns to his original home.' It is annihilation in God (Faná fi'lláh). This 'absorption in the Deity, the merging of the individual soul of the Saint in the universal soul of God is the ultimate aim of Šúfīism.'¹

Jalálu'd-Dīn says, 'Annihilate thyself before the One. If thou wouldst shine with splendour of day, burn up thy separate existence as black as night.'² Báyazīd of Bístām was the great exponent of this doctrine.

A story is told of how a gnat came to Solomon and complained about the enmity of the wind. The King summoned both parties to his presence. The wind came and instantly the gnat flew away. This is said to represent those who seek the presence of God and when He appears, they vanish. In other words there must be annihilation of self, before there can be union with God.

Jalálu'd-Dīn relates that one day a lover knocked at the door of the Beloved, who said, 'Who is there?' 'It is I,' said the lover. The answer came, 'This house will not hold me and thou.' The sad lover wandered in the wilderness for a short time and fasted and prayed, and, after a year had passed, returned and knocked at the door once more. Again the question was put, 'Who is there?' 'It is thou,' replied the lover. The door was immediately opened. The Beloved and the lover met and became one.

¹ Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, p. 63

² *Mathnawi*, Book I, Tale x.

Reason is called upon to tread the way of annihilation in order to get the larger life. 'O Reason, to gain eternal life, live everlastingly the way of death.'¹ So long as there is any sense of individuality left, even prayer is not real.

When your essence is free from all stain (of individuality),

Then it is that your prayers are a joy.

There remains then no distinction,

Knower and known are one and the same.²

It is the mark of the perfect man that, after being lost to self, he abides in God; he passes from plurality to unity. This is the *baqā* after *fanā*. So in Farīdu'd-Dīn 'Aṭṭār's delightful Allegory, the *Mantiqū'l-Ṭayr*, the Simurg, who in Ṣūfī poetry represents the Supreme Being, addresses the birds, who represent the seekers of the divine way, the Ṭarīqat, thus: 'Annihilate yourselves now in me joyfully and gloriously so that you find yourselves in me.'

The object of the Sālik is now to 'lose all consciousness of individual existence—to sink in the ocean of Divine Life, as a breaking bubble into the stream on the surface of which it has for a moment arisen.'

All creeds, all law, are things of the past. They had a temporary use, but are now no more. Jalālu'd-Dīn compares them to water flowing down a mill stream which provides for man's needs, but

¹ *Diwān-i-Shams-i-Tabrizi*, Ode iv.

² چو ذات پاک گردد از همه عین * نمازت گردد آنکه قره العین
نماند در میان هیچ تمیز * شود معروف و عارف جمله یک چیز
Gulshan-i-Raz, line 412.

when once these have been supplied the water is turned off and the mill stops.¹ At this stage it is useless to enunciate the dogma of the Unity even. The true light is gained not by accepting a dogma, but by the annihilation of self in the darkness of the night of non-existence. The seeker after all his search, the traveller after all his wearisome journey, passes behind the veil and finds—nothing. Sad ending to so much effort.

The circle is now complete. In the downward descent law was obeyed and creeds were believed; in the upward ascent² the hold on both was loosened more and more, until at last the traveller became the azād, or the free; the be-shara', or one without law; the majdhūb-i-muṭlaq, or the entirely devoted.³ So 'his end is joined to his beginning,' and he re-enters the normal element from which he originally sprung. This casting aside of all law is the logical result of Pantheism. If God be all in all, and man's apparent individuality a delusion of the perceptive faculty, there exists no will which can act, no conscience which can reprove or applaud.⁴

¹ *Mathnawi*, Book I, Tale ii.

² In this ascent ('Urūj) a man at first is a believer (Mū'min), then a recluse (Zāhid), then a knower ('Arif), then a saint (Walī) and lastly a prophet (Nabī) and when his mission is accomplished he is the seal (Khatm). Then Muḥammad is called 'The Seal of the Prophets' (Khatmu'l-Anbiyā').

³ Jadhb or attraction is the act of God drawing a man towards Himself. Man is entangled in the affairs of this world until the grace of God attracts him from it. Many Ṣūfis remain at this stage and do not pass from it. He who does go farther on the Path is called a Majdhūb-i-Sālik.

⁴ 'The Divine Immanence is a truth essential to religion. . . . The Christian Apostle can claim as a belief common to himself and his Greek audience, that "in God we live and move and have our being," and that "we also are His offspring." But the Divine Immanence may be interpreted either consistently with, or antagonistically to,

At this stage there is often some confusion of thought in Persian poetry, for the perfect devotee is sometimes represented as obedient to law.

The Saint is obedient as to his essence,
He is a devotee in the street of essence.
However his work is finished at the time
That his end is joined again to his beginning.¹

The explanation seems to be that, having made the ascent to the divine, he now descends again, not as at first, but *in* God, in order that he may make disciples of others still in darkness and error.² Thus, for the sake of example only he is obedient. Those whom he gains then make the ascent as he has done, and so all Šūfis come at last to the stage when 'Gracious is He to those who return to Him.'³

In an ode of much beauty in the original, Shams-i-Tabrizi describes the perfect Šūfi. A few lines are here given.⁴

an "ethical monótheism," such as was reached by Hebrew Prophets, and is the basis of Christian theology. If immanence is understood as *identity*, the universe and God are so absolutely one that man has no freedom, no responsibility, no sin and no guilt, and God is expressed in the crimes and vices of human history as in the progress of mankind in truth, righteousness, grace: then we have pantheism, and that is essentially opposed to the Christian faith.' (Garvie, *Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus*, p. 523). This seems to be the result of the Šūfiistic doctrine of absorption in the Divine.

بود تابع ولی از روی معنی * بود عابد ولی در کوی معنی¹

ولی وقتی رسید کاوش با تمام * که بآغاز گردد باز انجام

These obscure verses are explained by a Persian commentator to mean that, though the man is absorbed in the Truth, he is still obedient as to his essence, because by obedience he obtained his exaltation.

² This is the mark of the Perfect Man, who not only journeys to God, i.e. passes from plurality to unity, but *in* and *with* God, i.e. continuing in the unitive state, he returns with God to the phenomenal world, from which he set out and manifests unity in plurality.' Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islām*, p. 163.

³ Sūratu Bani Isrā'īl, xvii. 27.

مرد خدا صفت بود بجه شراب * مرد خدا گنج بود در خراب⁴

The man of God is drunken without wine,
The man of God is a treasure in a ruin.
The man of God is made wise by the Truth,
The man of God is not learned from books.¹
To the man of God right and wrong are alike.²

The earlier Muḥammadan mystics sought to impart life to a rigid and formal ritual,³ and though the seeds of pantheism were planted in their system from the first, they maintained that they were orthodox. 'Our system of doctrine,' said Al-Junayd, 'is firmly bound up with the dogmas of the Faith, the Qur'ān, and the Traditions.' There was a moral earnestness about these men which frequently restrained the arm of unrighteous despotism, and their sayings seem to show some appreciation of the spiritual side of life. Thus, 'As neither meat nor drink profit the deceased body, so no warning avails to touch the heart full of the love of the world.' 'The work of the holy man doth not consist in this, that he eats grain and

مرد خدا عالم از حق بود * مرد خدا نیست فقیه از کتاب

مرد خدا را چه خطا و صواب

Diwān-i-Shams-i-Tabrizi, Ode viii. The translation of this, and of several other quotations, is by R. A. Nicholson, whose edition of the *Diwān* is an excellent one.

¹ Mere learning from books will not make a theologian. The knowledge of God comes by عشق love, the spiritual faculty, intuition, illumination which is opposed to عقل, the intellectual faculty.

² The Šūfi is above law. All he does, good or bad, is in harmony with the divine will.

³ Of them Professor Brown says, 'We find their utterances reflecting little more than a devout quietism, an earnest desire for something deeper and more satisfying to ardent souls than the formalism generally prevalent in Islām, and a passionate love of God for His own sake, not for the sake of the rewards or punishments which He may bestow. . . . So 'Aṭṭār quotes the saying of a Šūfi, "O God, Thou knowest that in mine eyes the Eight Paradises weigh no more than the wing of a gnat compared with the honour which Thou hast shown me in giving me Thy love."' *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, p. 424.

clothes himself in Şúf, or wool; but in the knowledge of God and in submission to His will.' 'Hide thy good deeds as closely as thou wouldst hide thy sins.' 'He will never gain heaven, who considers himself perfect.' 'Boast not brother; whatsoever thou hast done, God knows thy heart.' 'The light of religion alone can quench the fire of lust.' 'Wait content, God knows what is best.'

Now and again men are warned that they will reap as they sow, and in a striking passage Jalálu'd-Dín describes how at the day of judgement every thought which has passed through the mind in this life will be embodied in a visible form, just as the ideas of the architect find an outward expression in the completed building, or as a tree in the development of the seed placed in the ground.¹

In the wild days when Muslim chiefs went forth to conquer or to die, when dynasty succeeded dynasty in bewildering rapidity, when might was right and autocratic power ruled, sometimes well oftener ill, the Şúfí poets acted as men of heroic mould and gave to Sultáns and to Sháhs, fearless of all consequence, sound and good advice. Thus the poet Jámí to a ruler could say :—

Thou art a shepherd, and thy flock the people
To help and save, not ravage and destroy,
For which is for the other, flock or shepherd?

Even in a book like the great poem of Jalálu'd-Dín, in which Şúffism pure and simple, with all its disregard for the outward restraints of an objective

¹ *Mathnawi*, Book V, Tale viii.

revelation, is inculcated, the author now and again teaches sound and wise principles.

To trust in God, and yet put forth our utmost skill,
The surest method is to work His holy will,
The friend of God must work.

Again he says :—

The Prophet cried with a loud voice,
Trust in God, yet tie the camel's leg.
Hear the adage, 'The worker is the friend of God ;'
Trust in Providence, but neglect not to use means.¹

In course of time pantheistic ideas were super-added to the quietism of the earlier Şúfís, a step neither long nor difficult. An extreme form of it is found in Al-Halláj,² who in his ecstasies said, 'I am the Truth,' and claimed that the Deity had become incarnate in him and that he was God. So the effect of the system has been bad and has worked for evil in Islám. Pantheistic in creed and too often antinomian in practice, it possesses no regenerative power. The divorce between the religious and the worldly life has been disastrous. Şúffism has discriminated between those who by renouncing the world profess to know God, and those whom it terms the ignorant herd. When it was believed that there was identity of essence between God and man, a distinct and separate existence could not be allotted to either. When man's apparent individuality is looked upon as a delusion of the perceptive faculty, there seems no

گفت پیغمبر باواز بلند * باتوکل زانو اشتر ببند¹
رمز الکاسب عیب الله شنو * از توکل در مسبب کاهل نشو

¹ *Mathnawi*, Book I, Tale v.
² For a good account of Al-Halláj, see Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, pp. 42-836.

room left for will or conscience. 'A movement animated at its outset by a high and lofty purpose has degenerated into a fruitful source of ill. The stream which might have been a fertilizing river has become a vast swamp, exhaling vapours charged with disease and death.' Moral laws and ceremonial observances have only an allegorical meaning. Creed's are but fetters cunningly devised to limit the flight of the soul; all that is objective in religion is a restraint to the reason of the initiated. The mystic finds great joy in the movements of his soul, and is apt to treat more lightly of the necessary contact of the mind with the things of sense, and to neglect essential duties.

How it all deadens the sense of sin is seen in 'Umar *Khayyám's* verse,

Khayyám! why weep you that your life is bad;
What boots it thus to mourn? Rather be glad.
He that sins not can make no claim to mercy;
Mercy was made for sinners—be not sad.

In a collection of short fragmentary pieces like the *Diván* of *Háfiz*, or in a longer poem like the *Mathnawī* of *Jalálu'd-Dīn*, the pearls of *Ṣūfīstic* lore, to use an eastern metaphor, are loosely strung together, and it is only very patient students who can find the esoteric meaning of the poet.¹ There is, however, a small poem less widely known, but

¹ Forbidden things are spoken of as if they were lawful; such as wine, taverns, curls of the mistress and sweethearts. The explanation given is that *Ṣūfīs* look at the internal features of things, exchange the corporeal for the spiritual, and thus to outward form give an imaginary signification. By wine they mean the love of God, the tavern is the excellent preceptor to whom a strong personal attachment is formed. The curls of the beloved are the praises of the preceptor which bind the heart and affections of the disciple to him. Similar mystical meanings are given to other terms of a mundane character.

which is unrivalled as an exposition of *Ṣūfīsm*. It is the *Salāmān* and *Absāl* by the great poet *Jāmī*. The advantage of the form of instruction he has adopted in it is that the tale is continuous and is explained by the author himself.

Jāmī according to the usual custom of the poets, commences by an invocation of the eternal Spirit. Then confused and lost in the contemplation of self and of that 'other than self' he prays,

Do Thou my separate and derived self
Make one with thy Essential! Leave me room
On that *Diván* which leaves no room for twain;
Lest, like the simple Arab in the tale,
I grow perplexed, Oh God, 'twixt 'Me' and 'Thee'
If I—this spirit that inspires me whence?
If Thou—then what this sensual impotence?

This gives the key-note to the whole story which is an account of the way in which the soul returns to Him who made it. The Arab story referred to is an amusing and excellent illustration of the manner in which matters of serious moment were lightly parodied.

A simple Arab of the desert came to the busy city of Baghdad. The busy bustling crowd confused this child of the desert. He longed for rest and sleep, but thought that, if he went to sleep, he would not, on waking up, know himself, so he tied a gourd round his ankle and went to sleep. A man, who had heard him express his doubts, quietly took the gourd from the ankle of the sleeping man and fastened it on his own, and then also laid down to sleep, but

By and by the Arab waking,
Looks directly for his signal,
Sees it on another's ankle,

Cries aloud, 'Oh good-for-nothing
 Rascal to perplex me so!
 That by you I am bewildered,
 Whether I be I or no!
 If I—the pumpkin why on you?
 If you—then where am I and who?'

After this serious and this comic introduction the story begins. A king had a wise counsellor who guided him in all matters of state-craft with so much skill that the rule of the Sháh extended to the Koh-i-káf, the limits of the then known world. Far and wide went the mandate of the Sháh, and none dared to disobey his behest, but notwithstanding all this power and glory the heart of the Sháh was sad. He had no son and heir. He called for his counsellor, known as the Sage, and confided to him his intense desire for a son; but the Sage pointed out that all the advantages of a son so eloquently described by the Sháh relate to a *good* son, but, as *bad* sons are not unknown, his advice is that the Sháh should not trouble about it.

The Sháh retained his desire, and lo! from darkness came a child to light, a child formed in no carnal mould. His name was Salámán.¹ As he had no earthly mother, a young and beautiful nurse, Absál by name, tended him with loving care till he reached the age of fourteen. As a lad he excelled in all manly exercises, was skilful with the lyre, melodious in song, and played to perfection the chess² of social intercourse. Meanwhile Absál looks with desire upon the beauty of the lad whom

¹ A compound of Salámat (peace) and Asmán (heaven), for he brought the peace of Paradise to his father.

² Metaphors and similes drawn from the game of chess are constantly used by Persian poets.

she had cared for and tended. At length he falls a victim to her blandishment. The Sháh and the Sage are sorely grieved. The father bids the boy ride, hunt, fight, do anything except submit 'to be slain by the arrow eye of a gazelle.' The Sage next tried to reason with the lad. But to his entreaties and to those of his father Salámán turned a deaf ear, and, being unable to meet the arguments of the Sage, he placed Absál on a fleet camel, and mounted by her side stole away. Six days and nights they hurried on, till their further flight was arrested by a mighty sea. The lovers felt that safety was only to be secured on the other side, and to attain this end they constructed a skiff of scented wood and launched upon the deep. At length, they reached an island, rich in flowers and fruit, and in birds of varied plumage and sweet of song. Salámán now found rest. All thought of journeying onward passed away and both gave themselves up to full enjoyment.

All this time the Sháh had mourned for the flight of his son. He changed his 'royal robe for ashes, and his throne for dust.' All search for the fugitives failed. Then from his secret art the Sage vizier made a magic mirror. The Sháh looked upon the mirror and saw in the far distant isle his darling entranced by the charms of the beautiful Absál. Days passed by and still the Sháh beheld his son now in the woman lost, and the crown that should adorn his head trampled under by a base desire.

The Sháh now lost all patience, and brought all the power of his will to bear on the young prodigal.

Then Salámán in agony and despair turned and saw his father's arm ready to rescue him from his fate. But the attractions of Absál were still too strong. Again he leaves his home and flees with the partner of his faults and follies. This time it is not to an earthly paradise, but to the solitude of desolation—a wilderness of death. Sad and weary they construct a funeral pile, apply a light and leap into the flame.

But the Sage
In secret all had order'd, and the flame
Directed by his self-fulfilling will,
Devouring her to ashes, left untouched
Salámán—all the baser metal burn'd,
And to itself the authentic gold return'd.

Salámán now stood alone in his individuality, but that utter loneliness was maddening, his sighs rose up like smoke to heaven. Then the Sage, exercising his magic will, raised a phantom of Absál which appeared for a while and then passed into oblivion. The sight recalled Salámán to himself and again the flame of love was kindled. The Sage saw this and described in glowing terms the lovely Zuhrah (Venus), a very star of beauty, to whom Absál and all such worldly creatures were but as the glimmer of a taper. Salámán listened and, as he listened, Zuhrah in all her glorious beauty stood beside him, and then for ever blotted Absál's image from his breast. Thus he left that which was earthly, and let it go for the eternal love, which he at last had found. Great were now the rejoicings in the Court of the Sháh. Kings and Princes, Amírs, and Nobles, all from far and near obeyed the call of their sovereign

lord the Sháh, and came to do obeisance to the son lost and found, the heir to the golden crown and throne of gold.

This is a bare outline of the tale, after the relation of which the poet proceeds to supply 'the key to unlock the cabinet of meaning.' The Creator of the universe created ten Intelligences. Salámán is the soul made of pure spirit, which, however, requires for its outward garb a body. This is Absál.

These, in such a bond
United, which God alone can divide,
As lovers in this tale are signified.

The island is the 'world of being,' in which the soul remains apart from God. Salámán in this external world found no permanent joy. Then the Sage calls up a phantom Absál and shows to Salámán that it is purer and better for him than the companion of his existence in the world of sense. Then all mortal love, all desire for phenomenal existence passes away, and Salámán reigns one with the First Intelligence.

The point of the allegory is that Salámán returns not to the 'Incomparable Creator,' but to that which He created, 'the First Intelligence.'¹ It is certainly to this, and not to the Creator to which Jámí makes Salámán return. The Muslim idea of God is that of a pitiless fate—a God afar off. Šúfíism is an attempt of the human mind to bridge over this gulf. This First Intelligence, or Primal Element, is represented as a manifestation of God, a means by which other created beings are formed.

¹ Ten Intelligences were created and Whinfield says, 'The (Gnostic) Æons were probably the prototypes of the Šúfí Ten Intelligences' *Lawā'ih*, p. 65.

The question then arises, whether all allusions in the Ṣúfī poets to the absorption of the soul in a superior being mean re-union with God, or with some manifestation of God. The Qur'án says plainly enough 'From Him was the origin and to Him is the return.'¹ Jámí might reply that 'Him' here means God as manifested in the First Intelligence, by which He, the Sháh of the allegory, created the worlds and through which He executes His decrees. If Jámí's exposition of Ṣúfī doctrine is correct, it makes even the most spiritual aspect of Islām dark and dreary, for it shows us how men, apparently longing for a closer communion with God, fell short of the mark; how even to them He is still 'sterile in His inaccessible height,' satisfied to let them feel that they can never be more than slaves, that nearness to Him is impossible. They felt the need of some intermediary, they found it in a revival of the old Gnostic notions of the Æons, forms of manifestation of the Ineffable and Incomprehensible. 'From this incomprehensible essence of God an immediate transition to finite things is not conceivable. Self-limitation is the first beginning of a communication of life on the part of God, the first passing of the hidden Deity into manifestation, and from this proceeds all further self-developing manifestation of the divine essence.'² All this, to which the Ṣúfī would subscribe, shows how much Ṣúfīsm owes to Gnosticism. The true

¹ *Súratu Yúnas* x. 4. Plotinus, a mystic who lived in the third century A.D., said, 'That man's duty was to return to the One. The motive for the return was the love of the divine spark in his soul for its source.' *Lawá'ih*, p. 67.

² Neander, *Church History*, vol. ii, p. 11.

antidote for both is a faith in great historical facts, on which the religious convictions of all men alike can depend.

The Ṣúfī, being a Muslim, was too proud to search into the true historical facts of the Christian religion, or he would then have found just what would have met his case and satisfied his soul—God manifested, not in some intangible principle, but in a living person, in One who 'is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature. For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist' (Colos. i. 15-17). Those in whom His spirit dwells are His spiritual body. Thus, do they even now become joined to Him, as the branches are in the vine. They are one in life, one in purpose; but, preserving now and evermore a conscious existence, are prepared to enjoy throughout time and eternity communion with one who is very God of very God. To such a conception the Ṣúfī never attained, for conscious union with God to him seemed hopeless, and repudiating altogether the true meaning of the Incarnation of the Son of God, his only aspiration was to become extinct in the Primal Intelligence, the goal of all his efforts.

He failed to realize the higher truth which inspires the Christian poet:—

That each who seems a separate whole,
Should move his rounds, and fusing all
The skirts of self again, should fall
Remerging in the general soul,

Is faith as vague as all unsweet.
 Eternal form shall still divide
 The eternal soul from all beside,
 And I shall know him when we meet.¹

There is much that is sublime in the idea of the search after life and truth; but Šúffism ends in utter negation of all separate existence. Pantheistic in creed, and too often antinomian in practice, it possesses no regenerative power. When man's apparent individuality is looked upon as a delusion, there seems to remain no room for will or conscience. 'The spiritualism of the Šúffís, though it seems the contrary of materialism, is really identical with it; but if their doctrine is not more reasonable, it is, at least, more thoughtful.'²

'Though the Šúffí saints may be our forerunners on the way to God, it yet remains that only as dominated by specially Christian convictions can mysticism bring to us an inwardness, which carries with it no peril of delusion, a spirituality, which does not menace our ethical life, and an absorption in the Divine, which does not destroy the sacredness of our personality and the reality of our freedom.'³

The orthodox Sunnī objections to Šúffism were greatly removed by the teaching and writings of Al-Ghazālī (born A.H. 1051). In a modified form he introduced it into Sunnī theology. 'At the same time he reduced Šúffism to a scientific form, and gave, or rather supported, a terminology derived

from Plotinus. Such a Šúffism may be described as Muslim mystic theology purged of its Shi'ite accretions. The admission of a modified Šúffism into the orthodox church of Islām took place in the sixth century A.H.'¹

¹ O'Leary, *Arabic Thought and Its Place in History*, p. 204. On Ghazālī's work, see De Boer, *Philosophy in Islām*, pp. 155-68.

¹ Tennyson, *In Memoriam*.

² Garcin de Tassy, *Poesie Philosophique et Religieuse chez les Persans*, p. 2.

³ Hernan, *The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, p. 371.

II

THE SHÍ'AHS¹

'ALI, the cousin of the Prophet and by his marriage with Fátima his son-in-law, was much beloved by Muḥammad. He was one of the earliest converts to Islām. His personal devotion to his master was great and only equalled by the courage which he showed in the warlike contests during the Prophet's career at Madína. He was the last of the four Rightly-guided Khalífas, the Khulafa'u'r-Ráshidún. He was much more successful as a follower than as a leader. His Khalífate² was a failure, for he lacked the qualities essential in a ruler in those troublous times; but the Prophet's love for him stood him in good stead and, though his promotion to the office of Khalífa was delayed for a time, it came at last. Muḥammad used to say, 'I and 'Alí are of one stock; 'Alí is a part of me and I of him.' 'He whose friend I have been, 'Alí is also his friend.' 'Thou art my brother in this world and the next.' 'To look upon 'Alí is devotion.' 'I am the city, 'Alí is the gate.' The Jarúdiyya sect say that the Prophet 'designated 'Alí by his characteristics, but not by his name.'³ The Khalífa 'Umar valued his judicial opinions and 'Ayísha

¹ The word Shí'ah means a party or following of 'Alí, so the full name would be Shí'ah Ahlu'l-Bayt, or followers of the House, that is, of the family of the Prophet.

² The correct term is Khiláfat, but I use the one more commonly known to the English reader.

³ *Al-Farq bain al-Firāq*, p. 22.

declared that no one equalled him in the knowledge of the Sunna, the oral law of faith and practice based on the traditional sayings and actions of the Prophet. In *Súratu'n-Najm* liii. 1 it is said of Muḥammad that 'he erreth not, nor is he led astray.' The Shí'ahs say that this shows that in his affection for and preference of 'Alí he did not err, but was divinely guided.

'Alí failed to punish the murderers of his predecessor, the Khalífa 'Uthmán, and so alienated a large number of people. He also foolishly dismissed many of 'Uthmán's officials, amongst whom was Mu'áwiyya, who held a high command in Syria, to which he had been appointed by the Khalífa 'Umar. This action was not approved of by the friends of 'Alí, who feared that trouble would come of it; but 'Alí was obstinate and, perhaps he remembered that Mu'áwiyya was the son of Abú Sufyán, a determined opponent of the Prophet. Ibn 'Abbás warned 'Alí that his opposition to Mu'áwiyya would lead people to consider that he had connived at the murder of 'Uthmán, whose assassins he had failed to punish. The result of this weakness was that a civil war broke out and 'Alí was defeated. After the battle of Siffin (A.D. 657), by a very clever trick on the part of the partisans of Mu'áwiyya, the respective claims were submitted to arbitration and the decree went against 'Alí, who properly refused to accept the decision. A division then arose amongst the partisans of 'Alí. One party, the Khárijites, who now deserted the cause of 'Alí, held to the theory that the Khalífate was not hereditary, but that the believers could

elect and depose Khalífas;¹ the other party was loyal to 'Alí and the hereditary principle. This dynastic conception is a cardinal dogma amongst the Shí'ahs to the present day. Mu'áwiyya at Damascus was saluted as Khalífa. 'Alí and his friends declined to acknowledge him and so there were now two rival Khalífas, the one (Mu'áwiyya) cursed in all the mosques of 'Iráq: the other ('Alí) in all the mosques of Syria. 'Alí was assassinated in a mosque at Kúfa on January 24, A.D. 661. Thus passed away one of the early converts to Islám, the beloved son-in-law of the Prophet. The troubles through which he passed and his striking personality have contributed to make his name revered, and his memory kept fresh by many millions of faithful Shí'ahs even to this day. His fame, however, does not rest on his statesmanship, but arises from the fact that the Shí'ah system is derived from him as its head. A curious thing about it is that one, so predominately an Arab, should in after years find his strongest supporters amongst the Persians whose dislike of the Arabs was so great.

'Alí's eldest son, Hasan,² made a formal renunciation of the Khalífate and took an oath of allegiance to Mu'áwiyya, who, however, did not feel safe so long as the eldest son of 'Alí was alive. So,

¹ This is contrary to the doctrine of orthodox Islám. 'The dignity of the Imám does not absolutely demand that the Imám be just, virtuous or irreproachable, or that he be the most eminent and the most excellent of the human beings of the time.' (*Mulleka*, a Turkish Law Code, quoted by D'Ohsson i, p. 271). 'Vices or tyranny in an Imám do not demand his deposition' (Op. cit. p. 288). The above extracts are taken from Lyber, *The Ottoman Empire in the time of Suleyman*, p. 165.

² Much later on the descendants of his son Muhammad became Sharifs of Morocco.

according to the Shí'ah historians, he caused him to be put to death by poison.

Yazíd the son of Mu'áwiyya became the next Khalífa; but the men of Kúfa were scandalized by his riotous living, and so they turned to Husayn, another son of 'Alí, then residing quietly at Mecca and urged him to take up arms against Yazíd. His friends urged him not to place any confidence in the promised support from the fickle people of Kúfa.¹ These fears were justified; the Kúfans gave no aid when war was declared, and the result was a crushing defeat and the sad death of Husayn. His end was very tragic. The small band of faithful followers was slain. Husayn sat down; his little son was running around him. The enemy, though longing for his death, for a while were restrained by a superstitious awe; no one ventured to rush in and slay the grandson of the Prophet. Then a chance arrow pierced the child's ear and he died. Husayn placed the corpse on the ground and said, 'We came from God and return to him. O God, give me strength to bear these misfortunes.' Another arrow then struck him, and seeing this the enemy rushed upon him and put him to death.

The action of Yazíd in causing Husayn to be thus slain was a great political blunder.² It not

¹ They were remarkable for perfidy and stinginess. A proverb says, 'More stingy than a Kúfite and more perfidious.' Al-Baghdádí, *Al-Farq bain al-Firāq*, p. 27.

² There is a famous fatva given by Al-Ghazálí on the death of Husayn. He was asked whether a person who cursed Yazíd was a reprobate? Had Yazíd the intention of slaying Husayn, or was it done in self-defence? The answer, given at great length, was that it was quite wrong to curse Yazíd, who was not personally responsible for the death of Husayn. The fatva, taken from Ibn Khallikan's *Biographical Dictionary* (Stane's ed.), vol. ii, pp. 230-2, is printed in full in Osborn's *Islám under the Arabs*, pp. 127-8.

only alienated those who had a high regard for the family of the Prophet; but it also stirred up the enthusiasm of the followers of 'Alí, and evoked, even in the hitherto lukewarm, deep emotion and frantic grief. The plain of Karbalá is now a place of sacred pilgrimage to pious Shí'ahs, and the sad event which took place there is kept alive in their memories by the annual celebration of the Muḥarram. 'Who,' says Sir William Muir,¹ 'that has seen the wild and passionate grief with which at each recurring anniversary the Muslims of every land spend the life long night, beating their breasts and vociferating unweariedly the frantic cry Ḥasan, Ḥusayn! Ḥasan, Ḥusayn! in wailing cadence, can fail to recognize the fatal weapon, sharp and double-edged, which the Umayyad dynasty allowed thus to fall into the hands of its enemies.' The schism was now complete and the rent thus made in the Muslim world had never since been healed.

This tragic event led, if not to the inception of the idea, at least, to the development of the dogma of the divine Imámat, which from henceforth could only be exercised by a member of 'Alí's family. This doctrine now established was used with great effect for political purposes by the 'Abbásid Khalífas, and the 'Alids in their opposition to the Umayyad Khalífas. It led to the establishment of the Fátimid Khalífate in Egypt and was the real basis of the 'Cult of 'Alí,' which has had such far-reaching effects in the Eastern world.

Many Shí'ah traditions have been handed down about 'Alí and his family. Muḥammad is reported

¹ Muir, *Caliphate*, p. 324.

to have said about Ḥusayn 'He will die for the sake of my people.' Just before going forth on his last fatal journey, standing by the grave of the Prophet, Ḥusayn said, 'How can I forget thy people, since I am going to offer myself for their sake?' The Shí'ahs believe that, even if at the Judgement Day the intercession of the Prophet should fail, the intercession of Ḥusayn will be successful. Then the Prophet will say to him, 'Go thou and deliver from the flames everyone, who has in his lifetime shed but a single tear for thee; every one who has in any way helped thee; every one who has performed a pilgrimage to thy shrine, or has mourned for thee.' It is on such traditions Shí'ah divines base the doctrine that the death of Ḥusayn is an atonement (*kaffára*) for the sins of those who believe in his divine right to the Khalífate. 'To the Persian Shí'a, therefore, Ḥusayn occupies the same position that Jesus Christ does to the devout Christian, notwithstanding the fact that the doctrine of the Atonement is utterly foreign to the original spirit of Islám.'¹

This idealizing of what, as a matter of sober fact, was the result of a tribal feud seems to show that the hard and fast system of orthodox Islám failed to find a ready response in many minds. It has been well said that 'the death of Ḥusayn, as idealized in after ages, fills up a want in Islám; it is the womanly as against the masculine, the Christian as opposed to the Jewish element, that this story supplies to the work of Muḥammad.' Starting off

¹ Browne, *Persian Literature in Modern Times*, p. 187.

with a political quarrel, the Shí'ahs has travelled into a distant religious position of their own. The fundamental tenet of the Shí'ah sect is the 'divine right of 'Alí, the chosen and his descendants.' The chief duty of religion is devotion to the Imám, or Pontiff, of the sect, from which position many curious dogmas issue.

Before, however, considering these, we must give a brief account of the Imáms who succeeded Husayn and 'Alí, making with them the company known as the *Ithna 'Ashariyya* or Twelve Imáms.

Imám Zaynu'l-'Abidín (ornament of the pious) was chosen to succeed Husayn.² His mother was a daughter of the king of Persia, and so the Persian people had a great affection for him; they also held strongly to the idea of Divine Right, and rejected the idea of a popular and democratic election, natural to the Arabs. He died in the year A.D. 95 at the age of fifty-seven. It is said that he was poisoned by the order of the *Khalífa* 'Abdu'l-Málik.³ He was looked upon as a very devout man, for it is said that he made 1000 rak'ata⁴ in the space of a day and night. He had a mosque in his own house and at midnight used to arise and pray thus; 'O thou Cherisher of the poor, anxiety about rising and standing before Thee did not allow me to spread the carpet of rest or to sleep.' Shí'ah

² As a matter of fact the Prophet did not nominate his successor. Abú Bakr and 'Umar were elected by the people to the office of *Khalífa*.

³ A few Shí'ahs support the claim of Muhammad ibnu'l-Hanifiyya the son of another wife of 'Alí. The sect did not last long, for this son was not descended in the direct line from the Prophet.

⁴ *Sahifatu'l-'Abidín*, p. 85.

⁵ A rak'at is the prostration made after a number of verses have been recited in the *Namáz*, the stated prayers.

historians often exaggerate the virtues of their heroes and idealize them, but, allowing for this, it is evident that Zaynu'l-'Abidín was a man of studious attainments, of simple life, upright in conduct, wise in counsel and justly held in high veneration by his followers. During his last illness, when suffering from the effects of poison, he prayed and thanked God who had given him a heritage in heaven, saying, 'How good is His reward to those who do good deeds.' With these words of praise his spirit passed away. At this time the Shí'ahs were bitterly oppressed by the Umayyad *Khalífas* and many were put to death.

Zaynu'l-'Abidín's son, Muhammad, succeeded his father. He was called Al-Bákir (the Ample), because he collected an ample fund of knowledge, or because he split open knowledge, that is, he examined it minutely and probed it to its foundations. Zayd, a grandson of Husayn claimed the Imámat and tried to obtain the aid of the *Khalífa* Hishám, but only gained permission to send Al-Bákir a saddle as a present; in which in some way he caused poison to be placed. The Imám went for a ride and soon after died from the effect of the poison (A.D. 143). A small company of the Shí'ahs broke away and recognized Zayd as their head. They claimed that the Imámat was elective and not hereditary. They are known as the Zaydites. They settled in Yemen. Zayd refused to curse Abú Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmán, saying that they were Viziers of the Prophet. Some of his followers protested against his conduct in this respect, and formed a fresh and very intolerant

sect called the Rafidís,¹ a name sometimes applied to the Shí'ahs generally by their opponents. Zayd is said to have been poisoned by the Khalífa Hishám. The Zaydiyya Imámát passed on to Idrís who founded a dynasty in Morocco which ignored the authority of the Sunní Khalífas.

Al-Bákir's son, became the next Imám and is known as Al-Ja'far aṣ-Ṣádiq. Through his mother he was a descendant of the Khalífa Abú Bakr. The Umayyad Khalífate was now coming to an end. A descendant of 'Abbás, an uncle of the Prophet, claimed the right to the Khalífate. The Shí'ahs were won over by the representation that the Umayyads had persecuted them, and that the Khalífate rightly belonged to the family of Muḥammad and the 'men of the House.' This ambiguous term included both 'Abbásids and 'Alids and deceived the latter, who naturally thought that the claims of their Imáms would be respected. In the battle of the Záb (A.D. 750) the Umayyads were beaten. The Khalífa Marwán fled to Egypt, but was there slain by his enemies. The 'Abbásids having now gained the victory founded their Khalífate and paid no further attention to the claims of the Shí'ah Imáms.² The 'Abbásids equally with the Umayyads treated the Shí'ahs as a proscribed sect, for the speculations of the Shí'ahs led them to adopt views entirely opposed to those of the Sunnís, the orthodox Muslims. The treatment the Shí'ahs received no doubt made them troublesome and insurrections

¹ From رافض abandoning, leaving.

² For further details see my *Umayyad and 'Abbásid Khalífates*, pp. 7-57, and Zaydan's *Umayyads and 'Abbásids*, p. 146.

were frequent. It is no wonder that they held aloof and that a great difference of doctrine, sentiment and spirit arose as the natural consequence of the political cleavage. The two first Khalífas of the new Khalífate bitterly persecuted the 'Alids and even attempted to kill Al-Ja'far. At length he was poisoned. Ja'far was a learned man and his comments on verses of the Qur'án have been highly valued by Shí'ah theologians. His eldest son, Isma'íl, predeceased his father, who then appointed his next son Músá Kázim as his successor. Isma'íl left a son named Muḥammad and so many Shí'ahs said that he was the rightful heir to the Imámát.

The Imám now passed into concealment,¹ keeping the teaching alive and preparing the way for the future return of the Imám to the visible world. This took place when the Isma'ílian 'Ubaydu'lláh, as the Mahdí, founded the Fátimid Khalífate. It is also said that Imám Ja'far, before the death of Isma'íl, had set aside his nomination, because he had heard that his son drank wine. To this the Isma'ílians reply that, even if he did drink wine, it was done to show that the wine forbidden by the Prophet was to be looked at in an allegorical sense, and that it referred to spiritual pride. This was the germ of the system of allegorical interpretation, known as Ta'wíl, a system which played an important part, as we shall see later on, in the propaganda carried on by the Isma'ílians.

All this led to a great split in the Shí'ah community and from it the famous sect of the Isma'ílians

¹ A concealed Imám is called Al-Makhtúm.

took its rise. The later 'Abbásid Khalífas were friendly to the Shí'ahs and it was in the reign of Al-Mutí' (A.D. 946) that the society known as the Ikhwánu's-Ṣafá, Brethren of Purity, was formed.

Thus arose the now famous sect of the Isma'ílians, the political influence of which in after years in Egypt became so strong that it was able to overturn the Sunní Khalífate and to establish in its place a Shí'ah one, known as the Fátimid Khalífate, a dynasty so called from the descent of its rulers from 'Alí and Fátima, the daughter of the Prophet.

The Isma'ílians say that the prophets possessed the gift of revelation; the Imáms that of interpretation, so it must be to them that men should look for guidance. They also say that now commenced what is called the succession of the 'concealed Imáms,' that is, the concealment took place long before the time of the twelfth Imám, Al-Mahdí. They also believe that there never will be a time when the world will be without an Imám, though he is not always visible. Sometimes he manifests himself, but usually he lives in seclusion. It is then that the work of the missionaries (Dá'ís) of the sect begins. This idea of the seclusion of the Imám has given rise to a number of secret societies, and paved the way for a mystical religion, which often lands its votaries in atheism. It has also given opportunity for pretenders, such as the Mahdí of the Súdán in recent times, to arise and claim the office and authority of the Imám, now they say, no longer in seclusion.

Imám Músá Kázim, the son of Ja'far aṣ-Ṣádiq, received this title of Kázim, which means 'one who

restrains,' because he exercised great control over his passions and desires. He does not appear to have taken any part in the political questions of the day, but the 'Abbásid Khalífas persecuted him, often cast him into prison and, at last, according to the Shí'ah historians, caused to be placed before him one day some poisoned grapes from the eating of which he died (A.D. 797). The story is a doubtful one, for the great historians As-Syútí and Mas'údí do not mention it, and the Khalífa Hárúm was not a cruel man.

At the end of the age Imám al-Mahdí will appear. There was now much controversy as to which Imám the dignity should be allotted and the different selections gave rise to many sects. Those who looked upon Músá Kázim as Al-Mahdí are called the Músawiyya.¹ They said he was still alive, though concealed.

Imám ar-Riḍa succeeded his father. There was much confusion in the land and Al-Faḍl, the able minister of the Khalífa Ma'múm advised his master to make peace between the Sunnís and the Shí'ahs by appointing Ar-Riḍa as his successor.² When the nobles of Baghdad heard that the Khalífa had received the Imám kindly they rose in rebellion and threatened to depose Ma'mún. The Khalífa, with great inconsistency, got out of the difficult position, in which he had placed himself, by secretly poisoning the Imám, and instigating the assassination of

¹ Those who said that the Imám Bákir will be Al-Mahdí are called the Bákiríyya.

² Ma'mún when inclined towards the Shí'ahs declared their marriages to be lawful, but the jurisconsult Yahyá reproved and against his ruling quoted Súratu'l-Mú'minín xxiii. 5-7. The Khalífa rescinded his order. Ibn Khallikán, vol. iv, p. 36.

Al-Faḍl. Imám ar-Riḍa is described by Shí'ahs as a kindly man, full of sympathy with his persecuted followers, generous to the poor and a strict observer of all ritual religious observances.

Imám Taqí is the title of Ar-Riḍa's son Muḥammad who now became Imám. He was called Jawwád, the generous; the Taqí, the pious. The Khalífa Ma'mún took a fancy to him and admired his learning and culture. He gave him his daughter, Ummu'l-Faḍl, in marriage, but the union was not a happy one. His wife made frequent and unjust complaints against him to her father, who at first would not listen to her. At last she concocted a story about her husband's adultery which roused the wrath of Ma'mún who tried unsuccessfully to murder Taqí. Finally the usual result followed and the Imám died of poison, the administration of which had become a fine art in Baghdad. Thus passed away, at the early age of twenty-four, another victim to the political jealousies of the age and the timid fears of the Khalífa. Taqí was a modest man, for, though a son-in-law of the Khalífa, he gave himself no airs and never boasted of his position. He was friendly with all comers and lived a simple, frugal life.

Imám Naqí was only six years old when his father Imám Taqí died. He became famous as a teacher and men came from far and near to profit by his instruction. He also performed the duties of his office as Imám to the satisfaction of all concerned with it. The Khalífa Mutawakkil, being prejudiced against him, invited him to pay a visit to his court. Naqí did not wish to go, but, as the

Khalífa could by force compel obedience, with some misgivings he set forth and proceeded to Sámarrá. For two years life passed quietly along, then the attitude of Mutawakkil changed. The Imám was removed to a mean house in a poor part of the city and placed in charge of a government official and so practically became a prisoner. The Khalífa then began a bitter persecution of the Shí'ahs, and prohibited the pilgrimage to Karbalá. Christians and Jews also suffered from his animosity. Naqí survived this tyrant, but was poisoned during the reign of the Khalífa Al-Mu'atazz bi'lláh. Naqí was a good-tempered man, who, under much persecution from the jealous and suspicious Khalífa, maintained his quiet dignity and showed remarkable patience.

Imám 'Askarí, the eleventh Imám, lived in Sámarrá all his days. His Imámat began in the days of the Khalífa Mu'atazz bi'lláh, whom the people did not trust and disorders arose. The power of the 'Abbásids was now declining and the Khalífa arrested the Imám and brought him as a prisoner to Baghdad. The story goes that he was cast into a den of lions. The animals bowed down before him and the Imám, spreading out his prayer-carpet, calmly said the namáz. He came forth, but only to be returned to his prison. He was finally released and lived on in his own home for five years. He also died of poison, put into some liquor sent to him as a present by the Khalífa.¹ His death was deeply regretted by his followers. He was

¹ It may be noted that, according to the Shí'ah historians, not one of the eleven Imáms died a natural death.

buried near his father's grave at Sámarrá. Glowing accounts are given of the high moral qualities, of the patience under persecution, of the learning and piety of Imám 'Askarí.

We now come to the last Imám, Al-Mahdí, who was born A.D. 860. He was surnamed Al-Muntazir (the Expected) Hujjatu'lláh (Proof of God); Imámu'z-Zaman (Imám of the Age); Al-Mahdí (the Guided). The last title is the one by which he was generally known. It implies that he was able to guide others, being himself guided by God. So many marvels attended his birth that he was believed to be the very promised Mahdí. It is said that when he was born, the words, 'Truth is come and falsehood is banished' (Súratu Baní Isrá'íl xvii. 83) were found written on his arm. For his safety he was kept in strict seclusion,¹ and only a few trusted friends were allowed to see him, for it was feared that, if the Khalífa heard of the marvels attending his birth, he might be alarmed and cause trouble. This period of seclusion is called the Minor Occultation (Ghaybatu's-Sughra). It lasted for sixty years, and was then followed by the Major Occultation (Ghaybatu'l-Kubra), which commenced in A.D. 940. To the friends who visited him he made known his plans and wishes. They are called the Abwáb (doors) through whom he held communication with the outer world. Thus, though in seclusion, he duly performed the duties of his office. The Khalífa Mu'tamid imprisoned the Imám's mother for six months, and so intimidated

¹ According to Ibn Khallikán (ii. 581) he entered into a cistern in his father's house and never came out again.

the Shí'ahs that they had to practise religious dissimulation (*taqiyya*) to escape persecution. Many fled to other lands.

The Imám now suddenly disappeared in an underground passage in Sámarrá and is supposed to be now living in the mysterious cities of Jabalka and Jabalsa, from whence he will return at the end of the age. After Al-Mahdí's sudden disappearance, the Abwáb remained. When the last of them was about to die, the Shí'ahs, fearing that they would be left without an Imám, begged him to nominate one. He refused saying that all communication with an Imám and his followers would cease until the full time of the Major Occultation was over. Then, and not till, then, would Al-Mahdí re-appear. Then he and Jesus Christ, the two pure and immaculate ones, will destroy Antichrist and all the world will be brought into the fold of Islám. Al-Mahdí will then possess the rod of Moses and the seal of Solomon, the one to rule with, the other with which to seal the hope of true believers. This idea of the Abwáb and the Major Occultation, was, as later on we shall see, an important factor in the inception of the great Bábí movement.

The above is a very brief account¹ of the twelve Imáms. The Shí'ah historians record many marvellous incidents, but, whether historically correct or not, they show how sincere the affection for and how deep the devotion to the Imáms were. A great rent was then made in the Muslim world, which time

¹ A complete account, based on the histories compiled by Shí'ah historians, is given in my *Ilhán 'Ashariyya*. Their followers are known as the Twelvers.

has failed to close.¹ The story of the martyrs, as told in the 'Ashúr Khánas in the annual celebration of Muḥarram in many lands now calls forth the deepest emotion of Shí'ah Muslims.² These Imáms are regarded as God's Apostles, inspired with the divine spirit, immaculate in life and conduct and honoured as great religious leaders in their day, and saintly teachers for all time. 'The Imám of the Shí'ahs is the divinely ordained successor of the Prophet, endowed with all perfections and spiritual gifts; one whom all the faithful must follow, whose decree is absolute and final, whose wisdom is superhuman and whose words are authoritative.'³

We shall see in the chapter on the Qur'án the attitude of the Shí'ahs to the early recensions of that book. Meanwhile we may notice a few alleged omissions of words favourable to the claims of 'Alí. I print them in italics. 'But God is Himself witness of what He hath sent down to thee *concerning 'Alí*' (Súratu'n-Nisá' iv. 164). 'O Apostle proclaim all that hath been sent down to thee from the Lord *concerning 'Alí*' (Súratu'l-Ma'ida v. 71). 'But those who treat them, *the family of Muḥammad and their rights*, unjustly shall know what a lot awaiteth them' (Súratu'sh-Shu'arâ' xxvi. 228). The Shí'ahs rely on a different reading of the verse 'Ye

¹ 'No one has been able to effect an appeasement between these two great divisions of Islâm, and a more tolerant attitude in the younger generation of Persians, so far as it exists, is due rather to a growing indifference to Islâm itself, than to a religious reconciliation' Browne, *Persian Literature in Modern Times*, p. 420.

² See the *Faith of Islâm* (4th ed.), pp. 418-24.

³ *Episode of the Báb*, p. 296. For a curious account of the qualities possessed by the Imáms, see *Journal Asiatique* Quatrieme Série, Tome iii, p. 398 and for the connection of the Imám with a prophet, see *RASJ*, July 1899, p. 633.

are the best *nation* that hath been raised up unto mankind; ye enjoin the just and forbid the evil (Súratu 'Alí 'Imrân iii. 106). They say that the correct reading is *Imáms* for *nation*,¹ and support it by saying that the duties referred to belong more properly to the Imáms as rulers than to a nation in its corporate capacity. In Súratu'l-Furqán (xxv) verse 74 *for* 'make us examples to those who fear thee' *read* 'make for us Imáms from those that fear thee.'

In Súratu'l-Húd xi. 20 of those who rest upon clear proofs from their Lord it is said, 'to whom a witness for him reciteth the Qur'án, and who is preceded by the Book of Moses, a mercy and truth.' Here it is the Book of Moses which is the 'mercy and truth,' but there is another reading, 'to whom a witness from him reciteth the Qur'án, a mercy and truth, preceded by the Book of Moses.' It is said that the witness is 'Alí, who comes from him (Muḥammad) and is the 'mercy and truth.' The verse is not an easy one to explain, some say that the witness is Gabriel, others that it is the Qur'án itself.²

In Súratu Yá Sín xxxvi. 11 there is a curious expression Imámin Mubínin (إِمامان مُبِينَانِ) literally 'a clear Imám.' The Sunní commentators take Imám here in the sense of a writing, a book, thus 'Every thing have we set down in the clear book of our decrees.' It is generally applied to the writing on the Preserved Table (Lauḥu'l-Maḥfúz) in heaven, on which the Qur'án was written. The Shí'ahs say it refers to 'Alí as the 'clear Imám,' and quote the following story (riwáyat). When Abú Bakr, 'Umar

¹ ائمة for امة

² See the *Khulāṣatu't-Tafáṣīr*, vol. ii, p. 383.

and 'Uthmán heard the words, they enquired whether Imám here referred to the Taurat, the Gospel or the Qur'án. The Prophet said it did not, but that 'Alí was the 'clear Imám,' to whom God had given the knowledge of all things. According to a tradition (ḥadīth) the Prophet said, 'Whatever knowledge God has given to me, I have taught to 'Alí.'¹ But the greatest change of all is the alleged omission of an entire Súra, the Súratu'n-Núrain, the chapter of the two lights, that is, Muḥammad and 'Alí.

The mystic lore connected with the doctrine of the Imámat has often sapped the foundation of moral life and vigour. A system of religious reservation is also a fundamental part in the system in its mystical developments, whilst all Shí'ahs may lawfully practice taqiyya, or religious compromise, in their daily lives. Pious frauds are legalized.² Taqiyya and the legality of Mut'a, or temporary marriages, are two weak points in the whole Shí'ah system.³

¹ The Shí'ah *Tafsír* of Maqbúl Aḥmad, vol. ii, p. 703.

² The validity of taqiyya is based on the verse, 'Let not believers take infidels for their friends rather than believers; whoso shall do this shall have nothing to hope from God—unless, indeed, ye fear a fear from them' (Súratu 'Alí 'Imrān iii. 27). Baiḍāwī (i. 151) says that the Qāri Ya'qūb reads taqiyyatan (تَقِيَّةً) for the word tuqātan (تَوْقَاتٍ) in the text, and that, therefore, the meaning is that alliance with unbelievers is forbidden, except in time of danger, when an *ostensible* alliance is permitted. The Sunnī commentator Ḥusayn (ii. 65) states that this authorized taqiyya in the early days of Islām, but that now it is only permissible in a Dāru'l-Ḥarb, that is, a land where Jihād is lawful. The Shí'ahs consider that it is allowable everywhere and at all times. There is a Shí'ah tradition: 'Concealment of religious opinions is my religion and the religion of my fathers' (al-taqiyatu dīni wa dīnu ābū'i). Imám Ja'far Ṣādiq said, 'He who denies taqiyya is without faith.' Sayyid Maqbúl Aḥmad's *Tafsír*, vol. i, p. 83.

³ Mut'a is said to be authorized in the verse 'It shall be no crime in you to make engagements over and above the law' (Súratu'n-Nisā'

The Imám occupies the position he holds not by election, for each Imám should nominate his successor, nor by virtue of any special capacities, but by divine right and his office is altogether spiritual. 'His orders are divine.'¹ As mediums between God and man the Imáms hold a far higher position than the prophets, for 'the grace of God, without their intervention, reaches to no created being.' The possession of an infallible book is not enough; the infallible guide is needed. 'The earth is never without an Imám though concealed. He who dies without knowing the Imám, or who is not his disciple, dies ignorant.'² 'The Imámat is a light (núr) which passes from one to the other and becomes prophetship. Divinity is a ray (núr) in prophetship, which again is a ray in Imámat and the world is never free from these signs and lights (anwár).'³ 'As the divinely successor of the Prophet, the Imám is endowed with all perfections and spiritual gifts.'⁴ We thus learn from this doctrine of the Imámat that God not only makes known His will and purposes through His messengers, the prophets; but also in some way, not easily defined, He is actually present in some favoured persons, and especially in the Imáms.

Holding these views and remembering the high praise of 'Alí given by the Prophet, and touched by

v. 28), that is, above the law of marriage. The Sunnīs do not accept this interpretation and some say the verse is abrogated, but I cannot find any authority for such abrogation. For other points of difference between the Shí'ah and the Sunnī systems see the *Faith of Islām* (4th ed.), pp. 144-5.

¹ Shahrastānī, *Milāl wa'n-Niḥāl*, p. 132.

² *Ibid.*, p. 132.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴ *Episode of the Báb*, p. 296.

the misfortunes of 'Alí and his sons, and the Imáms, his successors, we can easily understand how the doctrine of 'the divine right' of 'Alí and his successors in the Imámat became a cardinal article of faith in the growing Shí'ah community; an article held with the strongest tenacity to this day.¹

This dogma has been far-reaching in its effect and has found expression in the formation of many great sects, as we shall show later on. A knowledge of the doctrine of the Imámat is essential to all who would strive to intelligently understand the great religious movements in one large section of the Muslim world. The Qur'anic authority for it is found in the verse, 'When his Lord made trial of Abraham by commands which he fulfilled, He said, "I am about to make thee an Imám to mankind." He said, "of my offspring also?" "My covenant," said God, "embraceth not the evil doers"' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 118). From this verse two doctrines are deduced. First, that the Imám must be appointed by God, for, if this is not the case, why did Abraham say 'of my offspring also.' Second, the Imám is free from sin, for God said, 'My covenant embraceth not the evil doers.'

The difference between a Nabí (prophet) and an Imám is thus stated: 'The former hears and sees the Angel who brings the revelation; the latter does not see the Angel, but only hears its voice.'²

¹ One element in the quarrel between the Sunní and the Shí'ah is 'the essentially antagonistic doctrines of Democracy and the Divine Right of Kings. The Arabs are, and always have been, in large measure democratic in their ideas, while the Persians have ever been disposed to see in their Kings divine or semi-divine beings.' Browne, *Persian Literature in Modern Times*, p. 18.

² *Alhár-i-Ja'fariyya*, p. 101.

The first dispute about the Imámat originated with men who deserted 'Alí after the battle of Siffin (A.D. 657). They are called the *Khárījites*, the Seceders.¹ Many of them fled to Oman, and in that province it was held that the succession to the office was elective, and not hereditary. 'Abdu'lláh ibn 'Ibád was a vigorous preacher of this doctrine (A.D. 744) and his followers are known as the sect of the 'Ibádiyya. They are looked upon as orthodox Shí'ahs, who found consolation in the doctrine that it was God's will that the Imámat should remain in the family of 'Alí. Al-Baghdádí says that the 'Ibádiyya split up into four sects, differing in many points, but all agreeing 'that it is right to ask anyone who differs from thee with regard to the text of the Qur'án or its interpretation to return to their ('Ibádiyya) way of thinking. If such an one does recant, it is well; if not, he must be killed.'² Some say 'Alí is still alive and that "a part of God"³ is in him,' that is, 'he existed before the creation of the heavens and the earth, that he is a shadow at the right hand of the throne, and men and angels make tasbīḥ to him.'⁴

A general idea is that long before the creation of the world, God took a ray of light from the splendour of His own glory and united it to the

¹ Another section of the Shí'ahs is that known as the *Ghulāt*. 'They are such as hold extreme views (*ghalaw*) in respect to their Imáms, so that they raise them above the limits of created beings, and ascribe to them divine virtues, so that often they likened the Imáms to God.' Shahrastānī, *Al-Milal wa'n-Niḥal*, p. 132.

² *Al-Farāq bain al-Firāq*, p. 109.

³ The expression 'residue of God' (*baqiyat Ullāh*) is used in Bábí literature and is based on the idea that God in some way or other allowed some fraction of Himself to be connected with the Imám.

⁴ Shahrastānī, *Al-Milal wa'n-Niḥal*, p. 133.

body of Muhammad. This light descended to 'Alí and from him passed on to the true Imáms, who alone are the lawful successors of the Prophet.¹ A tradition recorded by 'Alí refers to Muhammad's words to him thus, 'Thou art the elect, the chosen, I will make the members of thy family the guides to salvation. I will place in thee my light and the treasures of my grace; for thy sake I make the waters to flow, exalt the heavens, distribute rewards and punishments and create heaven and hell. I reveal to thy family the secrets of knowledge, and to them shall there be no subtlety nor mystery. They will be the apostles of my power and unity.' Such was to be the work of the Imáms, the successors of 'Alí in the Imámat. Rebellion against them is sin, devotion to them the very essence of religion. It is said that the Imámat is a light (núr) which passes from one Imám to the others and becomes prophetship, so the Imáms are considered to be divinely inspired prophets. Some commentators say that the word light, in the verse 'Now hath a light and a clear book come to you from God' (Súratu'l-Má'ida v. 18), means the Núr-i-Muhammadi, others that it refers to the Qur'án. The whole idea of the núr seems, however, to have been borrowed from Zoroastrian sources, and to have been originally connected with Jamshid.²

The Imám is the divinely-ordained successor of the Prophet, adorned with all his qualities. He is

¹ It is said that the only difference between the light of Muhammad and that of 'Alí is that the former is prior in time.

² Tisdall, *Sources of the Qur'án*, pp. 246-51. In the Pahlavi *Minúkhind* and the *Khashtá* a similar account is given of the light of Jamshid. The original text is given in *Yanábi'u'l-Islám*, p. 211.

wiser than the most learned men of his age, holier than the most pious. He is the noblest of the sons of men and is free from all sin. Hence he is called ma'súm, the sinless one, 'The Imámities believe that the Imám, preserved from all sin, knows well what is in the pregnant womb and behind walls.'¹ 'Alí said, 'In me is the glory of every prophet that has ever been.' This glory passes on to the Imáms. The bodies of the Imáms are so pure and delicate that they cast no shadow. They are the beginning and the end of all things. To know the Imáms is the very essence of the knowledge which man can gain of God. They are the mediums between God and man, for without their intervention, the grace of God does not reach to any created being.

The fourth article of the Shí'ah creed is 'To consider 'Alí the *Khalífa* next in order after Muhammad, and to believe 'Alí's descendants from Hasan to Al-Mahdí, the twelfth Imám, to be his true successors, and to consider all of them, in character, position and dignity, as raised far above all other Muslims.' This is the doctrine of the Imámat.²

The Shí'ahs in support of their opinion regarding the close union of 'Alí with the Prophet, adduce the fact that in Súratu'l-Ahzáb xxxiii.33 the pronoun 'you' in the words 'God only desireth to put filthiness from you as His household' is in the masculine gender

¹ Jalálu'd-Dín Syúfi, *History of the Khalífs* (ed. Jarrett's, Calcutta 1881), p. 473. The Hāshimiyya, a small section of the Shí'ahs, in order to exalt the Imáms, held that Prophets could sin, but that the Imáms were pure. See Shabristání, *Al-Milal wa'n-Nihāl*, p. 142.

² Ibn Khaldúm says, 'It is an error of the Imámians to pretend that the Imámat is one of the pillars of religion: it is really only an office instituted for the general good. If it had been a pillar of religion the Prophet would have delegated it to some one.' *Protégomènes*, i. p. 43, de Slane's translation.

and in the plural form, the household being, according to the Shí'ahs, Muḥammad, Fátima, 'Alí, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. They also say that the word 'you' refers to the wives of the Prophet, and support this view by stating that the preceding pronouns and the next finite verb 'recollect' are all in the feminine gender.¹

The Shí'ahs were soon divided into two sects,² the Imámíans and the Isma'ílians. The former believe in twelve Imáms, Al-Mahdí being the last. They say that Gabriel came one day with the tablet of decree in his hand, and lo! on it were the names of the twelve Imáms in their proper order of succession. A Jew once said to the Prophet, 'Who will be your heirs and successors?' He replied, 'They agree in number with the twelve tribes of Israel.' The latter sect say that the succession of the 'Concealed Imáms' began after Ja'far Ṣádiq, the sixth Imám.

The Shí'ahs had long been popular in Persia, but it was not until Sháh Isma'íl founded the Ṣafawí dynasty in A.D. 1502 that the Shí'ah religion became the State one in Persia, a position it retains to this day. Sháh Isma'íl was, on his father's side, a descendant of Músá Kázim, the seventh Imám. His early life was not happy, but in due course he gained a following and became the Shí'ah ruler of Persia. He called himself Isma'íl Shaykh Ardebílí Qizil Básh Ithna-'Ashariz, that is, Isma'íl, Restorer of the cap of twelve colours. This is an allusion to

¹ For a full explanation see Baidáwí's *Tafsír*, vol. ii, p. 128.

² Both sects, the Twelvers (Ithná 'Ashariyya) and the Seveners (Sab'iyya), are agreed that the supreme spiritual authority must be exercised by an Imám, a descendant of 'Alí, who is possessed of supernatural and even of divine attributes. The point of difference is the order of the succession of the 'Concealed Imáms.'

the tradition that 'Alí introduced a high cap of cotton or wool dyed red. Qizil Básh means 'Red Head' and is a name given to the Persians by the Turks. On the top of the cap were twelve knots, each of a different colour, to represent the twelve Imáms. Sháh Isma'íl on establishing this new State religion made it obligatory that every Persian, whether in mosque or open market place, should publicly curse the first three Sunnī Khalífas.¹ At that time Shí'ah theological literature was scanty in Persia, but men set to work to supply it and, in the hyperbolic language of the period, we are told that 'day by day the Sun of Truth of the Doctrine of the Twelve (Imáms) increased its altitude and all parts of the world became illuminated by the dawning effulgence of the Path of Verification.'

In the Supplementary Fundamental Laws issued by Sháh Muḥammad 'Alí in October, 1907, it is said, 'The official religion of Persia is Islám, according to the orthodox Ja'far doctrine of the Ithna 'Ashariyya (Church of the twelve Imáms), whose faith the Sháh of Persia must profess and follow.'²

The Sunnís and the Shí'ahs disagree not only on the Imámat, but also on what is called Ijtihád.³ This is a legal term denoting the 'discovery and authoritative enunciation of fresh religious truths, based on a comprehensive knowledge of the Scripture and Tradition and arrived at by supreme effort and endeavour' (Browne). 'The word literally

¹ See G. de Strange, *Don Juan of Persia*, pp. 107-11.

² Browne, *The Persian Revolution*, p. 372.

³ I have given a full account of the doctrine of Ijtihád in my *Faith of Islám* (4th ed.), pp. 60-6; see also Sir 'Abdu'r-Rahím's *Muḥammadan Jurisprudence*, pp. 168-71 and Browne's *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. iii, pp. 353-5.

means striving, and exerting, and technically the application of all his faculties by a lawyer to the consideration of the authorities on which he bases his judgement' (Sir 'Abdu'r-Raḥím). Such a man is called a Mujtahid. The qualifications for this office are very severe and in the opinion of the Sunnís, there has been no Mujtahid of the first class, since the time of the four great founders of the Sunní schools (madḥabs) of law, that is, since A.D. 825 when the Bábu'l-Ijtihád, or the 'Gate of Endeavour' was closed.¹ The Shí'ahs hold that they still possess Mujtahids, and in Persia now they are still a very important body of men, though, probably, less influential than in the past.² They 'concern themselves with every department of human activity, from the minutest details of personal purification to the largest issues of politics. Their authority is greater than that of the Sunní 'Ulamá', who in their decisions must follow one or other of the four orthodox interpretations (madḥabs) of the Sharí'at. It is open to every Shí'ah Muslim to submit any problem, into

¹ Previous to this it was thought that, as the primary duty of the Khalífa was to see that the Sacred Law (Sharí'at) was observed, he was a Mujtahid who could interpret it with authority.

² They are the interpreters of the Sharí'at or sacred law and their decisions are accepted by the administrators of the 'Urf, or customary law. 'The Sháh acts as the Canonists have recommended, unless the vague distinction between the function of the canon law and the customary law gives him an excuse for exercising his personal authority' (*Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. xi, p. 457). Among the modernists in Islám the old orthodox view of Ijtihád is losing ground. A learned Indian Muslim says, 'We find that the idea of Ijtihád, reinforced and broadened by modern philosophic ideas, has long been working in the religious and political thought of the Turkish nation. . . . We, too, will have to re-evaluate our intellectual inheritance. The claim of the present generation of Moslem liberals to reinterpret the fundamental legal principles in the light of their own experience and the altered condition of modern life is perfectly justified.' Sir Muḥammad Iqbál, quoted in Mott's *The Moslem World of To-day*, pp. 102, 103.

the solution of which religious considerations enter (and they probably enter everywhere), to a Mujtahid and to ask for a formal decision, or fatva, conformable to the principles of Shí'ah doctrine. In this respect the Shí'ah doctrine must be credited with a greater flexibility and adaptability than that of the Sunnís, though in other respects narrower and more intolerant' (Browne).

In October 1907 the Sháh issued certain fundamental laws. I give a short extract: 'It is hereby declared that it is for the learned doctors of theology, to determine whether such laws as may be proposed (that is, in the National Assembly) are, or are not, in accordance with the principles of Islám; to reject and repudiate, wholly or in part, any such proposal which is at variance with the Sacred Laws of Islám. In such matters the decision of the Ecclesiastical Committees shall be followed and obeyed, and this article shall continue unchanged until the appearance of His Holiness, the Proof of the Age' (that is, Imám Mahdí). Browne in *The Persian Revolution*, pp. 262 ff. gives the Fundamental Law in full. There is a sort of unwritten or customary law called 'Urf, which the secular ruler administers through his own civil officers; but in any conflict between the 'Urf and the Sharí'at, the former has to give way. It is the province of the Mujtahids to declare when such opposition arises.

We have now seen how the doctrine of the Imámat lends itself to the formation of many sects¹ and even

¹ The principal ones are, the Zaydiyya, the Isma'ílians, the Carmathians, the Assassins, the Fátimids, the Druses and Nosarís, and the Shaykhís.

in our day is operative in this respect. In future chapters I shall describe these movements. Before, however, closing this portion of the subject, we may notice how this Shí'ah doctrine of the Imámat seems to show that there is in the human heart a natural desire for some mediator—some Word of the Father, who shall reveal Him to His children. At first sight it would seem as if this dogma might to some extent reconcile the thoughtful Shí'ah to the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation and Mediation of Jesus Christ, as the perfect revealer of God's will and as the guide in life. But it is not so. The Shí'ah, equally with the Sunnī, is self-satisfied and proud in his contempt for any other religion than his own.

Professor Browne gives a short account of modern Shí'ah doctrines taken from the work¹ of an author of the last century. The following are the chief points in it. God created men in order that they should worship Him, and has made known His will through many prophets, of whom Muḥammad is the last and the greatest. He left behind him for the guidance of mankind the Qur'án and his descendants and representatives. Belief in the Unity of the Divine Essence (Tauḥíd-i-Dhátī) is necessary. He is invisible, but is known by His actions and the signs of His power. Belief in the Unity of the Divine attributes (Tauḥíd-i-Ṣifátī) is essential. God alone can create (Tauḥíd-i-Khalqī), though, as He uses means to an end, He may employ the agency of angels. 'The good or evil manifested through

¹ *Aqā'idu'sh-Shí'ah* by 'Alī Asghar ibn 'Alī Akbar. For a full account of this work, see Browne, *Persian Literature in Modern Times*, pp. 381-401. This is a most valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Shí'ah doctrines.

God's plenipotentary servants is not God's act but their act; wherefore they are the recipients of rewards or punishment, by reason of the option which they enjoy.' It is necessary to believe in God's sovereign power, that He does what He pleases. It is wrong to worship an attribute or Name of God apart from the Essence. This is called Unity of Worship (Tauḥíd-i-Ibádātī). The special prophetic function of Muḥammad (Nabuwat-i-Kháṣṣa) is an article of faith. Also that the Qur'án is the last and greatest revelation, abrogating all previous ones and is the miracle of Muḥammad, though not the product of his mind, for it was sent down on the Laylatu'l-Qadr from the Preserved Tablet in heaven, and revealed by Gabriel as occasion required in the succeeding years. Belief in the Prophet's miracles is required. 'Alī was the immediate successor of the Prophet and the first Imám. Eleven Imáms succeeded him, of whom the last, Imám Mahdí, is still alive and will return in the 'last days' to establish the Shí'ah faith. Concerning these Imáms it is an article of faith that they were all created from one pre-existing Light; that all blessings and all knowledge of God comes through them; that through them the universe lives and moves and has its being. They are superior to the Prophets and to angels. They are sinless (ma'ṣúm) and are endowed with every virtue, knowledge and power.

At death the spirit leaves the body, but returns to it in the tomb to undergo the questioning (Su'ál-i-Qabr), by the angels Munkar and Nakír, whose aspect is terrible. If the deceased is a true

believer and his answers are satisfactory he is left in peace. A passage from his tomb to Paradise is then made, so that the air of that blessed region may sweeten the tomb. If he is an unbeliever, he will be severely beaten till he cries out in agony.¹ On other eschatological subjects the creed does not differ materially from that of the Sunnís.²

¹See *The Faith of Islām* (4th ed.), pp. 285-6.

²There is a difference between the civil law of the Shí'ahs and that of the Sunnís. For a full statement about Shí'ah law, see Hughes, *Dictionary of Islām*, pp. 575-8.

III

THE FÁTIMID KHALÍFATE¹

IN the early days of Islām the Khalífas saw that the best of all ways to settle the tribal disputes and the racial jealousies of the Arabs was to engage them in foreign wars. 'Umar, the second Khalífa, sent an expedition to Egypt, a country described to him as wealthy and weak, unable to resist a vigorous attack. 'Amr binu'l-'Áṣ commanded the army which was sent to Egypt. The campaign was a vigorous one and in A.D. 642 the Byzantine Power in Egypt came to an end. Then followed in after years many successive expeditions, which eventually led to the conquest of Northern Africa. The various Byzantine garrisons and the warlike Berber tribes often made a stout resistance, and so in A.D. 695 a fifth expedition was sent under the command of Ḥasan ibn Nu'mán. He had with him 40,000 men, and the promise of further aid was given to him by the Khalífa. Carthage was captured and the power of the Byzantines was broken in these regions as it had been in Egypt some years before. Northern Africa was divided into Afrikia, extending from Egypt to what is now Algeria; Maghribu'l-adhá, the lower or middle part; Maghribu'l-adsá which included the Morocco of the present day.

The most formidable opponents of the Arabs were the warlike Berbers. They were divided into many tribes, accustomed to constant tribal feuds,

¹ This is not a complete account of the history of the Fátimid Khalí-fate. I refer to it mainly to show the work of the Shí'ah Isma'ilians in the establishment of it and the influence of the doctrine of the Imāmat.

hardy and ready then, as always since, for war at any time, at any place and with any Power which tried to bring them into subjection. At last, exhausted by the conflicts, they sued for peace and Islám spread amongst them. This change of faith did not change their national character. They still hated their Arab rulers and were ready to welcome any allies.¹ In course of time they were joined by the Khárijites,² or Separatists, a sect which separated from 'Alí after the battle of Siffin, and were also opposed to the Ummayyad Khalífate. They called themselves Shurát, sellers of their lives for heavenly rewards, like the man described in Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 203 as 'selling his very self out of desire to please God.' Their intense fanaticism, their undoubted courage and their devotion to an ideal were reproduced in the Wahhábís of a later age.

The Berbers were delighted with them. Here were Muslims who hated the governors and viceroys of the Ummayyad Khalífas, who were seeking to conquer and control the native people of the land. 'Simple and ignorant they (the Berbers) doubtless understood enough of their (the Khárijites) doctrines to assimilate their revolutionary and democratic principles, to share the fanciful hopes of universal levelling which their teachers aroused, and to be convinced that their oppressors were reprobates whose destiny was hell-fire.'³ When the 'Abbásids

¹ For an interesting statement showing how slight the influence of Islám over the Berber tribes has been and still is, see Toynbee, *The Islámic World*, p. 126.

² Their view was that any free Arab was eligible for the Khalífate, and that a Khalífa, who ceased to give satisfaction, could be deposed by the believers.

³ Dozy, *Spanish Islám*, p. 131.

came into power, many Umayyads in order to escape persecution fled to Afrikia and aided the Berbers in their opposition to the governors sent by the Baghdad Khalífa.

The constant wars, with their alternate victories and defeats, were a source of trouble to the central government at Baghdad and so the Khalífa Hárún'r-Rashíd, made an arrangement with Ibráhm bin Aghlab, a soldier of fortune, by which the Khalífa relinquished direct government over Afrikia and the Maghribs, and agreed that Ibráhm should have full authority in those regions, on payment of an annual tribute of 40,000 dinars. The Aghlabites were military rulers; they erected forts, palaces and mosques and, themselves of Persian extraction, introduced the arts and sciences which the Persians had brought into Baghdad. They extended their power far and wide and even Charlemagne sent ambassadors to their court. All this did not appeal to the Berbers, who now founded separate States of their own; but dissensions among them enabled the Aghlabite dynasty to remain in power for a time. But a new enemy was about to appear. The advent of the Isma'ílians led to the ruin of the Aghlabite dynasty and to the rise of the Fātimid Khalífate.

After these few preliminary remarks,¹ we may pass on to the more immediate subject of this chapter, the influence of the Shí'ah sect of the

¹ In my *Muslim Conquests in North Africa*, I have given more details than are required in this brief introduction to a description of the great, though temporary, change in the fortunes of the Shí'ahs. Osborn in *Islám under the Arabs*, chapter ix, has given a graphic account of these wars in Africa.

Isma'īlians and the way in which the Shī'ahs came in for a brief period of power and how the dogma of the Imāmat was still a living creed.

The Isma'īlians claim that after Isma'īl, whom they say was the rightful sixth Imām (ante p. 57), the succession of the concealed Imāms commenced, in contradistinction to the views of the Imāmites (believers in twelve Imāms) that this concealment began with Al-Mahdī. The sect for a long time was only a minor one. The man who brought it into prominence was 'Abdu'llāh ibn Maynūn. The father was a prominent member of the extreme section of the Shī'ahs known as the Ghulāt. His son 'Abdu'llāh, an oculist by profession and a Persian by race, was one of the most remarkable man of the age. He thought out a plan for making the sect to which he belonged a real power in the world. It was 'to bind together in one association the conquered and the conquerors; to combine in one secret society, wherein there should be several grades of initiation, the free-thinkers, who saw in religion only a curb for the common people, and the bigots of all sorts, to form for himself, in short, a party, numerous, compact, and schooled to obedience, which, when the moment was come, would give the throne, if not to himself, at least to his descendants . . . an idea which, grotesque and audacious though it was, he realized with astonishing tact, incomparable skill, and a perfect knowledge of the human heart.'¹

¹ Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans de l'Espagne*, vol. iii, pp. 8 ff. Rene Dussaud in his *Histoire de Religion des Nosairis* takes a more favourable view of this sect. He says, 'certain excesses rendered these doctrines hateful to orthodox Musalmans, and led them definitely to

Professor Nicholson says, 'Filled with a fierce contempt of the Arabs, and with a free-thinker's contempt for Islām, 'Abdu'llāh ibn Maynūn conceived the idea of a vast secret society which should be all things to all men, and which, by playing on the strongest passions and tempting the inmost weaknesses of human nature, should unite malcontents of every description in a conspiracy to overthrow the existing régime.'¹ To attain this end, as we shall see, many devices were employed, such as 'devoutness to the believer; liberty, not to say license, to the reckless; philosophy to the strong-minded; mystical hopes to the fanatical, and marvels to the common folk.'

In order to propagate his views 'Abdu'llāh employed a large number of missionaries, called Dā'is,² whom at first he sent to the country around Kúfa and by their means gained some notable converts. 'Abdu'llāh bin Maynūn died in A.D. 874. He had several successors, but his grandson Sa'īd, who afterwards took the name of 'Ubaydu'llāh, was the one who reaped the fruits of the ambitious plans of his predecessors. One of the most useful of his

condemn them. It must be recognized that many Isma'īli precepts were borrowed from the Mu'tazilites. . . . Notwithstanding this lack of originality, it appears that the judgements pronounced by Western scholars are marked by an excessive severity. It is certainly wrong to confound, as do the Musalman doctors, all these sects in one common reprobation. Thus, the disappearance of the Fātimids who brought about the triumph of the Isma'īli religion in Egypt, concludes an era of prosperity, splendour and toleration such as the East will never again enjoy.' (Quoted in Browne's *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, p. 395.) Dussard probably takes too lenient a view of the principles and activities of the Isma'īlians. Professor Browne considers that Dozy hardly does justice to the Isma'īlians, whose missionaries amid a thousand changes showed admirable sincerity and self-abnegation.

¹ *Literary History of the Arabs*, pp. 271-2.

² The Arabic plural is Du'āt.

Dá'ís was Abú 'Abdi'lláh, often referred to as Abú 'Abdi'lláh, the Shí'ah. He was a learned man, clever in the formation of plans, bold and active in carrying them out. His personality was attractive, and his belief in the manifestation of the Imám, descended from Isma'íl, was profound. At Mecca he met pilgrims from North Africa, who invited him to visit their country. He did so and found the tribe of Kitáma ready to receive his teaching, and to them he declared that he was the messenger of the Mahdí, who would soon come and work many wonders among them. He called the men of this tribe true believers. 'Abdi'lláh's power rapidly grew and he became the leader of a large army. The time was now ripe for the advent of the Mahdí, so word was sent to Sa'íd that the Isma'ílian doctrines were generally accepted and men anxiously looked for the coming of Al-Mahdí. Sa'íd was delighted to get the news. His father had once said to him, 'you are he who will be the Mahdí after my death; you will flee to a distant country, where you will undergo seven trials.' He declared himself to be the great grandson of Muḥammad bin Isma'íl and took the name of Abú Muḥammad 'Ubaydu'lláh and made arrangements to proceed at once to Africa. The Khalífa of Baghdad got news of the intended departure of 'Ubaydu'lláh and sent throughout his empire descriptions of the fugitive with strict orders that he was to be imprisoned. 'Ubaydu'lláh disguised himself as a merchant and, after many narrow escapes, arrived in Egypt; but he was arrested on suspicion by the ruler of a place called Segelmessa and cast into prison. The Dá'í

Abú 'Abdi'lláh was much grieved when he heard of this calamity. As the ruler of Segelmessa would not listen to the request made by the Dá'í for the release of the prisoner, hostilities were commenced. Abú 'Abdi'lláh was victorious and 'Ubaydu'lláh was released amid great demonstrations of joy. Thus 'Ubaydu'lláh came into power, but one of his first acts was, in true oriental fashion, to get rid of his powerful friend and subject, Abú 'Abdi'lláh, who was arrested on a charge of treason and, with several of the Kitáma chiefs, was put to death. The Berbers and the Dá'í were disappointed when they saw that the Mahdí could work no miracles. Abú 'Abdi'lláh is reported as then saying to the Berbers, 'His actions are not like those of the Mahdí to whom I used to try to win you; I am afraid I have been mistaken in him.' He further advised the Berbers to examine him. The Shaykh of the Kitáma then asked the Mahdí to perform a miracle. The reply to this was the immediate execution of the Shaykh. Meetings were then held and the Mahdí, fearing a revolution, proceeded to put it down by force. The Imám then breathed more freely, and, after many conflicts conducted with much cruelty, grew more and more powerful. Between the years A.D. 915-8 he built the city of Mehdiyya, and when he saw it completed said, 'I am now at ease regarding the fate of the Fātimids.' After this he assumed the Khalífate in Egypt.¹ He was thus the first of the Fātimid

¹ Among the Shí'ahs proper the Khalífa exists only as the concealed Imám, and the visible ruler on earth is only his viceroy, but the Mahdí claimed to be not only Mahdí, but the heir of the Imáms, and thus assumed the Khalífate as the legitimate heir of 'Alí.' O'Leary, *The Fātimid Khalífate*, p. 73.

Khalīfas ; a dynasty so called from the descent of these Imāms from 'Alī and Fāṭima. The succeeding Khalīfas had to struggle on against opposition, but gradually they consolidated their power. In A.D. 960 the city of Cairo (Al-Káhira, the Victorious) was founded and the Fāṭimid rule was firmly established.¹ These great changes, the formation of a rival Shī'ah Khalīfate and the establishment of the Shī'ah religion as the official State one in Egypt had been well prepared for by the labours and teaching of the enthusiastic Isma'īlian Dā'īs, to whose teaching we may now give some attention.

The Isma'īlians are famous for their esoteric views² and for the activity with which they propagated them. One extreme section received the name of Bāṭinīs, a word which means 'inner,' and is applied to them because they held that there was an inner or esoteric meaning of the Qur'ān, that this was of far more importance than positive law, and that the meaning was known only to the initiated. As the Imāms of the Isma'īlians were concealed,

¹ 'Thus had the whirligig of time brought back its revenge and the hunted Shī'ah seated himself as sovereign in the richest province of the Muhammadan empire. By reason of its influence on the destinies of Europe, this conquest of Egypt by the Fāṭimid Khalīfas is perhaps, so far as the West is concerned, the most important episode in the history of Islām. The disunited provinces of the Baghdad Khalīfate were shortly to be welded together in the vast empire of the Seljuks; when, but for the rising of this hostile power in Egypt, the entire weight of the Muhammadan world would have descended upon the tottering empire of Byzantium and have crushed it. . . . To the Fāṭimid Khalīfas Europe owes that interval of precious time which enabled her to consolidate her nationalities and roll back the tide of Muhammadan invasion.' Osborn, *Islām under the Arabs*, p. 246.

² Thus they explain the Hajj as a pilgrimage away from sin, and the putting on of the Hājī's robe (ihrām) as the casting aside all sensual thoughts and feelings, just as one's ordinary clothes are put off when the ihrām is donned. 'This is the true meaning of the pilgrimage and its robe.'

their instructions could only be made known by the Dā'īs, who had been initiated into all the secret lore of the sect. This they made known to their neophytes in the following manner. When the Dā'ī wished to make a proselyte he proceeded to ask questions on obscure passages of the Qur'ān and to point out that the intellect of man was powerless to understand them or even the events of daily life. If the Dā'ī perceived that the person he addressed was intelligent and accustomed to controversy he accommodated himself to his opinions, showed him great respect and praised all he said. On the other hand, if the person addressed was a simple-minded ignorant man, the Dā'ī would then affirm that religion was a secret science known only to a few, and that the great division amongst Muslims was owing to the fact that they did not recognize in the Imāms the special knowledge God had given to them. Gradually the pupil began to see that much in life and in religion was an enigma to him, and that the Dā'ī possessed knowledge which he did not, so doubt imperceptibly crept into his mind and he became more and more susceptible to the influence of the Dā'ī, who now took for the subject of discussion the literal and allegorical¹ meanings of passages in the Qur'ān. The esoteric meaning of these was known to the Imāms and had been handed down from them to approved teachers in each generation. When the faith of the neophyte was sufficiently shaken and his curiosity excited, the Dā'ī proceeded to put such questions as these,

'What is the meaning of the casting of the pebbles and of the running between Mounts Ṣafá and Mar-wa?'¹ Why is a woman, who has omitted the fast and the namáz, obliged to keep the fast some other time but not to supply the omission of the prayers? Why did God take seven days to create the world, when he could have done it in an hour? How can it be true that the skin of the damned will be changed into a new skin, or that the new skin which has not taken on the sins of the other shall be tormented in fire?'²

Who are Gog and Magog, Hárút and Márút? What are the seven doors of hell and the eight gates of heaven? What is the meaning of the letters, Alif, Lám, Mím, etc., at the beginnings of certain Súras? Why were seven heavens created and why has the first chapter of the Qur'án seven verses? Why did twelve fountains gush forth when Moses struck the rock; why are there twelve months in a year?'³

The Dá'í then led on the pupil through the mazes of philosophic speculation; puzzled him with recondite questions with reference to the spiritual and the natural worlds; and on the strength of the text, 'On earth are signs for men of firm belief and also on your own selves, will ye not then behold them?'⁴ declared that it was incumbent on the believer to make great efforts to get at the inner meaning of

these things. 'If you give your attention to the teaching of the true Imám you will be delivered from error, and the most sublime truths will be made quite clear to you.'

Having thus excited the desire of the neophyte, the Dá'í became as reticent as he had before been communicative. He said that all these matters were revealed to none but a few, and then only after a long and severe course of training. He quoted the verse, 'Remember that We have entered into a covenant with prophets and with thee and with Noah, etc.,'¹ to show that no further steps could be taken, unless a covenant were made and a promise of loyalty and devotion to the Imám were given. The enquirer had to swear not to divulge any secrets, not to assist the enemies of the Imám, nor in any way whatever to swerve from an unquestioning obedience to his spiritual directors, and not to require a reason for any instruction given to him, or for any duty required of him.

The oath once taken, the enquirer entered upon the second degree, in which he learned that true knowledge came only through the Imáms, and that the calamities which had fallen on Islám were due to the general neglect of this truth. Not until he had thoroughly grasped this idea was he allowed to pass on to a higher stage.

The object of the third degree was to teach him that the reason why there were seven Imáms and no more was that there were seven planets, seven climates, seven heavens, and so on. The number

¹ These are ceremonies connected with the Ḥajj. See *The Faith of Islám* (4th ed.), p. 408.

² 'Those who disbelieve Our signs, We will in the end cast into the fire: so oft as their skins shall be well burnt, We will change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the torment.'—Súratu'n-Nisá' iv. 59.

³ Súratu't-Tauba ix. 36.

⁴ Súratu'dh-Dhárýát li. 20-1.

¹ Súratu'l-Aḥzáb xxxiii. 7. See also Súras xxxiii. 23; v. 1; xvi. 93-4; ii. 77.

seven is a sacred one. He was also taught that the Imámítes in recognizing twelve Imáms had departed from the true Faith, that only to those who recognized Muḥammad Ḥabíb as the seventh and last Imám would the mysteries of religion be revealed, and to such alone would be made known the exoteric and esoteric doctrine of things.

In the fourth degree he was taught matters of the utmost importance. He learned that the prophets entrusted with the production of new religions were seven in number—Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, Muḥammad, and, last of all, Muḥammad Ḥabíb, the son of Isma‘íl, in whose person was gathered up and terminated all preceding knowledge—‘Ulúmu’l-Awwalín—a term which may be said to denote the idea that the esoteric meaning of religion was perfectly known to him. As Muḥammad Ḥabíb, then, alone had the key to all mysteries, as in him the cycle of the old faiths with their positive precepts and inculcation of the letter terminated, and as with him began the knowledge of that allegorical significance latent in all the preceding religions, all who would be on the right path should follow him, in other words should become Isma‘ílíans. Each prophet had a special companion, called Sús.¹ Thus Adam had Seth; Noah, Shem; Abraham, Isma‘íl; Moses, Aaron; Jesus, Simon Ṣufa,² or the pure one; Muḥammad, ‘Alí. The proselyte who passed through this degree ceased to be a Muslim, for he could only attain to it by acknowledging a

¹ سوس the Druses use the form أساس Asás. The word سوس means source or origin : أساس is a foundation.

² Called الطاهر the Pure : it is evidently meant for Cephas.

prophet posterior to Muḥammad, the founder of Islám, and a revelation which superseded the Qur‘án and all that had gone before. The great majority of men stopped here, for the other five degrees were confined to a select few.

In the fifth degree the enquirer was taught many mysterious things with regard to the use of numbers and, above all, that moral commands and religious ceremonies were to be explained allegorically. He also learned that each Imám had twelve ministers, each called the Ḥujjat, or Proof, whose duty it was to make known his teaching to men.

In the sixth degree the very foundation of religious belief was attacked. Hitherto the proselyte had been taught that though one religion superseded another, yet all came originally from God. Now he learned that the opinions of philosophers were superior to those of the prophets, that religious creeds were clever artifices to fetter reason. The race had now outgrown the need of such a fiction as revealed religion. The Arkánu’d-dín, the obligatory practices of Islám, were all explained away allegorically, and so it was no longer necessary to observe them.

In the seventh degree it was shown that, as, according to the instruction given in the fourth degree, each great prophet had an assistant, so Isma‘íl had his son Muḥammad Ḥabíb. This led on to the teaching of the principle of dualism—something which gives and something which receives. It was explained that this principle was to be found in the Qur‘án and in religion. Thus of creation it is said, ‘When God createth a thing,

He only saith "Be" (كن) and it is.¹ This is the first and the greater of two powers; but the second is found in the words, 'All things have We created after a fixed decree.'² Thus will and necessity form a dualism. The Tablet and the Pen give another illustration. The Pen writes the Qur'án the Tablet receives it.³ All this pointed to the existence of a dualistic principle in the universe. The object of it all was to destroy belief in Tauhíd, or the Unity.

Then came the eighth degree in which dualism was carried a stage further, and it was said that there were two Beings who rule the world, the one pre-existent to the other and raised above it. The pupil had by this time become completely bewildered and so was prepared for the final stage.

In the ninth degree the neophyte was led on to nihilism. There was no God, no law, no religion.⁴ All who maintained the truth and existence of these things were to be treated as enemies. The universe was eternal.

Such were the methods by which the Isma'ílians, emancipated from the control of a moral law were formed into a fanatical sect, spreading destruction all around.⁵

¹ Súratu 'Alí 'Imrán, iii. 42.

² Súratu'l-Qamar liv. 49.

³ This is the Lauhu'l-Mahfúz on which the decrees of God are written. It is referred to in Súratu'l-Buruj lxxv. 21-2. 'It is a glorious Qur'án written on the preserved table.'

⁴ 'Follow Reason and do what it deems good, for it gathers the honey of counsel. And accept not a commandment from the Torah, for verily the Truth is hidden from it.' So the Arab poet Ma'ani.

⁵ A very full account of these nine degrees will be found in Silvestre de Sacy's *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*, vol. i, pp. lxxv-cxxxviii.

When the various degrees had been passed through the initiation was complete, and after solemn oaths not to reveal anything, and to yield unquestioning and implicit obedience, further instructions were given to the new member of the confraternity as regards his conduct towards other men. If he met with a Shí'ah he was to express his sorrow at the cruel treatment 'Alí and his sons had received: if with a Sunní he must speak with respect of the Khalífas Abú Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmán. To the Magian he should expatiate on the glory of the sun and moon, to the Jew he should extol the merits of the Messiah whose advent they longed for, and should also before them speak evil of Christians. With Christians he would refer with disdain to the Jews and would express belief in much of the Christian creeds, with the esoteric meaning of which he would say that he was well acquainted. In short, he would so conduct himself with all varieties of men that they might all be brought to acknowledge Muḥammad Ḥabíb, as the Seal of the Prophets, the last and final teacher of men. To the fully initiated, he was to admit that the Imám was dead, that he comes now in a spiritual form and that those who have reached the highest stages have in spiritual methods intercourse with him. Sleight of hand, fascination of the eye, aptness to mislead were all to be cultivated in order that he might make a show of miraculous power before the ignorant multitude.

There are still a few Isma'ílians in South Arabia and in Syria. A few of the Arabian ones recently (1923) complained to King Ḥusayn that the

Wahhābīs were troubling them; those in Syria do not appear to have exercised any appreciable influence in the recent political affairs of that region, now a mandated territory under French control.

The Arab Sunnī Government in Afrikia now came to an end and that of the Shī'ah Khalīfate rose into and exercised power. There were fourteen Khalīfās of this dynasty, of whom Al-Adīd (A.D. 1160-1171) was the last. The dynasty was brought to an end by the famous warrior statesman, Ṣalāhu'd-Dīn (Honour of the Faith) better known as Saladin. As we are not concerned with the general political history of this Khalīfate,¹ I shall only make a few general remarks on it, going rather more into details about the notorious Khalīfa Hākim, in whose reign some remarkable religious movements took place, which call for notice.

The Mahdī died in A.D. 934. He had the audacity to withstand the Sunnī Khalīfa, the head of the Islāmic world, an audacity justified by its results, for he founded a dynasty which played an important part in the years to come. Islām had now three chief rulers; one in Baghdad, one in Spain, one in Afrikia. The 'Abbāsīd Khalīfate was drawing to a close. The unity of the Islāmic empire was gone, never to return.

Mu'izz, the fourth Khalīfa established his power in Egypt and Cairo became (A.D. 973) the residence of the Fātimid Khalīfas.² The Berbers now threw

¹ An excellent account is given in O'Leary's, *History of the Fātimid Khalīfate*, pp. 49-245: and in Osborn's, *Islām under the Arabs*, pp. 185-236.

² It was now that a literary duel commenced between Egypt and Baghdad on the priority of 'Ubaydu'llāh's descent from 'Alī and Fātima, on which the claim of the Fātimid Khalīfate rested. Their

off the yoke of their recent masters, and gradually various semi-independent kingdoms were formed, the history of which we need not pursue. Mu'izz was a scholar and a careful administrator. He was one of the most tolerant of the Fātimid Khalīfas. He allowed religious freedom and even permitted open religious discussions between Christians and Muslims. He rebuilt a ruined Church at Fustāt and severely punished some Muslim fanatics who sought to hinder the work of restoration. On the whole, with some exceptions when cruelty and violence raged, the rule of the Fātimids was, for the age and country in which they ruled, 'liberal, beneficent and favourable to learning.' The earlier Khalīfas were patrons of learned men and encouraged the erection of fine buildings. It is to them we owe amongst others the mosque of Al-Azhar (A.D. 970). Al-'Azīz, who succeeded his father Al-Mu'izz, ruled successfully. Like his father he was a tolerant man as regards religion and race. His wife was a Christian, the mother of the mad Hākim the next and worst of all the Fātimid Khalīfas. Under the Khalīfa Al-Mustansir (A.D. 1035-95) the power and glory of the Fātimid dynasty rose to its highest point. Though Morocco, Algiers and Tunis were lost, it ruled over the rest of North Africa, Egypt, Sicily, Malta and parts of Asia Minor. For two years even Baghdad acknowledged Mustansir as Khalīfa, and for a short while Mecca and Madīna were in his possession. After his long reign of sixty years the

opponents said that they were descended from the Persian heterodox 'Abdu'llāh ibn Maymūn. See O'Leary, *History of the Fātimid Khalīfate*, pp. 116, 166; Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, p. 398.

decadence of the dynasty set in, and the great empire which Mu'izz and his son had built up gradually fell into decay.

The reign of Hákim (A.D. 996-1021) was one long history of cruel actions.¹ Christians and Jews all incurred his mad anger. Christian priests were flogged to death and churches were destroyed. Christians had to wear, suspended from their necks, a heavy cross. The Jews had to wear black garments, and, when they walked abroad, a piece of wood, carved like a calf's head, was placed on their heads. This was to remind them of the apostasy at Sinai. Hákim's Muslim subjects fared little better. He abolished the namáz, or public prayers, and the khutba, or Friday sermon in the month of Ramaḍán. He stopped the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the annual sending of the Kiswah, or the covering for the Ka'ba. He set aside the decrees of the Khalífas Abú Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman, whose memory he denounced and cursed. All this was very trying to good Muslims, but the Fāṭimid Khalífas, though nominally Muslims, denied the chief doctrines of Islám. Whilst the orthodox held that the Law given by Muḥammad was perfect and final, the Fāṭimid rulers, on the contrary, held that they themselves were incarnations of the Divine Reason, and that they alone were the interpreters of the inner meaning of the positive precepts of the Law. 'Every positive precept of the Law was an allegorical statement of some unseen verity; and as one pure and universal Reason presided over the spiritual world above, evil was neces-

¹ For a full account, see O'Leary, *The Fāṭimid Khalífate*, pp. 143-7.

sary in this lower world; also that this pure Reason should be incarnate in a person. It had been so in Isma'íl and his descendants; it was so now in the Fāṭimid Khalífas.¹

The death of Hákim came about in this wise. He issued many harsh edicts against the women of Cairo, even forbidding them to leave their homes or to appear in the streets. One day when passing by the baths, he heard the sound of women's merry voices within the bath-house. He ordered the doors to be bricked up and so left the bathers to die of hunger. His sister remonstrated with him on his acts of cruelty. He accused her of immorality and threatened her with death. Some of the nobles of the Court took her part. A plan was made to waylay Hákim on one of his nightly excursions and to put an end to his life. This was successfully carried out and Hákim disappeared and his body was not found. Various accounts are given of the manner of his disappearance.²

Hákim built in Cairo a college, called the Dáru'l-Hikmat, or Hall of Sciences, in which a large number of Dá'ís were instructed and initiated into the various degrees to fit them for the work of expounding the tenets of the Isma'ílian sect. One day Ḥasan ibn Ṣabbāḥ, afterwards, the Grand Master of the Assassins, came to these meetings and listened to the instruction given. He then spent three years in Syria. When the ninth Khalífa Al-Mustali (A.D. 1094-1101) ascended the throne his accession was disputed by his elder brother Nizar,

¹ Osborn, *Islám under the Arabs*, p. 247.

² See O'Leary, *History of the Fāṭimid Khalífate*, pp. 184-7.

but the opposition was finally put down. The Assassins,¹ as the followers of Ḥasan ibn Šabbāḥ were called, were opposed to the claims of the reigning Khalīfa and now formed a strong and formidable sect, organized on the traditional lines of the Ismaʿīlians. They had the same stages of initiation and were equally agnostic in their views. The head of the Highest Grade was the Grand Master, the Dāʾī-l-Duʾāt; also called the 'Mountain Chief' (Shaykhū'l-Jabal) and in Crusading Chronicles 'Le Vieux,' the Old One, and so he was widely known as 'The Old Man of the Mountain.' After wandering about and preaching his doctrines Ḥasan ibn Šabbāḥ by a clever ruse² in the year A.D. 1090 obtained possession of the strong mountain fortress of Alamūt, known as the 'Eagle's Nest.' The seizure of other fortresses followed and Ḥasan soon obtained great political power, the means which he used being the devotion of the Fidā'īs to his person and their use of the dagger. For thirty-five years, Ḥasan lived in seclusion at Alamūt. 'Pitiless and inscrutable as Destiny, he watched the troubled world of Oriental politics, himself invisible, and whenever he perceived a formidable foe, caused a dagger to be driven into his heart. Warriors, statesmen, merchants—he spared none.'³

¹ The etymology of this term has been disputed, and various derivations have been suggested. The most probable one is that it comes from hashish, the Indian hemp, or bang. It is largely used now in Eastern lands, but in Ḥasan's day it was not so widely known. One of his confederates, 'Atāsh, was a physician and may have known how to prepare it. Ḥasan used it in the training of his Fidā'īs. See Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. ii, pp. 204-5.

² The stratagem was this: he was allowed to take as much land as a bull's hide would cover, so he cut a hide into many thin strips and surrounded the site of the fortress with them.

³ Osborn, *Islam Under the Khalīfs of Baghdad*, p. 343.

Under the 'Mountain Chief' there were Grand Priors (Dāʾī-i-Kabīr) to each of whom the charge of a separate district was allotted. Then came the initiated Dāʾīs. Below them were the minor orders of Companions and adherents, and last of all the Fidā'īs, or self-devoted ones. These last were carefully trained¹ to assume various disguises, a favourite one being the garb of a Šūfī darwish, or of a religious mendicant. This was to enable them to enter into any society of men in order to propagate their views, or to do more deadly work. They were bound to a blind and unquestioning obedience and to commit murder when bidden so to do. The sect, thus surrounded with an atmosphere of secrecy, rightly received the name of Assassins. To prepare the Fidā'īs for their deadly work, Ḥasan made a lovely garden, in which were conduits of wine, milk and honey. In it were beautiful damsels and all that could lead to sensual pleasure. A few Fidā'īs at a time were drugged with hashish and when insensible carried into the garden in which, on recovering their senses, they found themselves surrounded with all that was beautiful and attractive to human passions. In attendance upon them were beautiful damsels, like the Hūrīs of Paradise, who charmed them with soft music and pleasant songs. The entranced Fidā'īs believed themselves to be in Paradise. When the 'Old Man' wished to send a Dāʾī on a perilous mission he caused one of those in the garden to be drugged and brought forth. On

¹ On the training of a Fidā'ī see Osborn, *Islam Under the Arabs*, p. 266; Marco Polo's description quoted by Browne in *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, pp. 207-8.

coming to consciousness he found himself in a palace. Then he received instructions and was told that the faithful performance of the Master's will would ensure his entrance again to Paradise. 'Go,' said the Master, and 'slay so and so, and when thou returnest, my angels shall bear thee into Paradise.' He was assured that, even if he himself was killed, angels would carry him there, and so he would forever enjoy the pleasures of which he had already enjoyed a foretaste.

In common with the whole body of the Isma'ilians, the leaders of this section of them taught that the universal Reason by which God created the world was in reality God incarnate. The first thing created was the universal Soul the attribute of which is life, just as the attribute of Reason is knowledge. The Universal Soul requires something in which to manifest itself and rise to the level of Universal Reason. So primary Matter was brought into existence and man appeared and individual souls came into existence. How are the two great powers of the upper world, universal Soul and universal Reason, to be made manifest in this lower one? The Active Intellect was formed to enter into the individual soul. Then the Soul and the Reason of the upper world can enter into human souls. But some individual person has to be selected for this special manifestation in a human person. In the person so selected Divine Reason and the universal Soul¹ incarnate themselves. Now the universal Reason is immortal; man is not; so the Reason

¹ This Reason is the Nátiq, one who speaks, that is, a prophet; the incarnate Soul is one who interprets, or makes known and interprets and investigates the Divine words and actions.

incarnates itself in successive generations of men, in other words in the Imáms. In them the universal Reason became incarnate successively in 'Alí, then in the Imáms who succeeded him, and now it was incarnated in the Fātimid Khalífa.¹

'Such were the doctrines taught by Hasan the first Grand Master of the Assassins. Such was the belief cherished by his followers. This accounts for the utter devotion with which they risked their lives in carrying out his orders. In the Fātimid Khalífas of Egypt they beheld an incarnate deity. To kill his enemies, in whichever way they best could, was an action, the merit of which could not be disputed and the reward for which was certain.'²

Alamút was finally destroyed and the power of the sect was broken by the Mongol leader, Húlágú Khán in A.D. 1256, and only a few minor groups of the sect remained and led a secluded existence in various parts of the world. At the present day a few are said to be in Persia, and, under the name of Khojas, a quiet enterprising people, a few remain in Bombay, Zanzibar, Syria and a few other places where 'they still enjoy a certain influence and importance, though it requires a great effort of

¹ Thus the Khalífa Mu'izzu'd-Din (A.D. 953-75) is reported to have used a prayer of which I give a few extracts: 'My God! I am as thou art, great by reason of thy supreme power. I am thy power, thy Manifestation, thy will and thy word. My God! grant to men that they may know me. My God! by me thou hast created all creatures and from me thou hast drawn all thy messengers and all thy prophets. I am one with thee in the effusion of light. I am thy revealed power and through me thy striking signs are manifest.' Quoted in Osborn's *Islām under the Khalífs of Baghdad*, p. 340.

² Osborn, *Islām under the Khalífs of Baghdad*, p. 340. Chapter III of this book gives a full and graphic account of this remarkable sect and their murderous activities.

imagination to associate their present pontiff, the genial and polished Aghá Khán, with the redoubtable Grand Master of Alamút, and the Old man of the Mountain.¹

We have now seen into what strange ways, the Shí'ah doctrine of the Imámat developed itself in the form of Isma'ílianism and its offshoots. Another development is found in the extreme section of the Isma'ílians known as the Carmathians. They are so called from the name of a Dá'í nicknamed Qarmat, on account of his short body and legs. He was the chief propagandist of the sect. For a time they caused great trouble in Arabia and elsewhere. In A.D. 925 they attacked the pilgrim caravan and in the following year entered Mecca and carried off the Sacred Black Stone (hajarū'l-aswad), which is kissed by the pilgrims as an act of devotion. They kept it for twenty years, thus shocking all orthodox Muslims. Sultán Maḥmūd of Ghazna severely punished them. As a sect they passed away in time, and we need not pursue their history further.

Perhaps the most remarkable movement in Al-Ḥákim's time is the rise of the sect of the Druses. Now a leading Dá'í, a Persian named Muḥammad ibn Isma'íl Darází,² of the Bāṭini section of the Isma'ílians encouraged the Khalífa in his pretensions to divinity. He led him to believe that he was an incarnation of the Deity, and that the Divine Spirit, which God has breathed into Adam, had descended through a long line of prophets to 'Alí and from

him through the Imáms to himself, the Imám of the present age.

After Darází came another Dá'í named Hamza, also a Persian whom the Druses claim as the founder of their religion. He took the name of Al-Ḥádi, the Guide. He claimed the power to abrogate all preceding laws and to abolish the Tanzíl, or literal interpretation of words employed in the Qur'án, which seem to attribute to God a human form, and the Tawíl, or allegorical system preached by 'Alí and the Imáms. Under the patronage of Ḥákim the sect of the Darázís (now called Druses) grew in numbers and influence.

The basis of the religion is that God is one, and that He alone is to be adored. He has often manifested Himself under human forms, and His last and final manifestation is the Lord Ḥákim. By a true confession of His unity, rightly believed, men gain eternal life. There are two dangers to be avoided in the idea one forms of the Unity of God. They are expressed by the words Tasbīḥ and Ta'ṭíl. The former signifies comparison and, in theological language, comparison with something created; the latter a stripping off, and, in its application to God, the denial in Him of any attributes as incompatible with His Unity. In some respects the Druses are close followers of the Mu'tazilís, who held that the attributes of God were not eternal, and had not any real existence in the Divine Essence.¹

The hierarchy of the Druses is formed on the model of the Bāṭinis. There are five leaders, the

¹ Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 460.

² The plural form of Darází is Dūrúz, from which the European form Druses is derived.

¹ See *The Faith of Islām* (4th ed.), p. 240.

chief one being Universal Intelligence, ¹ the name given to Hamza, from whom all knowledge emanates. The Druses believe in the transmigration of souls. Their reappearance in different forms is connected with the good or the evil deeds committed in a former life. After the death of Hākim, the people were told to look for his return, when with the aid of Hamza he would overcome all opposition and be universally adored. Previous religions introduced by Nātiqs (prophets), being exoteric beliefs, are known as Tanzīl now; but each Nātiq before his death nominated a special companion, called a Sūs, who will give the esoteric meaning (Tawīl) of the religion founded by his master, Hākim declared that the only sound interpreter of religion was Hamza and quoted the verse, 'We have recorded everything in a clear writing.' ² The chief article in the creed is to believe in the divinity of Hākim. They believe that he voluntarily disappeared in sorrow, leaving a world not worthy of him and that, though now in concealment, he will return when the world is ready for him. Such, in brief, is the religion of the Druses, a curious offshoot of the cult of 'Alī and of the dogma of the Imāmat. It is a strange mixture of fanaticism and folly, not without some redeeming features in the practical duties of

¹ According to the tradition 'The first thing God created was intelligence *أول ما خلق الله العقل*'

² *Sūratu Yā Sīn* xxxvi. 11. The Arabic for clear writing is *إمام مبين* (Imām Mubīn). The Druses say that it is Hamza, and for its application to a living person they have Shī'ah authority. Sayyid Maqbūl Aḥmad in his Shī'ah commentary (vol. ii, p. 703) so interprets it (ante p. 66). Naturally the Sunnī commentators take a different view, and say it refers to the writing on the Preserved Table (*Lauhul-Mahfūz*), on which in heaven the Qur'ān is said to have been written ready for Gabriel to bring it down in separate portions from time to time.

life amongst themselves. That a religion should grow out of the caprices of a madman, and that generation after generation should see in a blood-thirsty despot the incarnation of the Divine shows to what an extent men may be deluded, when they close their eyes to the 'true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' ¹

The cruelty of Hākim to his non-Muslim subjects shows how sad the lot of the Dhimmís was in certain lands, and under some Muḥammadan rulers. A few remarks on the subject may now be made. When Islām first arose no rules about the dress of Christians were needed; they dressed like the Arabs; but when the latter became more civilized and luxurious in the time of the Umayyad Khalīfas the Christians copied their dress and imitated their customs. Then the Khalīfa 'Umar issued his injunctions concerning the dress and customs of the Dhimmís, or non-Muslim subjects of a Muslim government, who enjoyed security of person and property, on payment of the *jizya*, or poll-tax. These injunctions are contained in what is called 'The covenant of 'Umar.' The canonical legists of Islām have elaborated the rules regarding the status of the Dhimmís, as regards dress, customs, marriage, inheritance and the like. At times these regulations were very harsh and contemptuous. The 'Abbāsīd and the Fātimīd Khalīfas were very hard on the Dhimmís. The Muftis of the canonical schools (*madhabs*) delivered fatvās, or legal decisions, against them. I give in an abbreviated form a

¹ For fuller information about the Druses see my *The Druses* (C.L.S.) and Silvestre de Sacy, *Exposé de la Religion des Druses*.

sample of one given by the Shaykh of the Málíkí Madhab.

QUESTION

What do the 'Ulamá' of Islám say as to the innovations introduced by the infidels in Cairo? For instance, they put themselves on an equality with the Amírs, the 'Ulamá' and the Sharífs, they wear rich garments, use the same kind of saddles as Muslim officials use, with servants running in front and in the rear. They purchase slaves, build houses higher than our mosques, and increase their churches and monasteries. The women walk out in public, wearing robes like those of Muslim women. It is the duty of the 'Ulamá' to publish the injunctions and to put down these disgraceful innovations.

ANSWER

The Most High has said, 'O believers! take not the Jews or Christians as friends. As for the infidels let them perish, and their works shall God bring to nought.' The 'Ulamá' have said that the words 'until they pay tribute out of hand and be humbled' mean that the Dhimmí must with great humility pay the tax to the Amír, who will then strike the Dhimmí on the back of the neck. The Dhimmís must not ride on horses, nor frequent the public roads, nor assemble in groups, nor have servants in attendance on them in the open thoroughfares and so on.

Other fatvás prohibit their employment as State officials. In modern times these regulations cannot be enforced, but in Hákím's time these laws prevailed, and thus his conduct is explained, though not justified by civilized custom.

IV

BÁBÍISM

THE teaching of the modern sect of the Bábís is closely connected with mystical modes of thought in Šúffism, and with the Shí'ah dogma of the Imámat. No sect in modern times has suffered so much persecution and survived and grown. The movement is one which illustrates the mystical tendency of Persian thought, the fanaticism of the Mullás, and the barbarity of the rulers; but all the efforts of the Muslim State and Church in Persia have failed to suppress Bábíism, or to lessen the veneration in which the Báb is held by those who accept his teaching.

The Persians themselves belong to the Shí'ah sect, which is itself a revolt from orthodox Islám. They are not naturally a narrow-minded people and in the past, as the Mu'tazila and the Šúffí movements show, have been more or less rationalistic and liberal in their views. It is difficult to see in what other Muslim country Bábíism could have arisen.

We have already seen (ante p. 62) what the Shí'ahs believe about Al-Mahdí and how in his seclusion he held communication with the outside world by means of selected persons whom he called the Abwáb, or doors, or gates. The day came when the last Gate, Abú'l-Husayn, reached the end of his life and declined to appoint a successor as his predecessors had done. He said that 'God hath a purpose which He will accomplish.' Intercourse

with Al-Mahdí was now at an end. Bábíism professes to decide when the Gates would re-appear and the intercourse be renewed. The importance attached to these men was very great, and accounts for the high esteem in which one appeared who called himself the Báb, the Gate.

The ground was prepared for him by Shaykh Ahmad, the founder of the Shaykhí sect, who soon gathered together a large following. The special point of his teaching was that 'God is immanent in the Universe, which proceeds from Him, and that all the elect of God, all the Imáms and all just persons are personifications of the divine attributes.' Thus the twelve Imáms were personifications of twelve of the chief attributes of God, and consequently they were eternal. Amongst these Imáms, 'Alí holds the highest rank, being superior to angels, prophets and even to Muhammad.'

The successor of Shaykh Ahmad was Hájí Sayyid Kázim. The Shaykhí doctrine now spread all through Persia, and in 'Iráq also there were more than a hundred thousand disciples. 'They did nothing to call forth the opposition of the Mullás, nor any political repression; on the contrary, among the admirers of the Shaykh were a great number of

¹ *Journal Asiatique*, Sixième Série, tome vii, p. 458.

Mírzá Kázim Beg adds the following note:—'The scholastic Musalmáns say that the attributes of God are equal and of one quality; but to the human comprehension some appear superior to others, for example, mercy surpasses severity. According to the doctrine of the Shí'átians, the attributes of God are eternally inherent in His essence. The Mu'tazilís do not admit this and say, "There is only one supreme existence and that is God; otherwise we must admit a multiplicity of eternal existences, which is contrary to the dogma of the divine unity." The doctrine of the Shaykhí school is that the attributes of God proceed from the supreme existence, and by His own will become personified in blending with the human soul and spirit which also emanate from God.'

'State officials, and of the chief among the clergy; all proud of his fame and enthusiastic about his philosophy.'¹ The Hájí died in A.D. 1843 and left no successor. According to the Bábí writers he appointed no one, because he looked upon Shaykh Ahmad and himself as forerunners of one who should shortly appear, and be far more glorious than they had been. Professor Browne gives the following translation of a passage in a Bábí history,² which bears on this point:—

'When Hájí Sayyid Kázim had but recently departed this life (A.D. 1843) I arrived at the supreme shrines (Karbalá and Nejed) and heard from his disciples that the late Sayyid had, during the last two or three years of his life, wholly restricted his discourse, both in lecture room and pulpit, to discussing the promised Proof, the signs of his appearance and their explanation, and to enumerating the qualities of the Master of the dispensation, repeatedly declaring that he would be a youth, that he would not be versed in the learning of men. Sometimes, too, he would say, "I see him as the rising sun." One day an Arab suddenly entered his presence and said, "I have seen a vision touching your reverence." On receiving permission he repeated the dream; whereupon Sayyid Kázim appeared somewhat troubled and said, "The interpretation of this dream is this, that my departure is nigh at hand and I must go hence." His companions, who were present, were much distressed and grieved at this intelligence; but he turned his face to them and said, "The time of my sojourn in the world has come to an end, and this is my last journey. Why are ye so grieved and troubled because of my death? Do ye not then desire that I should go and that the true one should appear?"'

The Shaykhís now began to consider what was

¹ *Journal Asiatique*, Sixième Série, tome vii, p. 463.

² *Episode of the Báb*, p. 239.

to be done in the matter of a successor, a spiritual director. They then went in different directions. Mullá Husayn proceeded to Shíráz and there met with Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad, who produced before him the signs of his call to his divine mission. Then Mírzá 'Alí gave marvellous expositions and clear explanations of most abstruse questions. For several days Mullá Husayn pondered over these matters, and at last became convinced that he had found in the young and ardent enthusiast before him, the 'Proof,' the 'True One,' the 'Sun of Truth,' to whose advent Hájí Sayyid Kázim had pointed. He wrote to his friends at Karbalá that neither he himself nor any other of them was worthy of the high dignity of Murshid, or leader, and that that 'Illuminated One,' to whom their late master had referred, was alone worthy. He had found him at Shíráz and he was worthy to be the Murshid.¹ It is for this reason, and because he so heartily espoused the cause of his new master, that Mullá Husayn is named the Bábu'l-Báb, or Gate of the Gate; the Harf-i-Awwal, or First Letter, and the Awwal man ámana, or the First to believe. But this decision was not acceptable to all the Shaykhís. A party headed by Hájí Muḥammad Karím Khán² of Kirmán utterly refused to receive the Báb and became his bitterest persecutors. The Shaykhís thus became divided into two sects. One passed on to Bábíism of which it was, in a way, the source. The other was, and continued to be, in fierce conflict with it. However,

¹ *Journal Asiatique*, Sixième Série, tome vii, p. 465.

² The Bábís called him the 'Very essence of Hell-fire.' *Episode of the Báb*, p. 242.

the great majority followed Mullá Husayn, and Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad become their recognized leader. He was then about twenty years of age.

As the connection between the Bábís and the Shaykhís is thus so close, we must now see what was the special dogma of the latter sect. The orthodox Shí'ah creed consists of five articles. They are belief (1) in tauḥíd, or the unity of God, (2) in 'adl, or the justice of God, (3) in nabúwat, or prophetship, (4) in imámat, (5) in ma'úd, the resurrection. The Shaykhís set aside the articles two and five, for they said that there seemed no sufficient reason why justice alone of all the attributes of God should be selected as an article of the creed, and that there was just as much reason for inserting His wisdom, power, or any other attribute. They also objected to the resurrection as a special article, on the ground that belief in the attribute of justice and in the resurrection is implied in the acceptance of prophetship. To take the place of the rejected articles and to bring the number up to four they added a new one, which they called the rukn-i-rábi', or the Fourth Support or Pillar. The meaning of this is that there must always be amongst believers one perfect man, a Shí'ah-i-kámil who can be the wásīta-i-faiz, or the channel of grace between the absent Imám and his people. Four pillars give stability to anything, so no more are needed in a creed. The term 'Fourth Support' is primarily applied to the dogma that the concealed Imám must always have on earth some one who possesses his entire confidence, to whom he gives special spiritual instruction, and who is thus qualified to convey to the

believers the wishes and wisdom of their invisible head. The term has, however, come to be applied to the person who fulfils this office. It is said that Hájí Muḥammad Karím Khán, the Shaykhí who refused to accept Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad as a leader, considered himself to be the 'Fourth Support.'¹ This, too, was the position of the Báb; at all events at first, for he claimed to be this 'Fourth Support,' and thus to occupy the place held by the 'Gates,' who were the intermediaries between the Imám and his followers during the minor occultation. Thus it is that Bábíism is connected with the very central doctrine of the Shí'ahs, though in many other ways it has so far departed from accepted Muḥammadan ideas as to form a new sect altogether. This will appear as we record the life and work of the Báb.

Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad was born at Shíráz on October 9, 1820. He was brought up by an uncle who was engaged in mercantile pursuits, but as his mind was more inclined to religious meditation and speculative thought, he proceeded to Karbalá, where he attended the lectures of the Shaykhí leader Hájí Sayyid Kázim. He was distinguished by his zeal for learning and soon won the esteem of his teachers. He now composed a commentary on Súratu Yúsuf. The Bábí historian² says of this work that in it, 'He addressed himself to that person unseen from whom he received help and grace, sought for aid in the arrangements of his preliminaries, and craved the sacrifice in the way of

¹ See *Episode of the Báb*, pp. 243-4 for an exposition of these two views.

² *Episode of the Báb*, p. 4.

love. Amongst others is the sentence, *O residue of God*,¹ I am wholly sacrificed to thee.'

He also wrote a commentary on other parts of the Qur'án and composed some prayers. He believed that his meditations were divinely inspired but the inspiration was subjective.

Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad, now twenty-four years old, more definitely formulated his views and announced himself as a duly authorized teacher and guide. On May 23, 1844, he assumed the title of the Báb, or Gate, through whom communication could be held with Imám Mahdí. This Manifestation took place just a thousand years after Imám Mahdí succeeded to the Imámát. This was the close of the Major Occultation (*Ghaybatu'l-Kubra*).² He said 'whosoever wishes to approach the Lord his God, and to know the true way that leads to Him ought to do it through me.' The Báb's first adherents were divided into several

¹ The expression, *residue* (or *remnant*) of God—*Baqíyat Ulláh*—is a very peculiar one. It is connected with a curious belief of the Shí'ahs, namely, that God allowed some part or fraction of Himself, in some way or other, to be connected with the Imám. As soon then as Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad was raised by his followers to the dignity of the Báb, or as soon as the idea became present to his own mind, he could address the Imám as the *Baqíyat Ulláh*, and set forth his complete devotion to him. His followers then gave him the titles of the servant of *Baqíyat Ulláh*, the mystery of *Baqíyat Ulláh*, the friend of *Baqíyat Ulláh*. Gradually, as during his imprisonment he became more and more invisible to his followers, and when he became credited with the power of working miracles and more or less a mythical being, he was no longer called the servant, or the mystery, or the friend of *Baqíyat Ulláh*, but himself was esteemed to be the *Baqíyat Ulláh*—the true Imám so long looked for, Mírzá Kázim Beg says that 'under the term "Mystery" they understood one who shared the secrets of the Imám. The name *Sirr-Ulláh*, or *Mystery of God*, was given to 'Alí, as to one who knew the secrets of divine revelation; and so, in its new application, the title *Sirr-i-Baqíyat Ulláh*, now a name of the Báb, would mean the one who knew all that was in the mind of the concealed Imám, who himself was the remnant (or residue) of God.' *Journal Asiatique*, 1866, vol. viii, p. 468.

² See *Ante*, p. 62.

classes : ' (1) rigorous and pious Muslims who really believed that the signs of Al-Mahdí were fulfilled in him ; (2) all who desired reform in Persia and thought that Bábíism would contribute toward that end ; (3) the mystics who considered Bábíism to be similar to their own pantheistic system ; (4) those who were attracted by the personal influence of the Báb.'¹ There is some difference of opinion as to what he really meant by the title of Báb which he had now assumed. Mírzá Kázim Beg says, 'I do not know whether he was acquainted with the words of Christ, "I am the door;" but he doubtless knew that Muḥammad had said, "I am the city of knowledge and 'Alí is the gate of that city.'"'²

However, he now gave out that, as 'Alí had been the Gate, by which men entered the city of the Prophet's knowledge, even so he was the Gate through which men might attain to the knowledge of the twelfth Imám. His followers have now discarded that name, and he is known amongst the Bábís by several titles, such as Ḥaẓrat, or His Highness ; Ḥaẓrat-i-nuqṭah-i-bayán, or His Highness the point of Revelation ; Ḥaẓrat-i-nuqṭah-i-úlá, or His Highness the First point ; Ḥaẓrat-i-rabbi ala'ala, or His Highness my Lord the Supreme. More recently the Bahá'ís call him Ḥaẓrat-i-mubashshir, or His Highness the Evangelist. Count Gobineau, a good authority on the subject, says, 'Mírzá Muḥammad 'Alí said that he was not the Báb in the sense in which they (his

¹ *RASJ*, 1889, p. 504.

² *Journal Asiatique*, 1866, p. 342.

followers) had believed and as he himself had thought, that is to say, the Gate of the knowledge of truth ; but that he was the Point, or the originator of truth, a divine appearance, a powerful manifestation,' and so goes on to show that the title Báb was set free and could henceforth reward the pious devotion of one of the Báb's followers. As a matter of fact, it was bestowed on Mullá Ḥusayn, who is sometimes called His Excellency, the Gate of the Gate, Janáb-i-Bábu'l-Báb.

The Báb made the pilgrimage to Mecca in November 1844, where he stayed a short time and completed all the rites incumbent on pilgrims. He returned early in the following year to Bushire. His personal charms and his attractive manners drew many people to him. The orthodox were pleased with the apparent veneration he held for the Prophet and the Imáms, whilst his more ardent companions rejoiced at the liberality of his views. The Mullás and others, however, became excited about him. They induced Ḥusayn Khán, the Governor of Fárs, to give orders that some of his followers should be beaten. A little later on in the year the Báb was brought as a prisoner to Shíráz. The impression he produced then was very great amongst the literary and religious classes. Whenever he appeared in the Mosque they listened to him in silence. In his public discourses he did not now attack the foundations of Islám, but was unsparing in his rebukes of the Mullás. His general theme was the sad and distressed state of men generally. Obscure allusions in his speeches awakened an interest amongst the curious, and delighted those

who were in part initiated into his teaching.¹ The Mullás of Shíráz appointed their ablest men to dispute with him, with the result that the enthusiasm regarding him greatly increased. Mírzá Kázim Beg thus describes one of these famous disputations. The 'Ulamá' assembled. The Báb appeared in the midst of them and spoke with courage and enthusiasm. The Governor, Husayn Khán, who had assumed the character and position of a learner, humbly suggested that the Báb should demonstrate that his doctrines were superior to those of Muḥammad. The Báb answered boldly, 'Take my Qur'án, compare it with that of your Prophet, and you will be convinced that my religion is the preferable one.' On hearing these words, the Governor changed his attitude and called for the executioner to whom he pointed out the prisoner. The Báb was then bound and beaten.

A Bábí historian² gives fuller details. He says that the matter acquired such importance that the reigning Sháh sent one of the most learned Doctors of the age, Sayyid Yahyá, to interview the Báb and to report the result. He held three long conferences with him, but the result was that he was so charmed with the Báb that he accepted him as a leader and admitted all his claims. About this time, Mullá Muḥammad 'Alí, a leading teacher, sent a person to Shíráz to ascertain the facts of the case. This messenger returned with some of the Báb's writings, which so impressed Mullá Muḥammad

'Alí that he too became a follower of the Báb. He urged all his disciples to become Bábís, and sent to the Báb a statement of his own adherence to his teaching. The Mullás complained to the Sháh, and Mullá Muḥammad. 'Alí was summoned to Tíhrán (Teheran); but he was able to meet successfully all his opponents in debate and nothing came of this action.

The orthodox Mullás soon perceived that they must attack the Báb direct and so they urged the Governor of Fars, Husayn Khán, to take more decisive action, saying, 'If thou desirest the extinction of this fire, or seekest a firm stopper for this rent and disruption, an immediate cure and decisive remedy is to kill the Báb.' The Báb, in order to avoid persecution, went to Isfahán, and wrote a letter to the Mu'tamadu'd-Dawlah, the Governor of the province, asking for a suitable lodging. The Governor, Minúchihr Khán, afforded him protection and showed him hospitality there, and invited the learned doctors of Islám to a public discussion with the Báb. They refused to meet him and, instead of doing so, signed a declaration to the effect that they were quite convinced of the heretical character of his doctrines¹ and that he should be punished. This very much displeased Minúchihr Khán, the Governor, who seems to have been a firm friend to the Báb. After his death in 1847, the Báb was removed to the castle of Máku, a fortress on the north-west frontier, though his confinement was not at first a rigorous one. His

¹ Count Gobineau, *Les religions et les philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 148.

² *Episode of the Báb*, p. 7.

¹ چون مخالف این شخص بشرع است اجرا حکم شرع عین موافق است -
Maqālah-i-Shakhsī Sayyid.

followers were allowed free intercourse with him, and continual correspondence went on between the Báb and his principal agents. The Báb at this time wrote many religious books, and his influence seemed to be on the increase. After the insurrection of Mázandarán it was determined to place him in stricter confinement, and so he was removed to the citadel of Chirík, near Urumiyyé, of which place Yahyá Khán was the Governor. He treated the Báb, who prayed and worked without ceasing, with deference and respect. Even the soldiers who guarded him, were influenced by his calm manner and his attractive conversation. The Báb was confined at Chirík about two and a half years, and, it is said, there declared himself to be the Qá'im, or the Imám Mahdí.

Soon after his arrival at Chirík he was brought to Tabríz to undergo his first examination. The Muḥammadan historians represent him as utterly foolish and ignorant.¹ The Bábí account of it is that the Báb advanced the claim of Mahdí-hood, on which a great tumult arose, and that, in general, his defence was a success. He was severely beaten and sent back to confinement in Chirík. Then we are told that 'learned divines and esteemed lawyers who were possessed of power and influence, girt up the loins of endeavour for the eradication and suppression of this sect.' They maintained that the Báb and his followers were not only in error, but were also hurtful to Church and State. The King, Muḥammad Sháh, however, declined to interfere,

¹ A full account is given in the *Episode of the Báb*, pp. 277-90: also in the *New History of the Báb*, pp. 285-91.

and declared that so long as the public peace was not disturbed the Government would not further interfere with him.

The Báb's followers were now most active in spreading his doctrines throughout the land. His most famous convert was a woman called Qurratu'l-'Ayn (Lustre of the eye). The course of the narrative may well be interrupted in order to give a brief account of so great and distinguished a woman. She was the daughter of Hájí Mullá Muḥammad Šáliḥ, a learned resident of Kazvín. She was an excellent Arabic scholar and was so intelligent that she could follow the most subtle discussions. Her acquaintance with the commentaries on the Qur'án and with the Traditions was very extensive.¹ She was acquainted with Hájí Sayyid Kázim, Shaykhí leader, and his famous disciple Mullá Husayn. When the latter set out for Shíráz Qurratu'l-'Ayn corresponded with him and begged him to let her know when he had found the spiritual teacher he was in search of. Mullá Husayn showed her letter to the Báb, who was much interested in it. For a while she lived at Karbalá and gave addresses to the Shaykhís. This displeased the governor of the place and she retired to Baghdád. Again she was ordered to change her place of residence. She then visited Kirmánsháh and Hamadán, everywhere preaching and making converts to the Bábí faith. Some of the Bábís looked with disfavour on this preaching by a woman; but the Báb supported her, applauded her zeal, and bestowed on her the title of

¹ Count Gobineau, *Les religions et les philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 168.

Janáb-i-Ṭáhira, or Her Excellency the Pure. From that time all acknowledged her position. Her father now brought her back to her home at Kazvín, but she was not happy there, as her friends and relatives were all bitterly opposed to the Shaykhís and the Bábís. Her uncle who showed much hatred of the Bábís, was now assassinated, and Qurratu'l-'Ayn was unjustly charged with being privy to the deed. This rendered her further stay in Kazvín impossible, and she left for a place called Núr, where she remained until the suppression by the Government of the Mázarán insurrection. She was then made a prisoner and sent to Ṭíhrán. On her arrival she was taken before the Sháh who said, 'I like her looks, leave her and let her be.' She was then kept in prison, though her confinement does not appear to have been very rigorous, for she had occasional intercourse with different Bábís and her life was in no danger until the attempt to assassinate the Sháh was made, when the mere fact of being a Bábí was sufficient to imperil life. Even there her marvellous beauty, enthusiasm and eloquence won for her the regard of her custodian, Maḥmúd Khán. He did all he could, consistent with his duty, to soften the rigours of captivity and held out hopes for the future. One morning Maḥmúd Khán returned from Court, saying that he had brought good news. He told Qurratu'l-'Ayn that she was to appear before her judges, and it was understood that, if she denied that she was a Bábí, she would be left alone, on condition that she lived quietly and ceased to teach. She indignantly replied that she would do no such thing and

prophesied his own downfall. Strange to say this came true, for a few years after Maḥmúd Khán was executed by the order of the Sháh. This refusal to deny her faith in the Báb was strong in her, and she did so refuse when confronted with her judges. They could not save her, and so she was put to death in the massacre at Ṭíhrán which followed on the attempt to kill the Sháh in 1852. Various accounts are given of the manner of her death. Gobineau says she was burned and then strangled: others that she was strangled¹ and then cast into a well. Her death was painful, and she was as brave in death as she had been in life. Qurratu'l-'Ayn was the most remarkable of the Báb's disciples. She was a person of marvellous beauty, possessed of high intellectual gifts, eloquent, devoted and fearless. She threw her whole soul into the cause she advocated, and her martyrdom sheds a halo of glory round her short and active career.

A Bábí historian says, 'Such fame did she acquire that most people who were scholars or mystics sought to hear her speak, and were eager to become acquainted with her powers of speculation and deduction. She wrested pre-eminence from stalwart men, and continued to strain the feet of steadfastness, until she yielded up her life at the sentence of the mighty doctors in Ṭíhrán.' Mírzá Kázim Beg, a most sober writer, waxes eloquent over the charms of Qurratu'l-'Ayn. Thus, 'This woman had an influence over her hearers, wholly spiritual. She

¹ 'As she would not suffer them to remove the veil from her face (though they repeatedly sought to do so), they applied the bow-string over her veil and thus compassed her martyrdom. Then they cast her holy body into a well in the garden.' *Tárikh-i-Jadíd*, p. 284.

knew how to inspire them with perfect confidence. She was well educated and very beautiful. Everything retired before her. She raised the veil¹ which covered her face, not to set at nought the laws of chastity and modesty, so deeply graven on the tables of the orthodox law and in popular prejudice, but much rather in order to give by her look more force to the inspired words she spoke. Her speeches stigmatized that gross tyranny which for so many centuries had imprisoned liberty. She preached not, as some have said, to abolish the laws of modesty, but to sustain the cause of liberty. The eloquent words which fell from her mouth captivated the hearts of her hearers, who became enthusiastic in her praise.'

Some of her poems breathe the spirit of Šúffism and show how deeply her mind was imbued with mystic lore. This is far more apparent in the original than in any translation of them. The following lines are from a translation by Mr. Browne :—

Though with sword in hand my Darling stand, with
intent to slay, though I sinless be,
If it pleases him, this tyrant's whim, I am well content
with his tyranny.

The country of 'I' and 'We' forsake; thy home in
annihilation make,

Since fearing not this step to take, thou shalt gain
the highest felicity.

Her romantic career, her marvellous power and
her tragic end contributed to give for a time strength

¹ Some Bábís say she did not do this; but Count Gobineau says, 'elle s'éleva non seulement contre la polygamie, mais contre l'usage du voile.' *Les Religions et les philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 168.

to the Bábí cause and the spirit of endurance to its followers.

The following sonnet by Eleanor Sell on Qurratu'l-'Ayn describes some characteristics of her influence :—

Qurratu'l-'Ayn! not famous far beyond
Her native shore. Not many bards have sung
Her praises, who, her enemies among,
Wielding her beauty as a magic wand,
Strove for the cause of him who had proclaimed
For poor down-trodden womanhood the right
Of freedom. Lifting high her beacon light
Of truth, she went unveiled and unashamed;
A woman, in the land where women live
And weep and die secluded and unknown,
She broke the bonds of custom, and to give
The Báb her aid, she dared the world alone,
Only to fail; death closed the unequal strife
And Persia blindly wrecked a noble life.

In the year 1848 Násiru'd-Dín Sháh was crowned at Tíhrán and the position of the Bábís became most critical. The Prime Minister, Mírzá Taqí Khán persecuted them with much cruelty. A civil war ensued, in which the Báb himself took no part, and on both sides much ferocity was shown. At length Mírzá Taqí Khán saw that the way in which his purpose of crushing the Bábí movement could be successfully carried out was to get the Báb put out of the way, and so he sent an order to his brother to this effect: 'Obtain a formal and explicit sentence from the learned doctors at Tabríz, who are the firm supporters of the Church of Imám Ja'far, and the impregnable stronghold of the Shí'ah faith. Summon the Christian regiment of Urúmaiyya, suspend the Báb before all the people

and give orders to them to fire a volley.' The orders were given to the chief of the farrashes and the next day, the Báb and a youthful Bábí of good family, named Áká Muḥammad 'Alí, after being condemned by the Mullás, were delivered up to the Colonel of the regiment already named. On the previous evening the Báb said to his friends, 'Tomorrow they will martyr me with shame and dishonour. Let one of you arise and slay me, so that I may not have to suffer the dishonour and humiliation from the adversaries.' All, with great expressions of sorrow, began to excuse themselves except Mírzá Muḥammad 'Alí, who seemed as if about to obey the command. His comrades, however, prevented him, saying, 'Such boldness and rashness is not the mark of true service.' For the following account of what really happened, I am indebted to Mírzá Kázim Beg.¹

The roads which led to the court of the barracks were crowded with people. At a military execution in Persia, the condemned are tied together with their backs turned towards the firing party. Áká Muḥammad 'Alí begged to be allowed to turn his face towards the people, and then, in a loud but calm voice, he began to say some prayers which had been composed by the master. The Báb kept perfectly silent. His pale and beautiful face surrounded by a black beard, his white and delicate hands, his figure and distinguished manner, everything in his person and in his dress aroused the sympathy and compassion of the spectators. The first volley

fired simply severed the cords by which the prisoners were fastened to the post. A second volley proved effectual. The crowd then dispersed in silence, but many men carried in their hearts the germs of hostility towards the Government. The execution of the Báb (A.D. 1850) does not seem to have been justified on political grounds, for, as Gobineau says, 'though the Bábí chiefs had given trouble to the State, the Báb himself had done nothing of the kind and no proof was brought forward that he had encouraged his disciples in their line of conduct.'¹ The bodies were finally cast out of the city, near the moat, to be devoured by dogs and jackals; but on the second night were conveyed away by the Bábís who by bribes, or the influence of powerful friends, obtained possession of them. 'They were wrapped in white silk, placed in one coffin, and sent to Tíhrán, where by order of Mírzá Yahyá (Şubḥ-i-Ezel), they were deposited in a little shrine called Imám-zádé-i-Ma'súm. Here they remained for seventeen or eighteen years, till the schism originated by Bahá'u'lláh deprived his half-brother Ezel of the supremacy in the Bábí Church which he had hitherto enjoyed, when they were removed by the Bahá'ís, to whom alone is now known the last resting place of the Martyrs of Tabríz.'²

Great pressure had been brought to bear on Áká Muḥammad 'Alí by his relatives to make him recant. He wrote a very touching letter in reply to an affectionate appeal from his brother, urging him to

¹ *Journal Asiatique*, Sixième Série, tome vii, p. 371.

The New History of the Báb also has a full account, pp. 297-312.

² Count Gobineau, *Les Religions et les philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 262.

² Browne, *A Year amongst the Persians*, p. 64.

give up the Báb, to save his life and to return to his family. Mr. Browne translates the letter thus :—

‘ He is the Compassionate.

O thou who art my Qibla! My condition, thanks to God, has no fault, and “to every difficulty succeedeth ease.” You have written that this matter has no end. What matter, then, has any end? We, at least, have no discontent in this matter; nay, rather, we are unable sufficiently to express our thanks for this favour. The end of this matter is to be slain in the way of God, and Oh! what happiness is this. The will of God will come to pass with regard to his servants, neither can human plans avert the divine decree. O thou who art my Qibla, the end of the world is death. If the appointed fate which God hath decreed overtake me, then God is the guardian of my family, and thou art mine executor; behave in such wise as is pleasing to God, and pardon whatever has proceeded from me which may seem lacking in courtesy, or contrary to the respect due from juniors, and seek pardon for me from all those of my household and commit me to God. God is my patron and how good is He as a Guardian!’¹

This letter is a remarkable witness to the power which the Báb had over his disciples, a power which could lead this youth, with so promising a future before him, to give up home and life, to face death and its terrors rather than be separated from the Master he loved so truly.

The Báb wished to effect religious reform, not to deal with affairs of the State, or to injure the status of the reigning family. He was absorbed in spiritual meditations and in mystical contemplations and was not a political fanatic. But when his followers found that the Government would not help forward reforms and would not move from the orthodox Shí‘ah standpoint, they gave to the Bábí

¹ This original letter is given in the *RASJ*, October 1889, p. 992.

movement a political turn which it had not previously possessed. The Báb himself remained passive, but most of the chief men amongst his disciples accepted this new departure. Then after the death of the Báb instead of becoming, as was expected by the Government, despondent and discouraged, they became exasperated and stern. The last restraints were now removed and they did not hesitate to count themselves enemies of the Sháh and his government.

The next historical event of importance is the attempt on August 15, 1852, to assassinate Náṣiru’d-Dín Sháh. It does not appear to have been an act determined on by any large number of the Bábí leaders, but to have arisen from a spirit of revenge in a few devoted followers of the Báb. If such be the case, the frightful persecutions which followed are utterly unjustifiable, even from an oriental standpoint. Some say that there were twelve conspirators, others say that there were seven. In any case only three actually took part in the attack on the Sháh. These were Mullá Fathu’lláh of Kum, Šádiq of Zanján, and Mírzá Muḥammad of Níríz. When the Sháh was out riding one day they approached him, under the pretence of having a petition to offer, and then one of them fired three times, the last shot slightly wounding the Sháh. The escort then came up, and Šádiq, one of the assassins, was killed on the spot and the other two were arrested. The Sháh was really in a very great fright, but the Musalmán historians give a different account. The following is a very good specimen of oriental hyperbole and flattery: ‘The dust of perturbation settled

not on the skirt of the patience and self-control of the king, whose elemental material God the Creator had leavened with the liver of the lion, the heart of Ardashir, the ardour of Shápúr, and the majesty of Taimúr. Neither did he urge his horse to turn aside, nor did he utter a word indicative of alarm or consternation. He kept his place on the poplar-wood saddle like some mountain of massive rocks, and, notwithstanding that wound, turned not aside in any direction, and carried not his hand to his hurt, so that those present in his escort knew not that any hurt had befallen the king, or that he had suffered any wound.'

At the examination before the Council of Ministers, the two arrested Bábís, though most severely tortured, declared that they had no accomplices, that they could not hesitate to obey the sacred orders of their chiefs who were no longer in Persia. They said, 'you can torture us till the day of judgment, we shall say no more.' The most stringent measures were at once taken against the Bábís. Baha'u'lláh and Subh-i-Ezel escaped death, though the former was arrested and a reward was offered for the capture of the latter. Most of these who were arrested were condemned to death, whether any proof could be given of their complicity in the plot or not. It was quite enough to be known as a Bábí. A great fear fell upon those in authority, and it was determined to make now a terrible example. An English traveller says,¹ 'Tow steeped in oil was inserted between their fingers and behind their

¹John Ussher, *Diary of a Journey from London to Persepolis*, p. 628.

shoulder blades, leaving portions hanging down which were lighted, and in this condition the unhappy wretches were led, as long as they could walk, through the principal streets of the capital. A furious proscription followed. No time was lost between apprehension and execution, death was the only punishment known, the headless bodies lay in the streets for days, the terrified relatives fearing to give them burial, and the dogs fought and growled over the corpses in the deserted thoroughfares.'

A most ingenious plan was adopted to avert from the Sháh and his Ministers, any special and definite hatred of the Bábís and to make the subjects of a possible retaliation on their part as varied as possible. The prisoners were divided amongst the different classes of the community who were made responsible for the execution of the victims allotted to them.¹ Some of the classes thus made to take part in the executions were the 'Ulamá', the Princes, the Employees of the foreign office, the Nobles, the Mír-i-Akhúr, or Master of the Horse and his assistants; the Sar-kishák, or the Captain of the Guard; and the Yúz-Báshís, or Centurions; the Artillerymen, the General and Officers, the Professors and Students, the Merchants, the City people, and so on.

The details of the prosecution are sickening. Hájí Sulaymán Khán and Kázim of Níríz were first wounded in many parts of their bodies, and in these wounds lighted candles were placed. They were then paraded through the streets and bazaars,

¹This reminds us of what is said of Queen Joan of Naples, who, when she strangled her husband, called out to her fellow-conspirators, 'Gentlemen you must all take hold of the rope.' *Quarterly Review*, No. 353, p. 290.

accompanied by musicians, whilst the spectators threw dust and ashes on them. At last they were sawn asunder. Sulaymán bore these tortures most heroically and during them testified to the joy he felt at suffering martyrdom for the cause of the Báb.

He recited the following verses :—

I have returned! I have returned! I have come by
the way of Shíráz!

I have come with winsome airs and graces! Such is
the lover's madness.¹

'Why do you not dance,' said the executioner,
'since you find death so pleasant?' The reply
was :—

In one hand the wine cup, in one hand the tresses of
the beloved.

Such a dance in the midst of the market-place is my
desire.

Renan speaks of the massacre thus : 'The day of
the slaughter of the Bábís in Tíhrán was, perhaps,
a day unparalleled in the history of the world.'²
Count Gobineau says : 'Children and women with
lighted candles stuck into their wounds were driven
along by whips, and as they went along they sang,
"We came from God, and unto Him we return."
When the children expired their corpses were thrown
at the feet of their fathers. Night fell on a mass of
shapeless flesh, and the dogs came in troops to the
place.'³ Since then there have been occasional
acts of violence,⁴ and some Bábís have been put to
death with great cruelty. Only in one case, and

¹ باز آمدم باز آمدم از راه شیراز آمدم * با عشرة باز آمدم هذا جنون العاشق

² *Les Apostres*, p. 378.

³ *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 302.

⁴ For a list of these see *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*,
vol. ii, p. 302.

then by a Russian military tribunal, has an assassin
been punished.

The day of the great persecution made more secret
followers of the Báb than his preaching had done,
for the impression produced on the people by the
calmness and patience of the martyrs was profound
and lasting. The persecution was a failure, for it
gave the movement increased vigour and vitality
and Bábís were now to be found in every walk of
life, from nobles of the court to the meanest of the
people, and not least from the Musalmán priesthood
itself. The heroism and the devotion of the Bábís
was wonderful. It is said that there was only one
instance of a Bábí having recanted. He, however,
returned again to his faith and was afterwards put to
death.

The Bábí doctrines are to be found in the writings
of the Báb, called the *Bayán*, a term he used as
conveniently expressing the sphere in which his
thoughts moved. It is a name sometimes apparently
applied to the collective writings, but more generally
to a particular book.¹ Many of the dogmas are
very mystical:² but the following is a brief summary.

God is eternal and unapproachable. All things

¹ Count Gobineau considers that the name applies to all he wrote
Les Religions et les Philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale, p. 311.

² It is not always easy to understand the esoteric dogmas of these
Persian sects for, as Professor Browne says, 'There is a profound
difference between the Persian idea of religion and that which obtains
in the west. Here it is the ideas of faith and righteousness (in different
proportions, it is true), there it is knowledge and mystery. Here
religion is regarded as a rule by which to live and a hope wherein to
die, there as a key to unlock the secrets of the spiritual and material
universe. Here it is associated with work and charity, there with rest
and wisdom, here a creed is admired for its simplicity, there for its
complexity. . . . Thus it comes to pass that Persians have as
often died for belief in some obscure mystical dogma as for some
ethical principle or motive.' *R.A.S.J.*, January 1898, p. 88.

come from Him and exist by Him. Man cannot approach Him except through some appointed medium. So, distinct from God there is a Primal Will,¹ or Mashíyyat-i-Úlá, who becomes incarnate in the prophets. This Primal Will which spoke in all the prophets of the past, spoke also in the Báb, who is the Nuqta-i-Bayán, or the point of Revelation and it will speak in 'Him whom God shall manifest.' This is apparent from the following texts of the *Bayán*, 'The whole *Bayán* revolves round the saying of "Him whom God shall manifest."' 'A thousand perusals of the *Bayán* are not equal to the perusal of one verse of what shall be revealed by "Him whom God shall manifest."' It must be remembered that Bahá'u'lláh claimed and is allowed by his followers this exalted position. The following are some of the expressions used of Bahá by his

¹ There is an evident connection between this dogma of the Bábís and the Súfí system, in which the 'First Intelligence,' or 'Primal Element' is represented as a manifestation of God. To the Súfí, as to the Bábí God is 'sterile in His inaccessible height.' Men can never be more than slaves, nearness to Him is impossible. This intermediary is the Primal Will of the Bábí and the Primal Element of the Súfí, who also calls it by the names of the Pen, the First Principle, the spirit of Muḥammad, Universal Reason or 'aqí-i-kullí. God's voice is heard through it, by it material things were brought into existence. It works in Prophets and Saints. The Imám is closely connected with it. I am not able to find out whether the Báb taught that the Primal Will was created or not. In Súfí theology it certainly is, for in the *Akhláq-i-Jalálí* it is written: 'It is admitted, equally by the masters of perception and conception, that the First Principle which, at the mandate, "Be and it is," issued, by the ineffable power and will, from the chaotic ocean of inexistence, was a simple and luminous essence which, in the language of philosophy, is termed the Primary Intelligence, and the great fathers of mysticism and investigation call it the Muḥammadan Spirit.' It is to this and not to the inaccessible and incomprehensible God that the Imám seeks to return. When his work in life is done, then 'his end is joined to his beginning'—*Ba ágház girdad báz anjám*. It is a curious phase of human thought which the Súfís evidently borrowed from the Gnostics and the Bábís from the Súfís. This earnest longing for communion with a manifestation of God we can sympathize with, and only regret that, in their ignorance or the repudiation of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, both Súfí and Bábí have so sadly missed the mark.

followers: 'Bahá has come for the perfecting of the law of Christ, and his injunctions are in all respects similar.' 'Christ returns to you as Bahá with angels, with clouds, with the sound of trumpets. His angels are his messengers, the clouds are the doubts which prevent you recognizing him; the sound of the trumpets is the sound of the proclamation which you now hear, announcing that He has come once more from heaven, even as he came before.'¹

Each dispensation of the Primal Will, thus become incarnate, supersedes a preceding one, and so Islám has ceased to be the true religion for to-day. Devotion to the Imám was a very prominent point in the teaching of the Báb. Then follow directions how to approach the Imám with humility, and the prayer to be said. He addresses the Imáms as Effulgences of the Divine Glory, Manifestations of God, Intercessors with Him for sinful men. He longs for communion with them. But this constant dwelling on the glory of the Imáms, the dispensers of God's will and favour, gradually led to the formation of the idea that he had special communication with them and was, in fact, the Báb. At this stage the usual Muḥammadan customs were not set aside. The month of Ramaḍán was observed as a fast; but the 'Ulamá' were bitterly reproached for opposing this new revelation. Thus the Báb says, 'O people of the earth! give thanks to God, for verily we have delivered you from the doctors of doubt.'

That which spoke in all the prophets of the past

¹ Browne, *A Year amongst the Persians*, pp. 308-9.

now speaks in the Báb and will speak through 'Him whom God shall manifest.' 'That which spoke in Adam, Noah, Moses, David, Jesus and Muḥammad¹ was the one and the same Primal Will. In each manifestation news has been given of the following one. Thus the Jews were told to expect a Messiah but they rejected him; the Christians to expect Muḥammad but, as a rule, they did not accept him; so the Muḥammadans are taught to look out for Imám Mahdí. Yet now he has come (that is, in the Báb) they persecute him.'²

The chapters of the *Bayán* are arranged in groups of nineteen, a number which has a peculiar significance with the Bábís. Each letter of the Arabic alphabet has a numerical value, and so dates can be given by words or sentences. Alif, the first letter, stands for God, and the word for one is wáhid. The numerical value of the letters in this word is 19. God is absolute Being, or wujúd, the value of the letters of which also comes to 19.³ The name of one of the attributes of God is Hayy, or the Living. The sum of the letters of this word is 18, to which, if we add the letter Alif—the 'One,' which pervades all, we again get the sacred number 19. Nineteen, then, represents the manifestation of the unknowable

¹ These are the Anbiyá' Ulú'l-'Azám of Islám. See *The Faith of Islám* (4th ed.), p. 293.

² *RASJ*, vol. xxi, pp. 914, 925.

³ This is in accord with the second canon of the Cabbalistic system of Biblical interpretation in the thirteenth century in Germany, which is called *Gematria*, or 'the use of the numerical values of the letters of a word for purposes of comparison with other words which yield the same or similar combinations of numbers.' I am not prepared to say that there is any historical connection between the Cabbalist and the Persian mystic. The subject needs investigation. For the Jewish use of *Gematria*, see Oesterley and Box, *The Literature of Rabbinical and Medieval Judaism*, pp. 233, 278, 282.

essence, and so $19 \times 19 (= 361)$ represents the manifested universe, or all things, expressed by the term 'kullu shai,' the numerical value of which words is 360, to which Alif, the 'One,' is added and we then get 361.

In this world, God is represented by Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad, the Báb, who is called the Nuqṭa, or Point, and his eighteen disciples. 'These eighteen are called the ḥurúfát-i-hayy, or Letters of the Living, because by them the Báb bestowed new life upon the world.' These again with their leader form the number nineteen, and thus constitute a wáhid, or complete unity, and, as each disciple was to have nineteen others under him, we again arrive at 361, which represents the numerical value of 'kullu shai,' or the 'number of all things.' On this same ground the *Bayán* has nineteen parts and each part has nineteen chapters. The Bábí year has nineteen months of nineteen days, each day nineteen hours, each hour nineteen minutes. The same principle was to regulate measures of distance and of weights. Law and commerce were to come under its influence. 'Organize,' said the Báb, 'all things after the number of the Unity, that is to say by a division into nineteen parts.'¹

Another point on which the *Bayán* lays much stress is that no revelation is final. This is entirely opposed to the ordinary Muḥammadan view, which is that, as Muḥammad was *Khátamu'l-Anbiyá'*, or the seal of the Prophets, his revelation closed the series. The Báb taught that, as the human race

¹ Gobineau, *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 322.

progresses, the Primal Will, the teacher of men, speaks in each new revelation more fully and more clearly. All these successive and progressive revelations and dispensations were not for the purpose of abrogating preceding essential laws, but to complete them and especially to prepare the world for the fuller teaching of 'Him whom God shall manifest.'

Professor Browne thus states the Bábí view of successive dispensations: 'A new prophet is not sent until the development of the human race renders this necessary. A revelation is not abrogated till it no longer suffices for the needs of mankind. There is no disagreement between the prophets: all teach the same truth, but in such measure as men can receive it. As mankind advance and progress they need fuller instruction. The instruction given by Abraham was suitable and sufficient for the people of his day, but not for those to whom Moses was sent, while this in turn had ceased to meet the needs of those to whom Christ was sent. Yet we must not say that their religions were opposed to one another, but rather that each manifestation is more complete and more perfect than the last.'¹

The great point in the Bábí theology is that the teacher is one and the same, though he manifests himself according to the capacity and needs of those to whom he is sent. The outward form changes but the Universal Spirit remains.² It then follows that 'during the long intervals which separate one

¹ Browne, *A Year amongst the Persians*, p. 303.

² 'The religion of God is One, though the Theophanies differ.' *New History of the Báb*, p. 336.

prophetic dispensation from the next, there must be in the world silent manifestations of the Spirit, intrinsically not less perfect than the speaking manifestations whom we call prophets.'¹

The *Bayán* speaks with confidence of the success of Bábíism. The future Bábí community is to form a perfect Utopia and its governments are to be tolerant. The kindly nature of the Báb is seen in the fancy sketches he draws of the future. At the Day of Judgment, 'He whom God shall manifest' will preside. All the good people will be praised for their works, their piety, their obedience. Evil men will be annihilated. Thus the good will return to God and dwell in Him; the bad will pass away and be no more.

The Muhammadan doctrines of the examination of the dead in the graves, the Resurrection, Širát, Heaven, Hell, are all treated allegorically. The first is really a summons to the people to believe in the next manifestation of the Primal Will, the Resurrection is the appearance of this manifestation. Širát, or the Bridge, is the belief in the prophet of the age, a matter difficult to the self-willed, but easy to the seeker after God. Hell is ignorance and denial of the last manifestation of God through the Primal Will incarnated in the Prophet, whilst Heaven is joy in it. The views of the Báb on a future life are not very clear.²

¹ Browne, *A Year amongst the Persians*, p. 327.

² On the question of the future life there is much difference of opinion amongst the Bábís. 'All agree in denying the Resurrection of the body as held by the Muhammadans; but whilst certain passages in the Persian *Bayán* seem to indicate that the spirit of the deceased continues to take an interest in his earthly affairs and while certain sayings of the older Bábís lend colour to the assertion of their enemies

Speaking of Barzakh¹ he says, 'What is intended by Barzakh is merely the interval between the two manifestations, and not that which is commonly known amongst men, for none knoweth what shall be decreed unto them after death except God.' The hope of future reward was not placed before his followers as an inducement to accept him, and this is in direct contrast to the conduct and teaching of Muḥammad. In the *Bayán* the Báb wrote the following words: 'So worship God that, if the recompense of the worship of Him were to be the fire, no alteration in thy worship of Him would be made; if you gaze on Paradise, and if you worship in hope of that, you have made God's creation a partner with Him.'²

He now wrote a book called the *Ikām* in which he seemed to admit the superior claim of Subḥ-i-Ezel, but later on he called upon all the Ezelís to submit to his authority and said that God would aid him, and all who opposed his claim to the leadership would be bitterly cursed. The result of the schism was that gradually the influence of Subḥ-i-Ezel grew less and his followers became few. 'Of Bábism as a living force, affecting both East and West, Akka has been the centre for the last forty years, and seems likely so to remain.'³

that they inclined to the doctrine of Metempsychosis (*Tanásukh-i-Arwáh*); other Bábís understood the "Return (*Rij'at*) to the life of this world" in a less material and more symbolic sense, while some disbelieve in personal immortality, or limit it to those holy beings who are endowed with a spirit of a higher grade than is vouchsafed to ordinary mortals.' Browne in *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ii, p. 305.

¹ See *The Faith of Islām* (4th ed.), pp. 285, 321.

² *RASI*, October 1889, p. 931.

³ *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ii, p. 303.

After the death of the Báb, the chief interest in the movement circles round Mírzá Yaḥyá and his half-brother, Mírzá Ḥusayn 'Alí, known as Bahá'u'lláh, who became the respective leaders of the two sects into which the Bábís are now divided—the Ezelís and the Bahá'ís.

There seems no doubt that the Báb nominated Mírzá Yaḥyá, as his successor and surnamed him Subḥ-i-Ezel (morning of eternity). For a time he was the undisputed leader of the Bábí community. His claim to the office is based on a document, said to have been written by the Báb.¹ It is addressed to Subḥ-i-Ezel thus:—

Unto him whose name is equivalent to the name of One² the remembrance of God unto the worlds,

Say, 'verily all things originate from the point of Revelation' (*Nuqta-i-Bayán*)

O name of the One, keep what hath been revealed in the *Bayán*,

And what hath been commanded, 'Verily thou art a mighty way of truth.'

At the end of 1852 Bahá'u'lláh was released from prison. He and his brother, Subḥ-i-Ezel, then escaped to Baghdad, which for the next eleven years or so became the headquarters of the sect. Cautiously and prudently the propaganda was carried on. Subḥ-i-Ezel, a man of quiet and retiring disposition, was still recognized as the spiritual head of the sect, but his brother, a more

¹ *The New History of the Báb*, p. 426. A facsimile of the transcript by Subḥ-i-Ezel from the original letter written by the Báb is also given.

² The Arabic for One is *Wáhid*, the numerical value of the letters of which is 18: the value of the letters in Yaḥyá is the same. Yaḥyá was the name of Subḥ-i-Ezel, and as it has the same numerical value as *Wáhid*, the One, it seems quite clear that the Báb refers to him.

active man, took the lead in all practical matters. The Persian Consul at Baghdad was hostile to the Bábís and the Turkish authorities were prevailed upon to expel them from Baghdad. The two leaders were first sent to Constantinople and after four months were banished to Adrianople, where they lived for four years. At Baghdad, Bahá'u'lláh, a man of resolute will and ambitious character, professedly acted under the instructions of his brother, but the idea gradually formed itself in his mind that he should become actually, as indeed he was virtually, the head and leader of the Bábís. Thus the influence of Bahá'u'lláh grew, and he began to advance claims, which afterwards culminated in the assertion that he was the person to whom the Báb referred as, 'Him whom God shall manifest.'¹ To this claim² the Ezelís replied that, before the person of whose advent the Báb had spoken could come, Bábism must obtain general currency, and its laws be accepted by most nations. It was not to be supposed that two manifestations—that of the Báb and that of 'Him whom God shall manifest'—could take place with so short an interval of time between them. To all this the Bahá'ís declared that the Báb had said that the new prophet would come suddenly; that Malachi had foretold the advent of Bahá'u'lláh,³ that the name Elijah in

¹ Man yázar u'lláh. He openly declared his divine mission in 1866-7 at Adrianople, from which date the schism commenced.

² It required great firmness to meet this claim and Professor Browne says, 'Such firmness Subh-i-Ezel, a peace-loving, contemplative, gentle soul, wholly devoted to his beloved master, caring little for authority and incapable of self-assertion, seems to have altogether lacked.' Introduction to the *New History of the Báb*, p. xxi.

³ The Bahá'ís apply 2 Thess. ii. 1-8 to the appearance of Subh-i-Ezel, who is 'the man of sin,' whom the Lord Bahá'u'lláh will

Arabic is 'Alí, that 'Alí was the name of the Báb, who was, therefore, the destined forerunner of 'Him whom God shall manifest.'¹ So the contest went on and often led to quarrels and blows. At length the Turkish Government determined to separate the disputants. Bahá'u'lláh and his followers were sent to Akka² in Syria, and Mírzá Yahyá and his people were sent to Famagusta in Cyprus in 1868. A few Ezelís were sent with Bahá'u'lláh and a few Bahá'ís with Mírzá Yahyá. It was hoped that by this arrangement the minority, in each case, would also act as spies and prevent any communications between the Bábís in Persia and either of the leaders. Since then the followers of Bahá'u'lláh have increased very much, whilst those of Mírzá Yahyá have decreased. This is an unlooked for development of the work of the Báb, for Bahá'u'lláh claims to be the messenger of a new dispensation altogether.³ This claim caused much consternation in the Bábí world. A hopeless schism

destroy with 'the brightness of his coming.' For some other curious interpretations of passages in the Bible, see the translations of a Bábí pamphlet given in the C.M.S. *Intelligencer* for August 1902.

¹ 'Among the Bábís the effect of this announcement of Bahá'u'lláh's claim was great. From Constantinople to Khurásán the communities of the faithful were rent asunder by a schism which every subsequent year has rendered wider and more permanent, and which nothing short of the complete extinction of one of the two rival factions can possibly heal. At Adrianople itself the struggle was short and the victory of Bahá'u'lláh complete.' *New History of the Báb*, p. xxi.

² This is still the headquarters of the Bahá'ís.

³ Professor Browne said to a Bahá'í, 'Why do you speak of Mírzá Yahyá as though he were of no account?' 'Yes,' replied Mírzá Hasan, 'it is true that he was one of the early believers, and that at first he was accounted the successor and vice-regent of the Báb; but he was repeatedly warned not to withhold his allegiance from "Him whom God shall manifest," and threatened that, if he did so, he would fall from the faith and become as one rejected. In spite of these clear warnings of his master, he refused to acknowledge the new manifestation when it came; wherefore he is now regarded by us as of no account.' *A Year amongst the Persians*, p. 336.

was now made. A struggle for leadership commenced, for Bahá'u'lláh's claim virtually deposed the Báb from his position as the 'Point of Revelations' and made him the mere forerunner of 'Him whom God shall manifest.' Assuming that Bahá'u'lláh had right on his side, it is stated that the changes he made were in a practical direction and beneficial. His teaching was less mystical than that of the Báb, and his laws, as laid down in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, are simpler than those framed by the Báb. He appealed to all men, not simply to Shí'ah Muḥammadans. His organization was good and his missionaries kept him well acquainted with news from all parts. They had all the tact of Isma'ílian Dá'ís (ante p. 87), who accommodated the instruction given to the opinions of their hearers, and only gradually led on to the doctrines of the system. His attitude to the Shí'ahs and to the Persian Government was generally conciliatory.

To a very large number of Bábís Bahá'u'lláh was during the latter part of his life¹ looked up to as a divinely appointed guide. Before he assumed that position he wrote a book called the *Iḥán*, which is held in great esteem. In this book he seems to acknowledge the then superior position of Subḥ-i-Ezel, but writes bitterly of some who were hostile to himself. Ten years after the Turks had banished him to Adrianople, he boldly asserted his claim and called on all the Ezelís to submit to his directions. He then wrote other treatises in which he declared that God would make him victorious over all who

¹ He died in exile on May 16, 1893.

opposed him. He severely censured all who opposed him.

The Bábí hierarchy consists of the Point and eighteen 'Letters of the Living,'¹ making up the mystic number nineteen. The 'Point' is the manifestation of the essence of God: the others, the eighteen, are regarded as incarnations or manifestations of the attributes or names of God. According to Bahá'u'lláh he himself was the 'Point' and Subḥ-i-Ezel one of the eighteen 'Letters of the Living.' This throws light on a passage where Bahá'u'lláh calls himself Málík-i-Sifát, or the Lord of the attributes, that is, he is the divine essence made manifest.²

A few extracts from some of Bahá'u'lláh's writings will show to some extent what he taught his followers. 'As for those who commit sin and cling to the world they assuredly are not of the people of Bahá'u'lláh. O worshippers of the Unity, make firm the girdle of endeavour, that perchance religious strife and conflict may be removed from amongst the people of the world and be annulled. With perfect compassion and mercy have we guided and directed the people of the world to that whereby their souls shall be profited. The heart must be

¹ In reality Subḥ-i-Ezel was the fourth letter. The Báb was the first, then came Mullá Muḥammad 'Alí Bárfurúshí (Janáb-i-quddús); then Mullá Husayn of Bushraweyh (Janáb-i-Bábu'l-Báb); then Mirzá Yahya (Subḥ-i-Ezel), who on the death of the two above him became second, and on the death of the Báb claimed to be the first.

² 'The Bahá'ís have taken over into their system the concept of incarnation, and their attitude on the question is that, whilst Jesus was certainly the Incarnate Word, God manifest in the flesh, yet He was a manifestation only for His own day. Incarnation did not stop with Him and in our own day Bahá'u'lláh was the Divine Essence manifested in human form.' Jeffery, *The Moslem World of To-day*, p. 314.

sanctified from every form of selfishness and lust, for the weapons of the worshippers of the Unity and the saints were, and are, the fear of God. Every one who desireth victory must first subdue the city of his own heart with the sword of spiritual truth and of the word. No stranger must find his way into the city of the heart, so that the Incomparable Friend (God) may come unto His own place, that is, the effulgence of His names and attributes, not His essence, for that Peerless King hath been and will be holy for everlasting above ascent or descent.¹

People often came to Bahá'u'lláh for direction as to their conduct and for instruction. This led him to write the *Lauh-i-aqdas*, or the 'Most Holy Book,' in which many practical rules are laid down. It will be seen that they differ considerably from those which are current in Islám. Prayer is to be said three times a day; the number of prostrations are much fewer than those held necessary amongst Muhammadans. The worshipper no longer turns to Mecca, but towards 'the Most Holy Region, the Holy Place, whence issueth the command to whomsoever is in the earths and the heavens.'² That Akka (Acre) is meant is clear, because it is said that

¹ This is to guard against the idea held by some that God comes down into man, or man rises unto God, and that thus both are identified. The mystical view is that man is annihilated in God. Jāmi, a Sūfī, says:—

So treat this path that duality may disappear,
For if there be duality in this path, falsity will arise;
Thou wilt not become *He*; but, if thou strivest,
Thou wilt reach a place where *thou-ness* (tú tú'í) shall depart from thee.

² Count Gobineau says that the Báb did not substitute any Qibla for the ancient ones of Jerusalem and Mecca which he set aside; but declared that 'ce sera le grand Revelateur qui deciders.' *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 332.

when Bahá'u'lláh dies, or, as it is put in hyperbolic language, 'when the sun of truth and exhortation sets,' the Qibla is to be changed to 'that place which we have appointed you.'

The great festival is that of the Persian Naurúz or New Year's Day. Instead of the Muhammadan fast of Ramadān of thirty days, a month of nineteen days, the last month of the Bábí year, is appointed. Images and pictures are not allowed in places of worship; but music and singing are lawful in such buildings for purposes of devotion. A belief in the efficacy of talismans and charms is encouraged. Each man constantly carries on his person a charm in the shape of a star, the rays of which are formed of lines containing the name of God; the women wear one made in the form of a circle.¹ The traffic in slaves is forbidden, and there are laws about great criminal offences and civil matters such as inheritance, endowments, and so on. Shaving the head is not allowed, but the beard may be cut off. Legal impurity is abolished and intercourse with persons of all religions is enjoined.² Music is permitted, wine and opium are prohibited. The furniture of houses should be renewed every nineteen years. No one must carry arms except in times of tumult or war. Circumcision is treated as a matter of indifference. The Báb allowed a second wife to be taken, but prohibited concubinage. His reluctance, however, to polygamy was so manifest that his

¹ For the use of amulets and charms by Muslims, see Zwemer. *The Influence of Animism on Islām*, chapter x.

² A missionary in Persia writes: 'I can again testify, as I did in the pages of the *C.M.S. Intelligencer* five years ago, to the exceeding friendliness, and even brotherliness, of these dear people.' *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, 1898, p. 648.

successors consider it an evil thing to accept the tolerance which he showed as regards duality of wives.¹ All are to read the sacred books regularly, to be kind and courteous in their conduct, to give alms, to approve for others what they would like themselves, and to forgive their enemies. Instead of the usual Muḥammadan salutation, 'As-saláma 'alaikum: 'alaikum's-salám, or 'peace be upon you' and 'upon you be peace,' the Bábís amongst themselves, on meeting one another, say, 'Alláhu abhá,' 'God is most bright,' to which the response is the same.

Some of the precepts to guide the conduct of Bahá'ís are on the following subjects:—

1. Abolition of religious warfare.
2. Friendly intercourse with all sects and people.
3. Promise of this 'Most Great Peace.'²
4. Obedience to the ruler who protects them.
5. Submission to the laws of the country in which they live.
6. Confession of sin to fellow-men is prohibited. Confession must be to, and pardon sought from, God only.
7. The study of such sciences as tend to the welfare of mankind is encouraged.
8. All must learn some trade or practise some profession.
9. Visits to tombs and shrines are not obligatory.

The political influence of the Bábís in Persia has

¹ Gobineau, *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans L'Asie Centrale*, p. 346.

² An expression used by Bahá'u'lláh in conversation with Mr. Browne. Bahá'u'lláh said, 'We desire . . . that all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bond of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversities of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this? . . . Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the "Most Great Peace" shall come.' *A Traveller's Narrative*, vol. ii, p. 40.

not been great. 'In the constitutional movement in 1907 the Bábís, though their sympathies were undoubtedly with the reformers, refrained from outwardly identifying themselves with that party, to whom support, by alienating the orthodox Mujtahids and Mullás, would have been fatal. This course of conduct led persons to look upon them as men who considered the claims of their sect as before that of their country.'¹

After the death of Bahá'u'lláh his eldest son, 'Abbás Efendí, became his successor and was called—man arada'lláhu—He whom God hath desired. He was also named 'the servant of Bahá' ('Abdu'l-Bahá) and the most mighty Branch (*Ghuṣṣ-i-A'zam*). He is described as a strong, tall man, with a broad forehead and keen eye, indicating a firm will and strong intellect. Those who came into contact with him felt his influence and soon learnt to respect him. Some Bahá'ís consider that he, like Bahá'u'lláh, is a divine manifestation and not a mere man; others deny this and say that he is nothing more than a servant of Bahá'u'lláh, for they hold that no further manifestation will take place until a thousand years shall have passed away. 'Abbás Efendí lived at Acre and maintained correspondence with his followers in Persia, and was visited by some of the more devout of his followers, who looked upon the journey from Persia to Akka (Acre) as a pilgrimage. In the year 1898 he was much troubled by dissensions caused by the rivalry of his younger brother, Muḥammad 'Alí, who said that Bahá'u'lláh had appointed him to be

¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica* (eleventh ed.), vol. iii, p. 93.

the spiritual head and his brother 'Abbás Efendí as the secular head of the community.

The claim of 'Abbas Efendí to the headship was disputed by his brother Mírzá Muḥammad 'Alí,¹ named 'The most great Branch,' who also received the support of his two younger brothers. 'Abbás Efendí appears to have claimed that the revelation was not ended, but had passed on to him. His opponents said it was closed and quoted from Bahá'u'lláh's book, the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (the most holy book), the words 'Whosoever lays claim to any authority before the completion of a millenium is assuredly a liar.'² On the one hand, 'Abbás Efendí's claim had the support of his father's written wish; on the other it seemed to be opposed to his father's teaching. 'As in the case of the previous schism between Bahá'u'lláh and Subḥ-i-Ezel, so here the conflict was between those who held that every day of Theophany must be succeeded by a night of Occultation, and those who felt that the Light by which they had walked could not be extinguished, but must rather increase in brightness.'³ The followers of 'Abbás Efendí remained supreme.

In Cairo a Syrian Jew, Ibráhím George Khayru'lláh, became a Bábí convert. He proceeded to America and commenced to lecture in Chicago on the religion of Bahá'u'lláh.⁴ A rich lady presented 'Abbás Efendí with a large house at the foot of Mount Carmel. Public notice was thus called to Baháism,

¹ In a Bahá'í poem he is called a 'breaker (náqiḍ) of the covenant.

² *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ii, p. 304.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 304.

⁴ He is said to have taught the Bahá'ís in America how to utter the most holy name of God.

and it is the several Bábí communities in America which keep up communications with the headquarters in Akka. Khayru'lláh now took the side of Mírzá Muḥammad 'Alí. Then 'Abbás Efendí to counteract this attack upon his position sent missionaries¹ to America to support his claims. This increased the public interest and a gentleman, named Phelps, became an ardent advocate of Baháism, and claimed for it a spirit of liberality which it does not really possess, though it is true that they profess to look forward to a period of universal brotherhood which shall include men of all religions.

This is a popular theory for propaganda purposes in other lands. Its enunciation is rather a matter of policy than of principle. Those who know them best doubt the permanence of this idea of universal tolerance. Thus Professor Browne says, 'I cannot wholly share his (Mr. Phelps's) confidence as to how the Bahá'ís would treat either the Shí'ite Muḥammadans, the Súfís, or the Ezelís (against all of whom they have, for different reasons, a special grudge), if they should one day, as it is within the range of possibility, become paramount in Persia.' Again he says, 'It is not certain that their triumph over Islám in Persia would ultimately conduce to the welfare of that distracted land, or that the tolerance which they now advocate would stand the test of success and supremacy.'² The teaching of 'Abbás

¹ One, named Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Faḍl, said that he was the Ambassador of 'Abbás Efendí, the Persian Messiah. To his visitors he said, 'As Jesus came to scatter you, so Bahá'u'lláh came to gather you. All who believe in the Messiah now will have their names written in the Book of life.' He claimed that many intelligent American ladies were deeply impressed by his teaching.

² *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ii, p. 307.

Efendí, as his American admirer describes it, is very obscure. It leads to pantheism and is based on the theory that in the person of Bahá'u'lláh the essence of God is manifested and that he is the duly appointed world-teacher of the age. The ultra-Shí'ah sects held peculiar views of incarnation, re-incarnation and the like, and Professor Browne says that 'these doctrines appear to be endemic in Persia, and always ready to be epidemic under suitable stimulus. In our day they appeared in the Bábí movement of which in its earliest form (A.D. 1844 to 1852) they contained the essential kernel, though in a later time under the influence of Bahá'u'lláh and now of his son, 'Abbás Efendí, they have been relegated to a subordinate or at least a less conspicuous position.' The teaching of Bahá'u'lláh is said to contain the following: the gathering of all people to the acceptance of himself as the manifestation of God, as the divine guide to the true religion, the spread of universal love and universal peace, thus abolishing war and bloodshed, the harmonizing of all national customs and characteristic in a great and harmonious brotherhood. This constant setting forth of universal love and brotherhood is strange, when we see how the history of Bábíism reveals just the contrary. Bahá'u'lláh superseded his brother Subh-i-Ezel. 'Abbás Efendí was opposed to his brother Mírzá Muḥammad 'Alí, and so two rival sects arose. Thus in its highest domestic circles it has absolutely failed to bring peace and harmony into the family life of its leaders, who by their example preach the doctrines of discord and unbrotherly love.

'Abbás Efendí was a man of considerable power, and by an apparent breath of view captivated a certain class of hearers. He was an idealist and much that he taught was useful, though the result fell short of his aims. He visited London and Paris, and it is said that he there received Christians, Muḥammadans, Agnostics and Gnostics and answered their questions in a simple and direct manner, and apparently to the satisfaction of some of his hearers, for it is said that to the Christian Baháísm is Christianity, to a Buddhist Buddhism, to a Šúfí it speaks in his familiar mystical language, to the rationalist it is logical. This visit was interesting as showing how curious many people are to hear something new and to patronize, for curiosity's sake, a setter forth of strange doctrines. Like other religious leaders in the history of the past both Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abbás Efendí often spoke the language of true devotion and gave good advice, but the claim to be the last divinely appointed messengers of God, to set right a world all gone wrong, is a weak basis on which to build up a system perfect and complete, such a Baháísm claims to be. He had been imprisoned by the Turks, but was set free by the Young Turks, in 1908. For good services rendered during the Great War, on the recommendation of Lord Allenby, he received the honour of Knighthood. He passed away in the early part of 1922, much regretted by his followers.

From what has now been stated, it will be seen that Bábíism or, as we may now call it, Baháísm is not a political movement, though in its early days it was brought into conflict with the civil power; but

that it is a religious revolt against orthodox Islám. It raises women to a higher level, it professes to limit many of the social evils of Islám, it tends to give liberty of thought and to develop a friendly spirit to others.¹ It does, at least, betray a longing for a real, living, loving, personal guide, the revealer of God to man, which can be best met by the acceptance of the Eternal Word. In any case, if only liberty of conscience can be secured, there seems to be a wide and open door for the proclamation of 'Him whom God has manifested,' 'in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,' for it 'pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.' (Coloss. ii. 3; i. 19.)

The latest development of Mahdíism is seen in the modern Ahmadiyya sect. It illustrates the far-reaching influence of the doctrine of the Imámat. Its founder Mírzá Ghulám Ahmad Khán was born in the year 1839 at Qádián, a village in the Punjab. In 1888 he claimed to be the Messiah and Al-Mahdí, and asserted that certain ancient prophecies were fulfilled in his person and mission, and that

¹ I am indebted to a well-known Missionary who has spent a long time in Persia for the following facts:—

(1) The Bahá'ís admit that the Lord Jesus Christ was the incarnate Son; but claim that Bahá was the incarnate Father, and as each incarnation is superior to a preceding one, Bahá is greater than Christ.

(2) Some of the Bahá'ís now say, 'we are Christians;' others say, 'we are almost Christians;' others, 'The only difference between us is that we accepted Christ when he came to us fifty years ago (i.e. in Bahá) and you rejected him.'

(3) They constantly invite the Christian missionary to their houses, and are most hospitable and kind.

(4) The Bahá'ís admit that the New Testament is the uncorrupted Word of God.

(5) Many Jews in Persia have become Bábís and, on the other hand, some Bábís have become Christians.

he received divine revelations. He also uttered prophecies regarding the humiliation or the death of his opponents. Finally he had to be restrained by a Government Order dated February 24, 1899, 'from publishing any prediction involving the disgrace of any person.' He alleged that Jesus did not die upon the cross, but was taken down in a swoon from which he recovered and afterwards travelled as far as Cashmere, where he died and was buried. He interpreted Matt. xvi. 28¹ to mean that Jesus was alive at the capture of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and Matt. xv. 24² as meaning that Jesus went east to seek out the lost tribes of Israel. Like the Bábís he held that at certain periods God raised up special leaders and that he was such an one—the Al-Mahdí of the Muslims and the Messiah of the Christians. He claimed to be an orthodox Muslim, accepting fully the apostleship of Muḥammad, and all the dogmas of Islám.³ He entirely opposed the views of the modern liberal school of Muslims, founded by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khán and represented by the late Maulavi Cherágh 'Alí and others. Naturally his claim to be Al-Mahdí and a prophet, his call to obedience to himself and his formation of a new sect raised up great opposition; but he gathered together a considerable number of persons, some of

¹ 'Verily I say unto you, there be some of them that stand here which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom.'

² 'He answered and said, I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'

³ He held, however, that there were contradictions in the Traditions, and that the true could not be separated from the false until the appearance of Al-Mahdí, that is, himself, who would fulfil certain prophecies and so confirm the correctness of the Traditions which contained them.

whom were able men, who supported his claims in a monthly periodical, called the *Review of Religions*. He died on May 26, 1908. Hákím Núru'd-Dín then became the leader of the movement under the title of *Khalífa'u'l-Masíh* (successor of the Messiah). He was assisted by a council.

Mírzá Ghulám Aḥmad had commanded his followers to abstain from any interference in political matters. In 1914 this order was disregarded, and a new party, the Anjuman-i-Ishá't-i-Islám, was formed at Lahore. Thus, just as in the Bábí movement in Persia, so here, after the death of the founder, divisions began and the unity of the sect was broken.

On the death of Núru'd-Dín, a son of the Mírzá, named Bashíru'd-Dín Maḥmúd Aḥmad became the *Khalífa*. The Lahore Anjuman was then represented in England by Khájah Kamálu'd-Dín, editor of a magazine published in England and an active missionary of the Aḥmadíyya movement. He has also edited a new English translation of the Qur'án with a commentary, remarkable chiefly by its disregard of the opinions of approved Muslim commentators, by its divergence from accepted Muslim beliefs, by its ignorant dogmatism and by its hatred of Christianity.¹

The Aḥmadís, or Qádiánís, as they are also called, are active propagandists of the views of the founder of the sect. This propaganda is not confined to India, but is extended to foreign countries.² The

¹ See *Criticism of a Qádiání Commentary* (C.L.S.)

² 'In a petition sent to the Amír of Afghánistán asking for the release of a Qádiání prisoner, it is said that he was a member of a community numbering about a million people.' This is probably

Mírzá claimed to have secured 500,000 followers. Persons able to judge put the number down as probably 70,000. Whether the movement will grow and what form it may yet take is hard to say.³

We have now seen the far-reaching influence of the doctrine of the Imámat. We have seen what strange developments have taken place, what divisions in Islám they have caused, and how new religions, differing in many ways from the original Shí'ah standpoint, have been formed on them. In many Eastern lands this passionate devotion to 'Alí and the Imáms meets messengers of the Christian Faith and calls for more earnest and more continued effort on the part of the Christian Church.

a great exaggeration. This person Manlavi Niámatu'lláh Khān was condemned to death in August 1924 by the Kabul Courts as an apostate. He was buried up to the waist and then stoned to death, the chief Maulavi of Kabul throwing the first stone. The martyr met his death with calmness and courage. See account in the *Madras Mail*, September 16, 1924.

³ For a full account of the movement, see Walter, *The Aḥmadíyya Movement* and the article Qádiání in *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. x.

V

THE DARWISHES

THE Darwishes look upon Islám as a vast theocracy in which their spiritual leaders are the true guides. They believe that Muslims should be governed by an Imám who is both a religious and political leader, who should so manifestly be a ruler that the words of the sacred tradition may be fulfilled. 'He who dies without recognizing the authority of the Imám of the age is accounted dead and is an infidel.' It is the special function of the great Religious Orders to keep this principle alive and to teach people its vast importance. In Africa and in parts of Asia it has resulted in a great pan-Islamic movement having for its object not merely 'resistance to the advance of Christianity, but also opposition to the progress of Western civilization in Muslim lands.'¹ Under various pretexts, innumerable agents of these Orders went in all directions; sometimes as students, preachers, doctors, artisans, beggars and quacks. The people received them kindly and protected them when they fell under the suspicion of the rulers of the countries in which they carried on their propaganda.

It was not until the nineteenth century that Islám suffered any great reverses. When the change began it very soon led to a great increase in the number and the strength of the Darwish Orders.

¹ Count Castries, *L'Islám*, p. 220.

Now the onward march of Islám has been arrested in Central Africa by the establishment of the great Christian Kingdom of Uganda and by the bringing in of pagan tribes under the control of Western Powers in their respective spheres of influence. The development of commerce, and the wider influence of modern civilization and learning, its arts and sciences are all disturbing elements. To Muslims of the old orthodox school all this was most distressing, and it accounts for the growth of the Darwish Orders in number, extent and power.

The existence of secret societies is not congenial to the spirit of Oriental despotism, for the power of the religious leader is apt to exceed that of the temporal one, and so at various times attempts have been made to curtail their influence. As far back as the sixteenth century Sultán Mauli Isma'il tried to suppress the Darwish Orders then existing and failed. In the seventeenth century Muḥammad Pasha, the able Vizier of Sultán Muḥammad IV, tried to ruin the Mauláwíyya, the *Khilwátíyya* and the Shamsíyya Orders but did not succeed. In 1826 Sultán Maḥmúd, after suppressing the Janissaries, tried to break up the Order of the *Bakhtáshíyya*.¹ The head of the Order and his two chief

¹ There was a close connection between the Janissaries and this Order. When Sultán Orkhan in 1328 created the Yenicheres (Janissaries), or New Troops, he sought some religious sanction for his action. The Shaykh of the Bakhtáshíyyas blessed the troops by putting the sleeve of his robe on the head of one of the soldiers, in such a way that it hung down behind his back, and said, 'The militia which you have just created shall be called Yanicheree, its figures shall be fair and shining, its arm redoubtable, its sword sharp. It shall be victorious in all battles and ever return triumphant.' In memory of this, the Janissaries wore a white felt cap, having a piece of the same material pendant on their backs. These troops were very closely attached to this Order, and this may have excited the animosity of Sultán Maḥmúd against it.

officers were executed; many of its monasteries were demolished, its members were not allowed to wear their distinctive dress; but the Order survived. These men were not lacking in courage. One of them stopped Sultán Maḥmūd and, seizing the bridle of his horse, said, 'Giaour Padishah, art thou not yet content with abominations? Thou wilt answer to God for all thy godlessness. Thou revilest Islām and drawest the vengeance of the Prophet on thyself and us.' The Sultán called upon his guard to put this 'fool' away. 'I a fool,' said the Darwish, 'it is thou and thy worthless counsellors who have lost their senses. Muslims to the rescue!' The bold Darwish was put to death and ever after was venerated as a saint. An Arab poet addressed Hárún'r-Rashíd thus:—

Religious gems can ne'er adorn
The flowing robe by pleasure worn;
Its feeble texture soon would tear
And give these jewels to the air.
Thrice happy those, who seek the abode
Of peace and pleasure in their God;
Who spurn the world, its joys despise,
And grasp at bliss beyond the skies.¹

In Algiers the work of the Darwishes has been manifest since 1830. The Emir 'Abdu'l-Qádir owed much of his popularity and success to the intrigues and support of the Qádiríyya Order. The insurrections in 1864, 1871 and 1881 were due in great part to the action of these Darwishes. It was very difficult to counteract their influence with the masses, for whenever, after a local insurrection, the French authorities had destroyed the Záwiyahs,

or Takyas (Monasteries) of the Darwishes, it was found that it had no effect in destroying their influence with and power over the people.¹

The temporal power had some authority over some of the Orders. In Egypt the person who exercised that authority was called the Shaykhu'l-Bakri and was always a descendant of the Khalífa Abú Bakr. The Khalífa 'Umar has a representative, who is the head of the Enáníyya Darwishes. The Khalífa 'Uthmán has none. The Khalífa 'Alí has one called Shaykhu'l-Sádát or Shaykh of the Sayyids. Each of these is known as the 'occupant of the sajjáda,' or the prayer carpet of the founder. The sajjáda is looked upon as a throne.

The 'Ulamá' and the official clergy are not favourable to the Darwishes. The feeling is not unlike that between the secular and the monastic clergy in the Middle Ages. The mass of the Muslims, however, who care not for theological disputes are attracted to the side of the Darwishes and look upon them as the chosen of God, the favourites of heaven. They are not shocked at the dancing and the music. The ignorant man sees that, though destitute of the education required to become one of the 'Ulamá', he may without it acquire in an Order a religious status and power equal to that attained to by his more orthodox and more learned brother elsewhere.

We may now proceed to consider in more detail the constitution of a Darwish Order. The head of an Order is the spiritual heir of the founder and is called the Shaykh. As a rule he is the husband of

¹ Quoted in Gilman's *The Saracens*, p. 374.

¹ Rinn, *Marabouts et Khouan*, p. 100.

one wife, and only takes a second if the first is childless, and the succession to the headship of the Order is hereditary. Absolute and unquestioning obedience must be rendered to him by every member of the Order. Subordinate to the Shaykh are the Muqaddams (chiefs), who are placed in charge of the several Zāwiyahs¹ or Monasteries. From amongst the Ikhwān, or brethren of the Order, certain persons are elected as assistants to the Muqaddams. These are the Wakīl, who has charge of the property and funds of the Zāwiyah, and the Raqqāb, who is employed as a courier to carry despatches. In the assembling of the members of the Order the Muqaddam is assisted by the Chā'ush or leader, the Muddāh or precentor and the Qaṣṣād or chanter of the qaṣīdas or elegies. There are also the 'Allām or standard bearers, and the Suqqāh or water carriers. All these offices are filled by members of the Order who look upon their several duties as a grave religious work.

The simple members of an Order are called Ikhwān² or brothers; Aṣhāb³ or companions, while the generic name of Darwish covers all. A disciple is called a Murīd, and his spiritual guide is known as a Pīr. He who faithfully perform the religious rites of the Order is known as a Murābiṭ. He is

¹ Literally, a corner and so a secluded place as a cell, a hermitage, a convent

² This name is now given to the fanatical followers of the Wahhābī ruler, though they do not form a Darwish Order. Another form of the name is Khouan.

³ They are subdivided into اصحاب الفتوى Aṣhābu'l-Fatwa, or companions of the decree; اصحاب البساط Aṣhābu'l-Bisāt, or companions of the carpet; اصحاب الاهداد Aṣhābu'l-Ashad, or companions of zeal; اصحاب اليد Aṣhābu'l-Yad, or companions of the hand.

one 'who habitually lives in a ribāṭ, or a frontier guard-house. Such buildings were occupied by troops, but pious individuals, wishing to join in a holy war (jihād) against unbelievers, joined them. The word Murābiṭ has got now the exclusive religious meaning of devotee or saint.'¹ Outside of these are what may be called the Associates, the lay members of the Order. They do not live in the Zāwiyahs. They are acquainted with the secret signs and words, by the use of which they can always claim the protection of the members of the Order with which they are associated. They do not join in the Dhikr, but they use the rosary in the same way as the full members do. Their allegiance to the Order is often more political than religious.

The founders of these Orders were orthodox Muslims, that is, they not only followed the injunctions of the Qur'ān, but also those of the Sunna, the record preserved in the Traditions (Aḥādīth) of the Prophet's words and actions, as a divine rule of faith and practice. The founders of the more modern Orders follow the special teaching of some famous theologian, who can show that his instruction was based on that of men who lived and taught in the earliest days of Islām. They maintain that their object in founding an Order is the glory of God, the extension of Islām, and the salvation of men. They claim to be able to lead their disciples on by successive stages to such a state that they

¹ Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 460. Another derivation of the word is that it comes from rabaṭa, be bound. From this word comes the names of the Moroccan dynasty Murābiṭūn, corrupted by foreigners into Almoravides. Meakin, *The Moors*, p. 331.

attain, or at least approximate to, spiritual perfection.¹

For the origin of many of the Orders a supernatural claim is made. Al-Khidr (Elias) is said to have been the greatest saint of his age, an intermediary between God and man and the founder of a Religious Order. He is supposed to be still alive and active, able to give power to the devotee who attains to the dignity of a Qutb. Owing to his being transported from place to place by the Spirit of God, to his investiture of Elisha with the prophetic office and to his marvellous translation, it is said that he still retains and exercises great influence with the men who rise to a high order of saintship. To them he unveils the future, confers the gift of blessing (baraka) and gives mystical supernatural powers (taṣarruf). All the members of the Order participate in this blessing and in the abundance of spiritual good, transmitted from the founder of the Order, who had entered into secret and direct communication with Al-Khidr and with the Prophet. The Shaykh almost always nominates his successor.² He informs the Muqaddams and Murīds that he has chosen a man who will maintain the traditions of the founder of their Order and its purity.

¹ There are four stages in this initiation. (1) the Sharī'at, or Holy Law which the Murīd must know and obey; (2) the Ṭarīqat, or Path in which he may abandon the observance of forms and ceremonies, and enter on the study of the mystical teaching of the Sūfīs; (3) Ma'rīfat, or knowledge. He now attains the supernatural knowledge and is equal to angels; (4) Haqīqat or Truth. He has now reached the stage of Divine Beatitude and is united with Deity. Few pass beyond the second stage, and to attain even to that the pupil must attach himself to a holy Shaykh and be instructed by a Pīr.

² Some, however, on the ground that the Prophet nominated no successor, leave the election to the Muqaddams. Rinn, *Marabouts et Khouan*, p. 60

Once or twice a year the Muqaddams meet in conference. The state of each Zāwiyah is gone into, its financial condition is examined and all other matters of business are attended to. New members are admitted into the Order. When all is over the Shaykh then issues pastoral letters to all the brethren. Amulets and charms blessed by him are sold.¹ The highest rank in an Order is that of Ghauth, a man who, owing to the superabundance of his sanctity, is able to become the sin-bearer of the faithful without incurring any risk to his own prospect of salvation. He is often called of the Ghauthu'l-'Ālam, or Defender of the World.

The next rank is that of the Qutb, or Axis. This title implies that the saint to whom it is given is a centre of influence round which all the greatness and the real grandeur of the world revolve. The one most prominent in his day is called the Qutb-i-Waqt, the Axis of the Age. He is the recipient of the special favour of God, by whom all the affairs of the lower and higher worlds are entrusted to him. All the Auliya', or saints, are subject to him. It is alleged that the Qutb often appears in the world though men do not know him as such. He has certain favoured stations where he appears, such as the roof of the Ka'ba in Mecca,

¹ Chatelier says that 'the Muslims in Western Africa use many of the pagan superstitions, charms and incantation, and that hypnotism is also practised by the religious teachers.' *L'Islam dans L'Afrique Occidentale*, p. 313.

For a full account of the widespread use of charms and other pagan customs in the propagation of Islām, see Dr. Zwemer's recent book on *The Influence of Animism on Islām*.

He says that the sale of amulets and charms of every description is carried on even now in the vicinity of Al-Azhar in Cairo. Op. cit., p. 192.

one of the gates of old Cairo and other places. It is believed that he can come and go, flit from place to place, as he pleases.

The *Autád* is the name given to holy men of influence in a country, or, in a mystical sense, to men who know God. It has the same meaning as *Arkán*, or pillars in such terms as *Arkán-i-daulat*—pillars of the State. There are four others called the *Anwár*, or lights, who succeed to vacant places among the *Autád*.

Then come the *Khayyár*, a word derived from *khayr* (good). It signifies excellent men. They are seven in number and are constantly travelling about, spreading the light of *Islám*.

Another class is that of the *Abdál*, the changeable. Owing to the purification of their nature, no vice dwells in them and so their hearts are said to be changed. For their sake God blesses the world. When one dies God appoints another, but no one knows where they live.

The *Shuhadá'*, or martyrs, forty in number, wander about the earth, completing the journey in a month. A person who happens to meet one can seek and obtain from him spiritual blessings. On the Day of Judgement they will all be recalled to God.

Walí, or friend of God, is a title given to a holy man after his death. These saints are highly venerated, and the reverence paid to them is based on a verse of the *Qur'án*, 'Verily on the favourites of God, no fear shall come, nor shall they be put to grief' (*Súratu Yúnas* x. 63). The word for the favourites is *Auliya'*, the plural of *Walí*. They are supposed

to have the power of working miracles and pilgrimages to their tombs are common. They are also said to receive illumination by the form of inspiration called *ilhám*, whilst the prophets possessed it by *wahí*.¹ A *Walí* must submit to the general guidance of prophets. Vows made at the shrines of *Walís* must be strictly kept; to break them would bring upon the offender, the wrath of the *Walí*.²

The *Shaykhs*, or Grand Master of the Orders, are very skilful in dealing with new converts, and show great discernment in adapting their instruction to the various classes of men with whom they have to deal. All must absolutely obey the *Shaykh*, keep secret the affairs of the Order, and be loyal to it; but beyond that the teaching and the discipline vary. A very religious-minded disciple is directed to observe the most minute details of the ritual acts of worship; a superstitious one has talismans and charms given to him. The mystic finds satisfaction in the religious ecstasy to which his devotions lead; the learned and philosophical are charmed with the religious speculations opened up to them; whilst the weak and oppressed find, as members of an Order, the support of a powerful association.

The neophyte gains admission to and promotion in an Order very slowly, and only after a long ascetic training. At first he is only a *Talmídh*,

¹ *Ilhám* means that the saint delivers the subject-matter out of his own mind, and is not a mere machine to reproduce the words brought to him by Gabriel. *Wahí* means that the words uttered are the very words of God himself. This is the inspiration of the *Qur'án*. See *The Faith of Islám* (4th ed.), pp. 67-8.

² For a detailed account of the cult of these saints, see *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. xi, pp. 63-73.

a disciple; then a Muríd, an aspirant; then a Faqír, poor in the mystical sense. He now enters upon the *Ṭarīq*, or path, and sees visions and has supernatural revelations. Thus he becomes a *Sálik*, a traveller on the mystical road, but many pass on to still higher stages of life and become *Majdhúb*, the attracted, that is, they are powerfully drawn by God to Himself and are illuminated and inspired. The life of such an one is wholly spiritual and not material, and the outward rites of religion are no longer needed. He is so absorbed in the contemplation of God that he passes on to the state of *Tauhíd* (unity), and is identified with the Supreme and so loses all sense of separate existence. Not all Darwishes attain to these higher degrees; they are reserved for the few alone. After some preliminary instruction, the novice is introduced by two of the brethren to the whole assembly of the Darwishes. In the presence of the Muqaddams, or of the Shaykh, he swears that he will be loyal to the Order and obedient to its Shaykh. After a full profession of the creed of Islám, he is taught the *Dhikr*,¹ or special form of prayer, used in the Order into which he is now to be admitted. The whole assembly then recites the *Fátiḥa* the first *Súra* of the *Qur'án*. He then gives to all and receives from all the kiss of peace. In some Orders the novitiate extends over a thousand and one days, during which time the novice

¹ A *Dhikr* easy to remember is learnt. An oath of obedience to the Shaykh, and to all things for the benefit of the Order is made. 'The novice is henceforth bound to loyalty to the Master, who becomes his sole guide in things temporal and spiritual, his intercessor with God, the controller of all his affairs.' Depont et Coppolani, *Les Confréries Religieuses Musulmanes*, p. 199.

has to perform the humblest domestic duties in order to test his obedience and to develop a spirit of humility. Absolute surrender of his will is necessary. Thus, 'Thou shalt be in the hands of the Shaykh as a corpse' in the hands of those who prepare it for burial. God speaks to thee through him. Thou art his slave. Banish from thy heart any thought to which God or thy Shaykh may object.'²

The Shaykh touches the head of the novice and breathes into his ear the words *Lá iláha illa'lláh*, which he has to repeat 101, 151 or 301 times. This is called the *Talqín*. The novice then retires into seclusion, meditates long and falls into a dreamy state. This is called *Khilwat*. He repeats his dreams to the Shaykh, who a second time breathes into his ear the words *Yá Alláh*, O God! This goes on for forty days, after which the novice becomes a Muríd, or a Faqír.

In addition to the duties involved in the renunciation of the world, retreats, watchings and fasting the *Ikhwán* must observe the *Ziárat*, the *Hadia* and the *Dhikr*. A *Ziárat* is a religious visitation for the purpose of collecting funds. A regular assessment is made, which the Muqaddam collects through the agency of the *Chá'ush*. In Algiers this was such a heavy burden on the people that the French authorities have regulated it. The *Hadia* is an expiatory offering made by the *Ikhwán* for the infraction of some rule or the neglect of some duty. It is a kind

¹ Ignatius Loyola, speaking of obedience, says, 'In the hands of my superior I must be as soft wax . . . I must consider myself as a corpse which has neither intelligence nor will.' William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 312.

² Rinn, *Marabouts et Khouan*, p. 94.

of tribute which the Muqaddam exacts from the chiefs of the local tribes, and which few are bold enough to refuse, lest some injury should happen to them.

By far the most important duty in the life of a Darwish is the Dhikr.¹ It is an attempt to secure a mystical union with the Divine through an emotional or sub-conscious bond; an effort carried on under the personal direction of a Mushíd. There are various forms of it. It may be recited aloud, in which case it is called Dhikr-i-jali; or mentally, or in a very low voice and then it is called Dhikr-i-khafi. The Naqshbandíyya Darwishes adopt the former; the Chistíyya and the Qádiríyya Orders the latter form. A Dhikr-i-jali is as follows: the worshipper sits down in the usual way and shouts out Alláh; then sitting as if for prayers again in a louder voice says Alláh; then folding his legs under him says still louder Alláh. Again placing himself in the correct attitude for prayer, he closes his eyes and shouts out the word Lá (no); drawing the sound from his navel, then he says iláha (god) as from his head, and lastly illa'lláh (but God) from his left

¹The origin of this frequent act of worship is to be found in Súratu'l-Abzáb xxxiii. 40. 'O Believers! remember God with frequent remembrance and praise him morning and evening.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحُوا بِحَمْدِهِ وَاصْبِرُوا

The Commentator 'Abdú'lláh bin 'Abbás says that اذكروا means 'Remember with tongue and heart,' and that سجد is equivalent to 'say the namaz.' The Darwishes say that كَثِيرًا frequent, means that the Dhikr is to be repeated often. There is a curious parody of the Dhikr in the ceremony used for exorcisms, called Zar. See Zwemer, *The Influence of Animism on Islám*, chapter xxi.

Dhikr supplies the emotional element in Islám which the formal Salát does not; but like all manifestations of religious emotion it has its dangers though to some persons it may be helpful and supply a need.

side. All this is repeated hundreds of times. The Dhikr-i-khafi is made by the Darwish closing his eyes and with the tongue of his heart saying:—First, from his stomach, Alláhu Sam'um—God the hearer; second, from his breast, Alláhu Basírun—God the seer; third, from his head, Alláhu 'Alímun—God the knower. He keeps on going over these names, not audibly but mentally, saying them to himself in an ascending and descending scale. Then in a very low tone of voice he says Alláh; then he exhales breath and says, whilst so doing, Lá iláha, and then inhales breath saying, Lá illa'lláh. This Dhikr is very often repeated hundreds of times, and is always a most exhausting exercise. By long practice a Darwish gains great control over his breathing. It is said of one man that he used to say Lá iláha exhaling his breath at the midday prayer, and Lá illa'lláh inhaling his breath at the afternoon prayer. He held his breath for three hours. Sometimes there is a meditation on certain verses of the Qur'án such as, 'He is the first and the last; the seen and the hidden; and He knoweth all things' (Súratu'l-Hadíd lvii. 3). 'Whichever way ye turn, there is the face of God' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 109).

Similar exercises to the Dhikr are the Tasbîh, saying Sabhānu'lláh—holiness to God; the Tahmíd, Alhamdu'lláh—praise be to God; then the Takbír, Alláhu Akbar—God is great. Muḥammad is also reported to have said that he who repeats the Tasbîh one hundred times morning and evening will have all his sins forgiven. It is by the strict performances of these religious exercises and by

retiring into privacy for devotional purposes (*Khilwat*); by turning his face towards God (*Tawajjuh*); by contemplating God with fear (*Muráqabbah*); and by mystical spiritualism (*Tasarruf*) that the Darwish is supported to gain the spiritual internal powers—*quwat-i-rúhi wa bátimi*—which enable him to subdue the will of others. The mechanical repetition of the *Dhikr* naturally weakens the intellect and personal will of the Darwish. It produces a morbid state of mind in which he is easily and blindly led by the stronger will of the *Shaykh* and the *Muqaddams*. The whole system is so developed that individuality is crushed out and the Order is exalted. The *Shaykh* is the one absolute will and all not only venerate but implicitly obey him.

There are said to be altogether eighty-eight Religious Orders.¹ The first came into existence in the first year of the Hijra (622) and the last in 1876. It is said that *Abú Bakr* first called men to a sort of common community life.² I now proceed to give a short account of some of the most important Orders.

The *Šiddíqíyya* Order takes its name from the word *Šiddíq*³—the righteous—a name given to *Abú Bakr*. It is found in Yaman, in Egypt and in small numbers in Algeria. Its chief principle is said to

¹ The names of the founders of these Orders with their dates are given by Rinn in *Marabouts et Khouan*, pp. 26-51.

² The *Bistámíyya* the *Naqshbandíyya* and the *Bakhtáshíyya* Orders claim to have descended from the *Šiddíqíyya* community, founded by *Abú Bakr*. The *Uwaisíyya* the *Qádiríyya* and the *Sanúsíyya* Orders connected themselves with 'Umar and also with 'Alí, to whom all the other Orders look up to as their original head. Each Order has its *silsilah*, or chain of succession, up to one of these *Khalífas*.

³ An Order is always called by the adjective formed from the name of its founder.

be the profound contemplation of the person and virtues of the Prophet, who, it is said, will appear to a Darwish of this Order in all times of difficulty, and in his hours of ecstasy.

The *Uwaishíyya* Order was founded by *Uwaishu'l-Karáni*, who in the thirty-seventh year of the Hijra (659) announced that Gabriel had appeared to him in a dream and revealed to him the constitution of an Order based on strictly ascetic principles. *Uwais* carried his veneration for the Prophet so far as to extract some of his teeth, because *Muḥammad* had lost two at the battle of *Uḥud*. The Prophet is said to have had a great regard for *Uwais* and gave him his own mantle. The mantles of all the Darwishes are copies of this mantle, known as the *Khírka-i-Sharíf*. This Order has not spread beyond Arabia.

The *Alwáníyya* Order founded by *Shaykh Alwán* in 766 was the first one with special rules and distinctive religious exercises. This *Shaykh* was the first to make formal rules for the initiation of a novice and to regulate the work of directors and duties of the *Muríds*. The whole Darwish system in its present form probably dates from this period.

The *Bistámíyya* Order was founded by *Abú Báyzíd Bistámí* about the year 874. He is looked up to as a saint by the *Shaykhs* of many other Orders. *Šúfí* doctrines are taught in it.

The *Qádiríyya* Order was founded by 'Abdu'l-Qádir Giláni of Baghdad in 1165.¹ It is one of

¹ It was introduced into India in 1482. Shrines have been erected in honour of 'Abdu'l-Qádir. The anniversary of his death on the seventh day of the month, *Rabi'u'l-Akhir* is kept as a feast. Vows are made, especially by childless women.

the largest and most important ones. The great religious revival at the beginning of the nineteenth century, probably due to the Wahhábí revival, stirred up the members of this Order to great activity. Throughout the Western Súdán they have made a great advance by their pacific propaganda.¹ This Order and a more modern and warlike one, the Tijáníyya, have been the principal agents in the extraordinary advance of Islám in the Western and Central Súdáns. 'Abdu'l-Qádir is represented as being a man of large heart and charitable feelings, and his Order was founded 'not only to improve by its mystical teaching the corrupt morals of Muslims, but also to relieve the miseries of men, to comfort the afflicted and to aid the poor by alms.' One of the Muqaddams said, 'If God had not sent Muḥammad to be the seal of the prophets, He would have sent 'Abdu'l-Qádir, for he, by his virtues and charity, most of all resembles Jesus Christ.' He is called the Saint of Saints, the Qutbu'l-Qutúb and the Ghauthu'l-A'zam, the Greatest Defender. No man equals him in the alleged working of miracles, nor are such marvellous stories told of any other Shaykh. The Dhikr of this Order is a very long one. On admission the novice has to add to the usual namáz the repetition 165 times of the creed, Lá iláhu illa'lláhu; he must also repeat 121 times the words, O God, bless our Lord Muḥammad and his family;

¹ This is confirmed by a great French authority who says, 'that by the instruction the founder gave to his disciples, by the colonies which he founded the number of the members of the Order multiplied in the Súdáns.' Chatelier, *L'Islam dans L'Afrique Occidentale*, p. 254. See also *C.M.S. Intelligencer*, February 1903, p. 115.

then 121 times 'Glory be to God, Praise be to God. There is no God but He. God is great;' then 100 times Súratu Yá Sín xxxvi; 41 times Súratu'l-Jinn lxxii; and other Súras many times. The Shaykh then places his hand between the arms of the novice and says, 'In the name of God most Merciful and the most Clement, I believe in God, in His angels, in His book and in His Prophet, in the Day of Judgement, in His decrees, His favours and punishments and in the resurrection from the dead.' The novice replies, 'I am a Muslim, I am confirmed in my worship and in my faith. I purify myself by a sincere repentance. I repudiate all heresy. I take the oath of fidelity. I will obey the divine laws and do all things as in the sight of God, will accept whatever He may send me and thank Him for any trouble which may oppress me.' Other ceremonies follow. Questions are asked and, if the answers are satisfactory, the novice is then admitted into the Order.

The Rifá'íyya Order was founded by Aḥmad Ar-Rifá'í of Baghdad, who died in 1183. The Order is also known as that of the Howling Darwishes. The banner and turbans are black. These Darwishes make fires which they extinguish by rolling on the burning coals; they even eat live coals¹ and glass and swallow serpents, or appear so to do. 'They sing the amorous poems of Ibnu'l-Mu'allim (born 1108) in order to work themselves up into their mystic ecstasies.'² In Mecca their

¹ Lane describes such a scene which he witnessed in Cairo. *Modern Egyptians*, vol. ii, p. 190.

² Huart, *Arabic Literature*, p. 101.

agents are active and they are hostile to Europeans. The chief interest in this Order is that under the influence of 'Abú'l-Haúda, an intimate friend of Sultán Abdú'l-Hamíd, it took a very active part in propagating the pan-Islámic views of that Sultán. 'Under the powerful direction of 'Abú'l-Haúda the Rifá'íyya men sought to recover their spiritual homogeneity and become at the same time sworn enemies of progress and civilization, the unscrupulous executors of the designs of the Ottoman Porte.'¹

The Chistíyya Order was founded by Mu'ínu'd-Dín Chistí, who was born in 1142 and died at Ajmir in 1226. His tomb is still a favourite place of pilgrimage. The members of the Order are mostly Shí'ahs. They are fond of music and perform the *Dhikr-i-jali*. A friend of the founder, *Khawájáh Qutbu'd-Dín*, was buried in Delhi. The *Qutb Minár* is named after him.

The *Shádhilíyya* Order was founded in 1258. The name is taken from that of its third Shaykh, Sídí Hasanú'sh-Shádhil, a man with a great reputation as a jurisconsult and theologian. It flourishes in Egypt and in Algeria. It has given rise to many branches which now form separate Orders. The founder, Abú Madian, was a mystic, deeply versed in Súffistic lore. To this advanced spiritualism he added great modesty of manner and a ready eloquence. The early chiefs of the Order, worthy disciples of the great master, took little interest in worldly affairs, and were really the heads of a mystical philosophical school. A general order

¹ Depont et Coppolani, *Les Confréries Religieuses Musalmanes*, p. 327.

was, 'Obey your Shaykh before you obey your temporal sovereign.' Whilst the philosophic teaching was adapted to win over learned men, that for the masses was to call attention to the founder as an ecstatic saint rather than to his philosophical learning.

The Mauláwíyya Order, known as the Dancing Darwishes, was founded by Maulána Jalálu'd-Dín Rúmí in 1273. It was, until recently suppressed, the most popular Order in Turkey. The members of the Order are famous for their mystical dance, which consists chiefly of whirling round and round. This is said to represent the revolution of the spheres and the circling movement of the soul caused by the vibrations of its love to God. They say the *Dhikr* in silence, standing up and turning from east to west. It is a very wealthy Order, and the recent confiscation of its property must have brought much material gain to the Angora Government. The Shaykh must be a descendant of the founder. The office is hereditary and so the marriage of the Shaykh is obligatory.

The Naqshbandíyya Order¹ was founded in 1312 by Muḥammad Bahá'u'd-Dín Naqshbandí, a native of Persia. It is a very large and important Order. It attracts men of position and of learning. The *Dhikr-i-khafí* is used, and in addition to it each member must say the prayer for pardon (*Istighfár*) once, the prayer for peace (*Salámat*) seven times, the *Fátiḥa* seven times, *Súratu'l-Inshirāḥ* (xciv)

¹ Shaykh Ahmaḍu'l-Farángí (died 1625) brought this Order into India, but it did not spread much. Its most famous shrine is that of Sháh Musáfir at Aurangabad.

nine times and *Súratu'l-Ikhlâs* (cxii) once. The dignity of its outward ceremonial and the high class of persons affiliated to it are amongst the causes which give this Order a very high place in the esteem and regard with which other Darwishes look upon it. In 1925 the head of the Order was Shaykh Sa'îd of Pálú. His head Takya, or monastery, was a place of pilgrimage and he had many friends amongst the Kurdish chiefs. He took a leading part in the Kurdish revolt against the Angora Government for its policy of Westernization and its abolition of the Qur'anic law. The insurgents wished to proclaim Salîm Efendi, a son of Sultân 'Abdu'l-Hamîd, as *Khalîfa*. The revolt was put down and Shaykh Sa'îd was taken prisoner, tried as a rebel and executed. All the Takyas of the Order in the eastern vilayets were closed by order of the Turkish Government.¹

The Order of the *Qalandariyya*, or Wandering Darwishes, was founded in 1323 by 'Alî Yûsuf, *Qalandari*, a native of Spain. Being dismissed from the *Chistîyya* Order, he founded this new one. Its members are bound to live on charity, not to amass wealth for themselves and to be always on the move. They are practically *Şûfis*. Their *Dhikr* is the usual one. The *Qalandar* Darwish is a well-known character in Eastern tales.

The *Bakhtâshîyya* Order was founded by Hâjî *Bakhtâsh* in 1357 and was famous in Turkey, owing

¹ See Toynbee, *Turkey*, p. 266; *Survey of International Affairs*, pp. 507-10. The Angora government has suppressed other Orders. From an orthodox Muslim standpoint Islâm in Turkey, as represented by its rulers, seems to be tending towards rationalism, whilst the traditional form is kept up as an aid to the conservation of a spirit of nationalism.

to its connection with the corps of Janissaries. The symbol of the Order is the mystic girdle which is put on and off seven times. In doing so the Darwish says:—

- (1) I tie up greediness and unbind generosity ;
- (2) I tie up avarice and unbind piety ;
- (3) I tie up anger and unbind meekness ;
- (4) I tie up ignorance and unbind the fear of God ;
- (5) I tie up passion and unbind the love of God ;
- (6) I tie up hunger, and unbind (spiritual) contentment ;
- (7) I tie up the influence of Satan and unbind the influence of the Divine.

Their esoteric doctrines are a curious mixture of pantheism and materialism. This has been attributed to the influence of the *Hurûfî* 'sect' amongst the *Bakhtâshîyya* Darwishes. It is said that the *Hurûfîs* were antinomians who, believing themselves to be identical with God, looked upon the moral laws as not binding upon them. Gibb says 'Such beliefs lead to practical evils when proclaimed openly to all classes of society, and when, in addition, the promised Paradise is declared to be here in this present world, and the *Hurî*-brides to be none other than the beauties of earth, the flood gates of social anarchy have been flung open.'

The more recent Orders are to be found in Timbaktu, Algeria and Morocco, and are, generally speaking, offshoots from the older ones, especially the *Shâdhîlîyya* one. I describe a few of the more important ones.

The *Bakkayîyya* Order was founded in 1552 by Ahmad Bakkay. Its headquarters are in Timbaktu,

¹ For an account of this curious sect, see articles by Professor Browne in *RASJ*, January 1898, pp. 61-94; *RASJ* July 1907, pp. 533-40; also Gibb, *Ottoman Poetry*, vol. i, pp. 338-42; 353-5; 373.

but it has considerable influence in Morocco. It is an offshoot of the Shádhilíyya Order.

The Karzaníyya Order was founded in 1607 by a member of the Royal family of Morocco, who had been a Muqaddam of the Shádhilíyya Order. He taught his followers to reject reason as it was a guide to error, to place absolute confidence in the Shaykh, and to be ever ready to fight in the cause of God. The Order is widely spread in Morocco.

The Taybíyya Order was founded in 1679. The first Záwiyah was at Wazan. The second Shaykh was Mulai Tayb, from whom the Order takes its name. He made many converts from amongst the negroes, whom he then set free. It is essentially a political Order, devoted to the interests of the Moroccan empire. At the same time it has cultivated friendship with the French. Shaykh 'Abdu's-Salím married an English lady, and in 1876 vainly tried to become a French citizen. He did not oppose the entry of the French into Twat and their occupation of the surrounding country. Still, the ties of the Order are so strong with Morocco that a French writer says, 'We ought not to lose sight of the possibility of enormous difficulties to our interest from the Taybíyya Order in Algiers, Senegal and Morocco, should the Shaykh become hostile to our authority.'

The Hansalíyya Order was founded in 1702 by Sayyid Yúsufu'l-Hansalí, a man born in Morocco. He studied for a time in the Al-Azhar University in Cairo. He said that God had called him to his work in a direct revelation. The Order has much

influence amongst the Berbers of the Atlas mountains. In addition the Dhíkr, the Ikhwán recite some portions of a famous poem on the ninety-nine names of God. I give a translation of a few of the Arabic verses :—

1. O pardoning God, I cry to Thee
Thy Pardon to implore ;
O Sovereign Lord, subdue thro' me
Who e'er subverts Thy law.
2. The glory, Glorious Being, doth
My feeble strength increase ;
O Thou, who humblest in the dust,
Cause lying tongues to cease.
3. Knowledge and understanding give,
O, Giver of all, to me ;
Sustainer, for my sustenance
I look for ease from Thee.
4. The souls of all Thine enemies,
O Seizer of spirits, seize ;
O Scatterer of gifts, increase desire
In beauty's devotees.
5. O Humbler, humble Thou the power
Of all who Thee oppose ;
O Thou who raisest, raise me up
In spite of these my foes.

The doctrines of the Order are similar to those of the Shádhilíyya, but Hansalí introduced many ascetic practices. The prestige of the Order is high for saintliness, and perhaps this is the reason why the amulets they prepare have a great reputation for preserving the wearers in safety in times of accidents, and as a protection against the evil eye, always a source of dread to the superstitious.¹

¹ On the use of amulets and charms by Muslims, see Zwemer, *The Influence of Animism on Islám*, a most complete and valuable work on the subject. See also Herklot's *Islám in India*, pp. 288-93.

The Darqáwíyya Order was founded by a Sharíf Morocco at the end of the eighteenth century. He advised his followers to abstain from worldly affairs, but they did not do so. The Order became a political one, in great sympathy with the turbulent Berber tribes. Depont says, 'In all the rebellious movements in Algiers and Morocco, since the formation of this fraternity, we have found the hand of these frightful sectaries, these men in rags, these puritans of Islám, these frantic Darwishes.'¹

The Tijáníyya Order was founded in 1871 by Si Aḥmad bin Mukhtár Tijání, who studied in the Muslim University at Fez. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca and astonished the theologians there by his erudition and knowledge. He found that Fez was a place too much given up to political and religious strife for the establishment of his Order there, and so he moved further south for that purpose. Earnest propaganda work was then carried on and the Order spread rapidly in Tunis, in the Ṣaḥará and the Western Súdán. The Order has been a militant² as well as a teaching one. One of its leaders, Ḥájí 'Umar went to the Hausa country and there reproached the ordinary Muslims with their ignorance. Even the Qádiríyya Darwishes were too tolerant for him. In their ascetic zeal they resembled the Wahhábís in Arabia. His influence extended as far as the hinterland of Sierra Leone.³ This Order has done more to spread

Islám in Western Africa than any other, and it still has much influence, though the establishment of French influence in the Senegal and the Niger regions in 1890 has weakened its political power which has steadily decreased.

The two Orders the Qádiríyya and the Tijáníyya have played the chief part in the propagation of Islám in the Western Súdán. Under the Qádiríyya the propaganda was by peaceful methods; the Tijáníyya adopted opposite methods, and, so long as they had the power, won their way by force.¹

The Raḥmáníyya Order was founded in 1793 by another native of Morocco, Muḥammad bin 'Abdu'r-Raḥmán. It has great influence in the Súdán and in Algeria, where, owing to jealousy, the 'Ulamá' tried to convict the Shaykh of heterodoxy but failed to do so. This really increased his authority.

The Darqáwíyya Order was founded at the end of the eighteenth century by a Shaykh of Morocco. It became political in its aim and full of sympathy with the turbulent Berber tribes and its members are said to have taken part in many insurrections.²

The Madaníyya Order is as intolerant as the preceding one. It was founded about A.D. 1820. The second Shaykh of the Order was a great supporter of the pan-Islámic movement, and became a great favourite of Sultán Ḥamíd, who gave him one of the royal palaces in Constantinople. The members of the Order travelled far and wide and

¹ Depont et Coppelani, *Les Confréries Religieuses Musulmanes*, p. 504.

² For an account of its wars, see Chatelier, *L'Islám dans L'Afrique Occidentale*, p. 167.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

¹ Chatelier speaks of the Tijáníyya as 'ardent aux guerres saintes'; of the Qádiríyya as 'pacifique et debonnaire.' *L'Islám dans L'Afrique Occidentale*, p. 345.

² Depont et Coppelani, *Les Confréries Religieuses Musulmanes*, p. 504.

kept up a spirit of restlessness. In some few places the members of the Order have been already absorbed in the still more dangerous one of the Sanúsiyya Order.

I have now given a brief description of some of the older and of some of the more modern Orders, which owe their existence to the great wave of religious revival which, stimulated by the Wahnábí movement in Arabia, passed on to the Muslim Confraternities in Africa and led to an active propaganda effort. Islám as a theocratic system does not recognize the limitations made by the political influences between the various Muslim peoples, dividing them into different States, and so these Orders, which are common to all lands, can at any time, and anywhere, exercise a very real influence in any direction which their leaders may choose.

For many centuries Islám has advanced not only on the northern coast of Africa, but has progressed in the interior. Still the great advance is to be dated from the end of the eighteenth century, or the beginning of the nineteenth, and has been mainly due to the increased energy and devotion of the Darwish Orders. Islám extended from two centres. From the west it went along the Atlantic coast to Senegal, Timbuktu and the Hausa land; from the eastern side the modern movement began when Si Ahmad bin Idrís, the Shaykh of the Qádiríyya Order, sent out missionaries during the early part of the nineteenth century. They won over the Nubians who joined this Order in large numbers, and their missionary work began amongst the pagans of

Kordufan. This work was afterwards carried on by the Khartum Mahdí and is sustained by the Sanúsís. These two currents, the one on the east, at one time more warlike and fanatical; the other on the west more commercial, advanced rapidly into all the pagan regions. The penetration of those parts by European Powers may have a deterring effect, for trade will be no longer solely in the hands of Muslim merchants, who, to their credit be it said, are active missionaries. One article of commerce, that of slaves, will cease to exist. The great Christian Kingdom of Uganda blocks the way to Muslim advance in those parts.

Amongst the earlier agents of this extensive movement are the Fulahs. They are strict Muslims and under the Shaykh Danfodio became, about a hundred and thirty years ago, a warlike and aggressive kingdom. They won many of the pagan people to Islám and in 1837 made Sokoto the capital of a Muhammadan State. They then advanced into the Yoruba country and built the large city of Ilorin.¹ The energy of Shaykh Danfodio was great.² He prophesied that his green flag would be the passport to victory for a hundred years. If this was really said, his words have come true, for the decision that the Fulani country should become part of the British Protectorate was made in 1903, in which year a

¹ 'The downward sweep of the Fulani invasion at the beginning of the nineteenth century led many into Islám.' (*C.M.S. Outlook*, September 1927.) In the pastorate of Nigeria thirty-nine per cent. of the people are now Muslims. In the *New Africa* it is said that five hundred and sixty-two tribes are wholly Muhammadan, and nine hundred and sixty-three are under Muhammadan influence. Quoted in *The Expository Times*, September 1927, p. 520.

² He made the pilgrimage to Mecca and returned full of zeal. He was an ardent advocate of Wahnábí doctrines.

few British Officers, with a small band of well-trained native troops, overthrew the powerful Fulah ruler and his followers. Sokoto was captured and the last descendant of Shaykh Danfodio, who sat on the throne of his fathers, perished. Fulah rule was so despotic and cruel that the country was largely depopulated; disorder, constant warfare and slave raiding were its marks. The consequent hatred of the people to their rulers made the British conquest possible. This rapid increase of Islām amongst pagan races is not to be looked upon as a permanent gain to civilization. It elevates a pagan race to a certain level; it puts away some vices, such as cannibalism and infanticide; but it teaches the converts that slavery, polygamy and facility of divorce are divine institutions, set forth in God's latest revelation and enforced by the command and example of his latest prophet. The convert is taught that this system is perfect and final, and he is thus fixed at a low level of moral life. Reform implies imperfection in Islām, and that no Darwish teacher will admit to be the case. The very pride of it which its converts feel when once they accept it keeps them stationary. Islām under Fulah rule failed to make to the pagan people happy, peaceful or prosperous, and its political power has justly come to the end.

The most recent and the most powerful Order is the Sanúsiyya, which is a strong opponent to all Western civilization. It was founded in 1791 by Si Muḥammad bin Si 'Alī bin Sanúsi, born in Algiers, where he spent the early years of his life. He claimed descent through Idrīs from 'Alī. At Fez

he studied Muḥammadan law and theology under an Idrīsi Mullá, famed for his learning. He also became acquainted with the philosophy and the mystical tenets of the Shádhilīyya Order. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca and was initiated into some of the Darwish Orders. At Cairo he studied at the Al-Azhar, but the 'Ulamá' there denounced him as an innovator in religion and he had to leave the college. He gave a different reason for his departure. He said that, when making the waḍú', or ceremonial ablution before saying the namáz, a poor and mean looking man appeared and said, 'I am the Qutb of the age, go to Mecca.' He went and there placed himself under the guidance of the Shaykh of the Qádirīyya Darwishes, who for some cause or other was soon after expelled from Mecca. His pupil went with him, and on his master's death in 1833 claimed to be his successor. The majority of the members of the Order did not agree, and so Shaykh Sanúsi, as we must now call him, winning to his side some of his fellow Darwishes, founded a new Order. He called his teaching the Taríqat-i-Muḥammadí, or Path of Muḥammad, and said that his community was a branch of the Shádhilīyya Order. He declared that the Prophet had appeared to him and directed him to establish his Záwiyahs in many lands. In course of time they were so established in Arabia, Egypt, the Súdán, Tunis, Algiers, Sennegambia and the Eastern Archipelago. With this marvellous extension the power of the Order rapidly increased, with the result that in the minds of other Muslims a spirit of jealousy was aroused. The 'Ulamá' of Cairo, Constantinople

and Mecca were all ranged in opposition to him,¹ and so in 1855 he withdrew altogether from their influence and made his headquarters in the oasis of Jaghbúb, in the Libyan desert, midway between Egypt and Tripoli.² The Záwiyah there occupied a commanding position on one of the principle caravan routes. It was a fortress, a monastery and a theological school. It grew in importance after the conversion of the people of Wadai, of whom many came as students or as labourers. It was a place to which tributes of ivory, ostrich feathers and slaves were sent by many chiefs, and in which warlike materials were stored. Pilgrims on the way to Mecca halted there to worship at the tomb of the founder of the Sanúsiyya Order and to receive a blessing. Work now commenced amongst the negroes. He purchased slaves from the nomad Arabs, brought them to Jaghbúb, placed them under religious instruction and when they were fitted for it sent them as free

¹ A Mufti of the Málíkí school (madhab) of jurisprudence published in Cairo a book containing fatvas denouncing the Sanúsi Shaykh, who was charged with neglecting the rites prescribed by the great Imáms, the founders of the four schools of law, and with the non-acceptance of the authorized commentaries on the Qur'án and the Sunna. The fatvas may have had some influence in Mecca and in Cairo, but they had none amongst the nomadic tribes of Tripoli and the Súdán. The principle fatva is given in full by Depont et Coppolani in *Les Confréries Religieuses Musulmanes*, pp. 446-51.

² The Italians landed on the Libyan coast in October 1911. The Sanúsi Shaykh, who controlled the oasis in the interior of Libya, objected, and when Italy took part in the Great War the Shaykh joined the Turks and entered into it. For a time their combined forces met with a considerable measure of success. After peace was declared acts of aggression still continued and the possession of Jaghbúb became a necessity to the Italians; so in 1925 Egypt consented to the inclusion of Jaghbúb within the frontier of the Italian possessions. Provision was made for the freedom of caravans to and fro from Jaghbúb from taxation, and for freedom of access to the founder's tomb by Muslim pilgrims. Thus the Sanúsi Shaykh, by his foolish intervention in the Great War, lost a place so intimately associated with the rise of the famous Sanúsi Order of Darwishes.

men to their own countries as preachers of Islám. They were amongst his most faithful followers.

The transfer of the capital in 1894 to the Kufra oasis had lessened the importance of Jaghbúb, which after that event, and until the Italians took possession of it, was little more than the theological home of the Order in which hundreds of missionaries were trained as teachers and preachers and then sent forth for propaganda work into all parts of North Africa.

The Sanúsiyya Order is not only an organization to reform what its leaders consider lax in Islám; it is a powerful proselytizing body. The isolation of the desert life at Jaghbúb and the freedom thus gained from the opposition of the 'Ulamá', orthodox Mullás and Maulavis gave Shaykh Sanúsi that peace and tranquillity, which increased his spiritual and moral influence over his followers.¹

Shaykh Sanúsi died at Jaghbúb in 1859 and was buried there. His mausoleum in the great mosque there is a magnificent one and pilgrimages to it, instead of to Mecca, are common amongst his followers. He was a very remarkable man. Without shedding of blood or the calling in the aid of any temporal ruler, by the energy and force of his character, he raised up in the Ottoman Empire and its adjacent lands a theocratic system which was almost, if not quite, independent of any political Power. No obstacle checked him. He astonished the educated by his knowledge; he won the populace by the skilful adaptation of his doctrine to their needs and by the fervour of his methods. His great

¹See *Foreign Office Handbook*, Number 127, Italian Libya, p. 15.

object was to restore the original Islám, as he conceived it to have been. This led him to oppose modern innovations in Turkish rule and life. His desire was to raise an impassable barrier against Western civilization and the influence of the Christian Powers in Muslim lands.

He was succeeded by his son, 'Alí bin Sanúsí, a lad of thirteen years of age. He is now known as the Shaykhu'l-Mahdí. This name distinguishes him from his father. He assumed the administrative oversight of the Order whilst his brother Muḥammad Sharíf looked after the religious teaching. They were both very young, but their father had wisely appointed some of the ablest Muqaddams to be their leaders and guides. Muḥammad Sharíf died in 1895. His brother, the Shaykhu'l-Mahdí is reported to have died in Kanen in 1902. His son-in-law Sayyid Aḥmad succeeded him.

The Grand Council of the Order met from time to time at Jaghbúb. One councillor was in special charge of the Jaghbúb Záwiyah. In 1886 there were no less than 121 different Záwiyahs, all subject to the mother house at Jaghbúb, in which there were about four hundred Darwishes, gathered from many lands, ready to go wherever sent and to do whatever was ordered to be done. The inmates of the Záwiyah were armed and supplied with warlike stores and some artillery. The Order was rich in slaves, houses, sheep and camels. By a system of couriers communication was kept up with the distant Záwiyahs and so the Shaykhu was kept well informed of all that was going on. Travellers were received with suspicion and the privilege of an

audience with the Shaykhu was not easily obtained. This was one of the actions denounced in the fatva already alluded to. It says, 'The pretensions that this shutting of himself up, and of not receiving visitors, except at particular hours and then only after repeated requests, constitute the way (taríqat) of the Šúffís are simply lies.'

The Muqaddams have much influence over people who are not members of the Order. In many cases they are mere vassals, holding their lands by a sort of feudal tenure, liable to be called up for military service. In the large districts occupied by the Sanúsís, the principal person was not the Turkish Mutasarríf, but the Sanúsí Shaykhu.

In the annual Conference the temporal and spiritual affairs of the Order were discussed and plans for the future were made. In their propaganda work they largely used education in schools which they established and thus spread their views. In 1880 they went to the oasis of Farfara in the Libyan desert and in a few years changed the character of the people and acquired valuable property. Another way of reaching a new tribe was to purchase slaves from it and, after teaching Islám to them, to send them back as preachers to their own people. In this way they gained much success in the Wadai country, the Sultán of which became an enthusiastic adherent of the Sanúsí Shaykhu. In 1876 he died and the succession to the Sultánate was disputed. The Sanúsís stopped the internecine strife and secured the appointment of their nominee, who now became a loyal subject and held his office as a tributary to the Jaghbúb Záwiyah. The adjoining

State of Ennedi became a vassal one and all its inhabitants embraced Islām. The intelligent young men were sent to Jaghbūb to be fully trained under the personal direction of the Shaykh. The whole region round Lake Chād became more or less under Sanūsī influence. The large Zāwiyah of Al-Istāt in the Kufra oasis was second in importance to the one at Jaghbūb. It is situated in an almost unapproachable region and so in 1893 the Shaykh moved his headquarters to it. From a strategical point of view the place is important. Tripoli is now in the possession of the Italians, but their power does not extend far into the interior, the districts of which are in the hands of the Sanūsīs.

The hatred of the Sanūsīs to Muslims who submit to the political supremacy of the Christian Powers, or who would effect a compromise with Western civilization, was so great that good Muslims were exhorted to leave such countries as Turkey and Egypt. The Sanūsī Darwishes, in places where they are likely to meet opposition, assumed other names. In Turkey they appeared as members of the Qādirīyya Order, but their success there was small. In the Ṣaḥarā they have been more successful. They commenced work in Morocco in 1877 and established Zāwiyahs at Tangiers, Tetuan and Fez. There they sheltered themselves under the name of Darqāwīyya Order, with whose political views and tendencies they are in accord. They have many adherents among the Berber tribes. In 1873 they had gone as far as Senegal and Timbuktu with a view of winning the pagan people to Islām. In

Africa the Order has spread with great rapidity¹ and possesses much influence and power. In Asia there were some time ago twelve Zāwiyahs one being at Mecca. The Order was said to be popular in the Hijāz, but how it will fare under the present Wahhābi ruler is doubtful.

A point of some importance is the apparent readiness with which the Sanūsīyya Order assimilated itself with other religious Confraternities, especially with the Shahdhilīyya, the Tijānīyya and the Qādirīyya Orders.² A great French writer has said that 'these tactics constituted a grave political danger.'³ A man, without abandoning his own Order, might become a Sanūsī, provided he submitted to certain restrictions. The Sanūsīs, in fact, claim the support of a very large number of the other Orders, in whose Zāwiyahs its secret agents were to be found, who report to their own Shaykh all matters of importance. In the namāz, or public prayers, they conformed to the usual ritual, but their special Dhikr is known to and used only by themselves. They affirmed that the glory of God was their only aim, but they looked forward to a temporal kingdom, which the Theocracy they hope to see will be; but for the present they worked for that object in their own way, and that way was to avoid

¹ In 1909 the Rev. E. F. Wilson reported that the Sanūsīs were at Lokoja, a town in Upper Nigeria, and were giving much trouble (C. M. S. Report, 1900-1, p. 94); but the influence of the Sokoto Sultāns and the Hausa Chiefs has probably counteracted the Sanūsī propaganda. I have no later information as to how matters are now going on there.

² 'All these Orders or Confraternities, formerly divided seem, on the contrary, to-day to obey a common impulse, the origin of which is as yet unknown.' Frisch, *Le Maroc*, p. 186.

³ Duveyrier, *La Confrérie Musulmane*, p. 8. See also Frisch, *Le Maroc*, p. 180.

any entanglements with worldly Powers. They declined to help Turkey against the Russians; they refused to give any aid to Arabi Pasha's revolt or to the Mahdí in the Súdán. The Sanúsí Shaykh probably saw in the Mahdí, a member of the Qádiríyya Order, a possible rival, whose suppression would materially strengthen his own position. With this policy of aloofness was combined the encouragement of emigration from other lands to lands where Western civilization had not yet penetrated. In this way it was thought that the true believers might be gathered together and freed from the influence of the Christian Powers, and the scarcely less hated rule of the Sultán of Turkey and the Khedive of Egypt, who had not been able to resist the influence of modern civilization. The desert life, isolated from contaminating influence, was the ideal one.¹ The Sanúsís were thus enemies not only of the Christians but of the Turks also. The motto of the Order was, 'The Turks and the Christians are in the same category; we will destroy them both with the same blow.'² They were, however, drawn into the Great War, and on the side of their old enemy the Turks.³ The landing of the Italians on the Libyan coast in 1911 roused the anger of the Sanúsís, and when in 1915 the Italians joined the Allies in the war against Turkey, the

¹ 'The desert is the natural home for the contemplative religious life, and in the oases will be found masses of men, adepts in Sūfí mysticism.' Cooksey, *The Land of the Vanished Church*, p. 66.

² الترك والنصارى لكل فى رمزة نفهم فى مرة

³ In 1910 the young Turks solicited their aid in a pan-Islámic campaign. They held aloof for the claims of the Khalífa had no charm for them. They entered the war when the Italians came into it.

Sanúsís, under Turkish leadership, strongly and with some success¹ opposed them.

Núrí Bey and Ja'far Pasha,² a Turkish officer, supported by German influence won over the Sanúsí Shaykh, to whom the Kaiser sent the following letter:—

Praise be to the most High God, The Emperor William, son of Charlemagne, Alláh's envoy, Islám's protector, to the illustrious chief of the Sanúsís. We pray God to lead our armies to victory. Our will is that the victorious warriors shall expel infidels from territory that belongs to true believers and their commanders. To this end we send thee arms, money and tried chiefs. Our common enemy, whom may God annihilate, shall flee before thee.³

The Sanúsís were finally defeated in 1917 and Shaykh Aḥmad had to repent at leisure his folly in joining the Turks.

A contest, however, continued with the Italians after the conclusion of the Great War in 1918. In 1920 Sayyid Aḥmad, the Sanúsí Shaykh, received a large sum of money, paid in gold, under certain conditions. He took the gold, but did not fulfil the conditions and again took up arms against the Italians. These attempts proved futile and the Shaykh fled to Constantinople, leaving Sayyid Idrís as the head

¹ This was done although their military strength had been weakened when the French in 1910 occupied Wadai; it was still further broken by the British repulse of their attack in Egypt in 1916. The Sanúsís were able to bring at least 5,000 well-trained troops into the field, part of a much larger enemy force.

² Ja'far, a Mesopotamian Arab, was soon taken prisoner. In an attempt to escape from a prison in Cairo he injured himself. While in hospital he heard of the Arab Revolt and felt that he had been fighting on the wrong side. He was released and, as a Commander in Feisal's army, did such excellent service that he was given a C.M.G. When this distinction was bestowed on him, the guard of honour at the ceremony was the very troop of Dorset Yeomanry, which two years before had taken him prisoner. See *Lawrence and the Arabs*, pp. 146, 328.

³ *The Times History of the War*, part 112, p. 292.

of the Order. He had long been an aspirant to that office, but now has to be content with the spiritual oversight of the Order, for all hope of territorial aggrandizement has passed away.

The oasis of Jaghbúb contains the tomb of the founder of the Order and, 'when the Sanúsiyya Fraternity entered the lists against Italy, as it did after the outbreak of the Great War of 1914-18, it became a matter of some importance for Italy to bring within the recognized frontiers of her North African dominions a place, which, though insignificant in itself, was one of the religious centres of the Sanúsi Power.'¹ After numerous delays in settling the frontiers between Egypt and the Italian possessions, an agreement was reached in December, 1925 and Jaghbúb was recognized by the Egyptian Government as an Italian possession.²

When the question of the appointment of a new Khalífa was first mooted at Mecca, the Sanúsi Shaykh, Sayyid Aḥmad, hurried thither hoping that the Khalífate might be bestowed upon him. His chances of election were fairly good, for he was now friendly with the Turks, his prestige as a fighter for Islám was high and there were several Sanúsiyya Záwiyahs in the Híjáz; but he foolishly advocated pilgrimages to the tomb of the wives of the Prophet. This was too much for Ibn Sa'úd's iconoclastic zeal and Sayyid Aḥmad was forthwith sent about his business in disgrace and with hopes unfulfilled.

The reason for the founding of new Orders, such

¹ Toynebee, *Survey of International Affairs*, pp. 185-6.

² For a full account of the war against the Sanúsís, see the *Foreign Office Handbook, Libya*, pp. 18-30.

as that of the Sanúsiyya is to be found in the need felt by large bodies of Muslims for clear direction and supervision, and for something which would give them spiritual solidarity. This the Sanúsiyya Order has sought to give by setting before itself as one of its grand objects the federation of all the various Orders in one great pán-Islámic movement; but fortunately many of the other Orders do not approve of this plausible attempt at absorption. The French in Algiers are perfectly aware of the danger in their midst.¹ A very large number of the inhabitants are connected with different Orders. As a rule they are simple, credulous, people, obedient to their Shaykhs. But of all the Orders the Sanúsiyya is the most dangerous and the most powerful for evil.

The most recent Muslim Confraternity is that of the Ikhwán or Brothers, organized by the present (1927) ruler of Najd in Arabia, 'Abdu'l-'Azíz ibn Sa'úd. It is not exactly a Darwish Order, but it is a compact body of men, devoted to the propagation of Wahhábí principles and fanatical in their procedure. Its influence over the Bedouin tribes is very great. The early Khalífas placed bodies of troops in places, such as Kúfa and Baṣra, where there was a likelihood of disaffection; in like manner Ibn Sa'úd has placed colonies of the Ikhwán in various parts of his dominions. 'The Ikhwán movement, which is nothing but a Wahhábí revival in an intensified form, is the result not of accident,

¹ 'The Sanúsiyya Order is the irreconcilable enemy and really dangerous to the French rule in North Africa, in Algeria, Tunis and Senegal.' Duveyrier, *La Confrérie Musulmane*, p. 14. Silva White says, 'Algeria is honeycombed with Sanúsi intrigues. So vast a combination is fraught with danger to the peace of Africa.' *From Sphinx to Oracle*, p. 125.

but of a well-considered design, contrived with no less a purpose than that of remedying the shortcomings of the Arab race, and of checking before it is too late the insidious processes of decay.¹

In 1925 there was a Kurdish revolt in which members of the religious Orders were suspected of having taken part. In fact the Shaykh of the Naqshbandiyya Order was the leader of the revolt. He was defeated, captured and, with forty of his companions, nine of whom were Shaykhs, was executed. An order was also passed for the closing of all the Darwish Zāwiyahs in the Eastern Vilayets. The government now realized that the Darwishes were determined enemies to reforms.

So in September 2, 1925, the Angora Government passed three administrative decrees. 'The first one closed all religious homes (Zāwiyahs) and abolished the religious Orders in Turkey; prohibited individuals from living as members of Orders and from wearing the costumes or bearing the titles connected therewith; closed all chapels (musjids) attached to religious houses and all mausoleums and abolished the office of custodians of such establishments.'² In the Ottoman Empire the Darwishes no longer find any home.

From this sketch of these important movements and of the part played by the great Darwish Orders in the propagation of Islām, especially in Africa, it will be seen how urgent is the call to Mission work in that great continent, lest before the Gospel can reach the pagan races they should be converted to

¹ Toynbee, *The Survey of International Affairs*, p. 277.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

Islām. We may fairly accept the position that Islām, in some respects, raises a pagan tribe to a higher level of life and conduct and yet, in the interests of social, of moral life and of religious belief, and so in the best interests of mankind, we may view the conversion of such tribes to Islām with much concern. No well-wisher of even the most degraded race can desire that it should be permanently fixed at what, after all, is a low level of conduct, and that an almost impassable barrier should be placed in the way of its rising to a higher stage of life by the acceptance of a purer and more elevating faith. Never before has the crisis been so acute. The Muslim advance in Africa has been so constant and so rapid that the speedy evangelization of the pagan races there is the most urgent work, which the Church is now invited to enter upon. If it is not done without delay many tribes will be almost irretrievably lost, for the teeming millions of Africa will have entered into the fold of Islām. The wonderful and inspiring history of the Uganda Mission shows how a once pagan nation, won for Christ and formed into an enlightened progressive Christian State, provides an effectual barrier to the progress of Islām in that region.

VI

THE QUR'ÁN

IT is said that God chose the sacred month of Ramaḍán in which to give all the revelations that in the form of books have been given to mankind. Thus on the first night of that month the books of Abraham came down from heaven; on the sixth, the books of Moses; on the thirteenth, the Injíl or Gospel; and on the twenty-seventh, the Qur'án. On that night, the Laylatu'l-Qadr, or 'night of power,' the whole Qur'án is said to have descended to the lowest of the seven heavens, from whence it was brought by the angel Gabriel to Muḥammad as occasion required. 'Verily, we have caused it (the Qur'án) to descend on the night of power' (Súratu'l-Lail xcii. 1). 'The Qur'án,' says Ibn Khaldún, 'was sent from heaven in the Arab tongue, and in a style conformable to that in which the Arabs were wont to express their thoughts. It was revealed phrase by phrase, verse by verse, as it was needed, whether for manifesting the doctrine of the Unity of God, or for expounding the obligations to which men ought to submit in this world. In the one case we have the proclamation of the dogmas of faith; in the other the prescriptions which regulate the actions of men.'¹

The night on which the Qur'án descended is

¹ *Les Prolégomènes d'ibn Khaldún* (de Slane's translation, ed. Paris 1863), vol. ii, p. 458.

called the blessed night, the night when angels came down by the permission of their Lord, the night which brings peace and blessing until the rising dawn. Muḥammad used to retire for solitary meditation to the cave of Hírá',¹ and there on this night he heard a voice saying, 'Recite² thou, in the name of thy Lord who created man from clots of blood' (Súratu'l-'Alaq xcvi). He was much alarmed and hastened to his wife Khadíja and stated his fears. She assured him that he was under God's protection and that no harm would come to him. When he calmed down and told her exactly what had happened, she bade him be of good cheer, for he would certainly be the Prophet of the people. 'Áyisha, a later wife of the Prophet, is reported to have said that Khadíja now took her husband to see Waraqa, a Haníf, who, according to Bukhárí, had been a Nazarene in the days of ignorance, and bade him listen to what had just occurred. Then Waraqa said, 'This is the Námús which God sent down upon Moses.' The tradition is recorded by Bukhárí, and the commentators on it say that this Námús, which means the possessor of a secret, is 'none other than Gabriel.'³ After the first revelation for a time there was no further one. This period is called the Fatra and it lasted two or three years. It was a period of anxious suspense during which no inspiration (waḥí) came to him. At last, one day Muḥammad heard a voice from heaven and saw the

¹ Sell, *Life of Muḥammad*, p. 24.

² Baiḳáwí says the recital is by the tongue of Gabriel and adds an order to the Prophet 'recite it and repeat it till it remains in thy memory.'

³ See the *Ṣaḥíḥu'l-Bukhárí* on Súratu'l-'Alaq xcvi, vol. iii, pp. 381-2.

angel which had formerly appeared to him. Much agitated, he rushed home and called upon Khadīja to cover him with a cloth. She did so and then God revealed the Súratu'l-Muddaththir lxxiv, which commences thus, 'O thou, enwrapped in thy mantle, arise and warn.' According to Bukhārī the steady and regular flow of the revelation of the Qur'án then commenced, or, as he puts it, 'inspiration became warm' (*fahamiya al-wahī*).¹

The following verses refer to the revelation of the Qur'án. 'We have sent down to thee an Arabic² Qur'án' (Súratu Tá Há xx. 112). 'Verily from the Lord of the world hath this book come down; the faithful spirit (Rúhu'l-Ámín) hath come down with it' (Súratu'sh-Shu'ará' xxvi. 193); also 'The Qur'án is no other than a revelation revealed to him, one terrible in power (Shadídu'l-Qawá) taught it to him' (Súratu'n-Najm liii. 5). 'The Holy Spirit (Rúhu'l-Quds) hath brought it down with truth from the Lord' (Súratu'n-Nahl xvi. 104). The terms mentioned in these verses are said to refer to Gabriel, and this view is confirmed by a verse in a late Madína Súra which reads as follows: 'Say, whoso is the enemy of Gabriel, for he it is who by God's leave hath caused the Qur'án to descend on thy heart' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 91). The words in Súratu'l-Qiyámat lxxv. 18, 'when we have recited, then follow thou the recital,' show

¹ *Sahíhu'l-Bukhārī*, vol. i, p. 6.

² Yet Jalálu'd-Dín As-Syútí in the *Mutawakkil* mentions one hundred and seven foreign words. Al-Kindí in his apology refers to this fact as a defect either in the messenger, or in the message. 'If there be in the Arabic language no words to express the ideas, then the medium of communications, and therefore the message itself, is imperfect; if otherwise, the messenger?' *Apology of Al-Kindí*, translated by Muir, p. 30.

clearly that the Qur'án is an objective revelation, and that Muhammad was only a passive medium of communication. This is made quite clear by Ibn Khaldún, who says,¹ 'Of all the divine books, the Qur'án is the only one of which the text, words and phrases have been communicated to a prophet by an audible voice. It is otherwise with the Pentateuch, the Gospel and the other divine books; the prophets received them in the form of ideas.' This mechanical mode of inspiration is called *wahī* in contradistinction to the mode of inspiration described as employed in the case of other prophets, which is called *ilhám*. Ghazálí defines *wahī* thus: 'The recipient knows the medium by which he receives it, that it is an angel; *ilhám* is defined as information received in an unknown way, it is a breathing into the heart (*nafakha fi qalb*).' On account of the peculiar nature of its inspiration the Qur'án is esteemed as a miraculous revelation of divine eloquence, as to form and substance and in its arrangement of words.² By this alleged wonderful miracle of the Qur'án, called the 'cream and compendium of all the heavenly books,' the Prophet felt sure of carrying conviction to a large number of persons.

Early in his Meccan career the Prophet challenged any one to produce a book equal in style to the Qur'án. 'Will they say, "He hath forged it himself?" Nay, rather it is that they believed not. Let them produce a discourse like it, if they speak the truth' (Súratu't-Túr lii. 34-5). 'Were men and jinn associated to produce the like of

¹ *Prolegomenes d'Ibn Khaldún*, vol. ii, p. 195.

² *Takmilu'l-Islám*, pp. 14, 21.

the Qur'án, they could not produce its like' (Súratu Bani Isrá'íl xvii. 19). 'If they shall say, "The Qur'án is his own device," say, "Then bring ten Súras like it of your devising"' (Súratu Húd xi. 10). 'If ye be in doubt as to that which we have sent down to our servant, then produce a Súra like it' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 21).

Muslims now say that no Arab could produce any thing like the Qur'án. If this refers to the subject matter of the book, obviously the Quraysh could not do so, for they did not believe in its dogmas; then, as no one could reproduce the individuality of Muḥammad, stamped upon his book, he could safely challenge any one to produce its like. If the superiority claimed lies in the form and expression, then, if we examine the Qur'án by the rules of rhetoric and criticism accepted by Muslim scholars, we shall see that the Qur'án is a perfect model, for the principles of rhetoric are drawn from it.¹ It is looked upon as the perfect standard and unapproachable, so obviously no composition could surpass or even equal it in the eyes of such judges. There is not, however, a consensus of opinion as to wherein the superiority consists. Some authorities say it lies in its eloquence, or in its subject matter, or in the harmony of its parts. Anyhow, its alleged superiority over all other books is held to be a proof

¹ 'Al-Mukaffa, Al-Mutanabbí and a few others, who did not hold very orthodox opinions, assayed in some of their writings to surpass the style of the Qur'án, but their attempt was naturally considered to be a failure. Were we to examine the Qur'án by the rules of rhetoric and criticism as they are taught in Muslim schools, we should be obliged to acknowledge that it is the perfection of thought and exposition; an inevitable result as the Muslims drew their principles of rhetoric from that very book.' De Slane in the Introduction to Ibn Khallikan's *Biographical Dictionary*, vol. 1, p. 17.

of its miraculous origin, and so, quite apart from questions as to its actual nature, the Qur'án is looked upon as the standing miracle of Islām.

In Súratu'l-'Abasa lxxx. 13-15 the Qur'án is described as 'written on honoured pages, exalted, purified, by the hands of scribes, honoured and righteous.' The old interpretation of this verse was that the Qur'án was written in Paradise, at God's dictation, by the 'hand of Angels.' The commentator Ḥusayn says that 'Angels copied it from the Preserved Table.' A Qádiání commentator says the scribes were Abú Bakr, 'Uthmán and 'Alí who made copies of what the Prophet said. But such copies of the Qur'án are not known to have existed, and had there been any such copies the two recensions would not have been necessary.¹ Bell says that it is more natural to suppose that it refers to the current Bible so carefully preserved by Jews and Christians.²

In Súratu'z-Zukhruf xliii. 3 the Qur'án is described as 'a transcript of the archetypal Book kept by us' (that is, God). Literally the words are 'Mother of the Book' (Ummu'l-Kitáb). In the *Tafsír-i-Ḥusaynî* this term is said to mean this, 'the original of all the heavenly books is kept free from change in the Preserved Table' (Lauḥu'l-Maḥfúz).³ Baidáwí also calls it the 'original of the heavenly books.'³ A Qádiání commentator says, 'It signifies the original source from which the Qur'án comes, and its meaning is that the Qur'án cannot be

² *The Origin of Islām in its Christian Environment*, p. 94.

³ أصل هم الكتب السماوية در لوح المحفوظ كه أيمن از تغير

أصل الكتب السماوية

destroyed because it exists in Divine knowledge' (*Holy Qur'án*, p. 943). This comment ignores the fact of the term being used for the origin of other books besides the Qur'án, and so the impossibility of their destruction. We are not told in which language the Ummu'l-Kitáb was written, but if, as Ḥusayn and Baidáwí say, it is the original of *all* the heavenly books, it could scarcely have been in Arabic. Again, if, as coming from it, the Qur'án cannot be destroyed, so all the other heavenly books which proceed from the same source must be 'safe from change,' and the Taurát and the Injíl must also 'exist in the Divine knowledge and remain for ever as authoritative revelations.'

The Qur'án is often praised for the emphasis it lays on the doctrine of the Unity of God, but it has been well said that, 'there is no charm in the abstract doctrine of the unity of God to elevate mankind. The essential point is the character attributed to the One God. In Islám the knowledge of God is a fixed quantity revealed in a book, the mind of man has no capacity to understand it.'¹ Speaking of the attributes of God as stated in the Qur'án, Professor Gwatkin says, 'They tell us nothing of the character behind them; so far as these (first) four go they might be an almighty evil.'² There are ninety-nine names of God, called 'the most excellent names' (Al-asmá'u'l-Ḥusna), but amongst them the name of Father is not found. Man must ever be to God in the relation of a slave; in Islám he can never attain to the dignity and

freedom of a son. The fundamental conception of man's relation to God which the Qur'án sets forth as infallible truth is expressed in the following words, 'Verily there is none in the Heavens and in the Earth-but shall approach the God of mercy as a servant ('abd)' (Súratu Maryan xix. 94). In this respect it falls below even Judaism. 'Man, the servant of the Highest, is the keynote of Islám; man, the friend, the son of God is the keynote of the Law (Taurát).'

The question of the eternal nature of the Qur'án has been the subject of much controversy amongst Muslim theologians of the past. It is intimately connected with the various theories about the nature of God's attributes (Ṣifát). We need only consider that portion of the controversy which deals with the question as to whether the attributes are eternal or not.¹ It is said that the Qur'án pre-existed in the thought of God as did everything else, for 'everything have we set down in the clear book of our decrees' (Súratu Yá Sín xxxvi. 11). To this the reply is that only the substance of the Qur'án had its existence in the divine essence in a different way to that by which the actions of men are foreknown; so it existed as a divine attribute. But the Qur'án is not simply a record of general statements concerning divine attributes; the greater part of it is taken up with stories of the prophets, political affairs and the domestic concerns of the Prophet. If all these comparatively trivial matters pre-existed in the mind of God, then what superiority has the Qur'án over

¹ Osborn, *Islám under the Arabs*, p. 7.
² *The Knowledge of God*, vol. ii, p. 120.

¹ For a full account of the general question in dispute, see *The Faith of Islám* (4th ed.), pp. 217-43.

other events which God foreknew. To make finite historical matters part of the eternal, living attributes of God is to associate the finite with the essence of the infinite God. And so the controversy went on.¹

The Šifátians, according to Shahrastání, 'taught that the attributes of God are eternally inherent in His essence, without separation or change. Each attribute is conjoined with Him as life with knowledge, or knowledge with power.'² The Asha'rians somewhat modified that view. They said that the attributes of God are distinct from His essence, yet in such a way as to forbid any comparison being made between God and His creatures. They say that the attributes are neither 'ain nor ghair, that is, not of His essence nor distinct from it. The Mu'tazilís took a different view altogether. They say that 'God is eternal, and that eternity is the peculiar property of His essence; but they deny the existence of any eternal attributes (as distinct from His nature). Knowledge, power, life are part of His essence; otherwise, if they are to be looked upon as eternal attributes of the Deity, it will give rise to a multiplicity of eternal entities.'³

We shall now see how this dispute, this difference of opinion, is connected with the Qur'án. The seventh attribute of Kalám, or speech, is thus defined: 'God speaks, but not with a tongue as men do. He speaks to some of His servants without the intervention of another, even as He spoke to

¹ See an interesting discussion on this question in Gairdner's *Inspiration*, pp. 30-3. It is published by the C.L.S.

² *Milal wa'n-Nihál*, p. 67.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

Moses and to Muḥammad on the night of the ascension to heaven (Mí'rāj). He speaks to others by the instrumentality of Gabriel and this is the usual way in which He communicates His will to the prophets. It follows from this that the Qur'án is the word (Kalám) of God and is eternal and uncreated.'¹ Thus Kalám mean not mere speech, but revelation and every other mode of communicating intelligence. Al-Ghazálí makes an important statement on the orthodox side. 'He doth speak, command, forbid, promise and threaten by an eternal ancient word, subsisting in His essence.'

'The Qur'án, the Law, the Gospel and the Psalter are sent down by Him to His apostles, and the Qur'án, indeed, is read with tongues, written in books and is kept in hearts yet, as subsisting in the essence of God, it doth not become liable to separation and division whilst it is transferred into the hearts and on to paper.'² An-Nasafi (died A.H. 53) says, 'He whose majesty is majestic speaks with a word (Kalám). This word is a quality from

¹ Garim de Tassy *L'Islamisme d'après le Coran*, p. 154. Al-Asha'ri, the great opponent of the Mu'tazilís, said, 'The Word of God exists in the mind of God and is, therefore, eternal and uncreated. The Qur'án is the manifestation of that Word; but the vocal sounds through which the Word was made known to the Prophet are created.' The Mu'tazilís hold that the Qur'án was created (see *The Faith of Islam*, pp. 259-67). The commentator Zamakhsharí in his introduction to the *Kasháf* wrote, 'Praise be to God who hath created the Qur'án.' He was told that, on seeing this, people would not read his commentary, so he substituted for the word *created* the word *established*, which to the Mu'tazilís means the same thing. See Ibn Khallikan, vol. iii, p. 323. The Ibádíyya in Oman use Zamakhsharí's commentary.

² The orthodox believe the Kalám to be of God's nature (Qá'im bi Dh'átihi, as other attributes are, without reference to letters and sounds (*Báz'u'l-ma'áni*, p. 14). Others say it has two meanings (1) the eternal Word inherent in God's essence, and (2) the spoken word created by God.

all eternity. The Qur'án is the uncreated word of God.' Thus these divines looked upon the Qur'án as the eternal Word inherent in God's essence.

Now against all this—the Mu'tazilís bring the following objections:¹ (1) The Qur'án is written in Arabic, it descended, is read, is heard and is written. It is divided into parts and some verses are abrogated by others. (2) Events are described in the past tense, but, if the Qur'án had been eternal, the future tense would have been used. (3) The Qur'án contains commands and prohibitions; if it is eternal who were commanded and who were admonished. (4) If it existed from eternity, it must exist to eternity, and so even in the last Day and in the next world men will be under the obligation of performing the same religious duties as they do now, and of keeping all the outward precepts of the Law. (5) If the Qur'án is eternal, then there are two eternals. (6) Men can produce its like in eloquence and arrangement. A man, named Naḍír ibn Ḥáaritha, was bold enough to accept the challenge, and arranged some stories of the Persian kings in chapters and Súras and recited them. He is evidently alluded to in Súratu Luqmán xxxi. 5 in the following words, 'A man² there is who brings an idle tale, that in his lack of knowledge he may mislead others from the way of God and turn it to scorn. For such is prepared a shameful punishment.' This proved to be the case. Naḍír was taken

¹ For fuller details, see *Takmilu'l-Islám*, p. 60 and 'Aqá'id-i-Jámí, p. 83.

² Baidáwí, *Tafsír*, vol. ii, p. 119, and Ḥusayn, *Tafsír*, vol. i, p. 183, identify this man as Naḍír.

prisoner at the battle of Badr. Ransom was refused and he was put to death. Naturally no one else attempted to undertake so perilous a work.

The Mu'tazilís by asserting the subjective nature of inspiration brought the Qur'án within reach of criticism. They recognized both the divine and the human side of the book. As a sect the Mu'tazilís passed away,¹ but in recent times there has been a slight revival of their views. Syed 'Amír 'Alí has openly declared that he belongs to this school of thought,² and the late learned Maulavi Cherágh 'Alí ranged himself on the same side. He said, 'A prophet feels that his mind is illumined by God, and the thoughts which are expressed by him, or spoken, or written under that influence are to be regarded as the words of God. This illumination differs in the prophet, according to the capacity of the recipient, or according to the circumstances—religious and moral—in which he is placed.'³

We may now pass on to consider briefly the sources of the Qur'án.⁴ It does not appear that Muḥammad had any acquaintance with the contents of the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible was not translated into Arabic until long after his time.⁵ So he gained

¹ For the story of the conflict between the orthodox party and the Mu'tazilís, and of the persecutions on both sides, see *The Faith of Islám* (4th ed.), pp. 243 ff.

² *Personal Law of the Mahomedans*, p. xi.

³ *Critical Exposition of Jihād*, p. lxix.

⁴ For fuller details see Tisdall's *Sources of the Qur'án*, and his *Religion of the Crescent* (S.P.C.K.); Blair's *The Sources of Islám* (C.L.S.); Geiger's *Judaism and Islám* (Diocesan Press, Madras); *Yanābī'u'l-Islám* (Religious Book Society, Lahore).

⁵ See Rodwell's *Qur'án*, p. 11. The Old Testament was translated in A.D. 900 and the New Testament in A.D. 1171.

his information from the Talmudic Literature,¹ made known to him by the Jews, his friends at Mecca, and to the Apocryphal Gospels. The following are some examples of information thus gained.

There is a great similarity between the importance given in orthodox Judaism to the Oral Law, believed to have been handed down by tradition from Moses, and the importance attached to the Sunna, the Oral Law of Islâm, based on the traditional accounts of the Prophet's words and deeds. In both communities, the Oral Law is held to be divinely inspired, and to be authoritative in matters of faith and practice. 'Hence, too, sprung the idea, so deeply rooted among Muslims, that obedience to the latter, which they held to be God's law, will atone for sin.'²

Rabbi Jehudah relates how, after the Fall, the Angels said, 'Sovereign of the world, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him. He is altogether vanity.' The LORD replied that he too uttered praise and called on them to name the animals. They could not, then Adam stood up and did so. In Sûratu'l-Baqara ii. 28-32 this event is related in almost the same words, to which, however, is added the command to the angels to bow down and worship Adam which all did except Iblîs.

In the Midrashim the burial of Abel is thus related. His dog guarded the corpse and Adam did

¹ The Babylonian Gemara was finished about the year A.D. 530; the Jerusalem Gemara in A.D. 539 and the Mishnah about A.D. 200; so all these would be well known to the Jews in Arabia.

² Tisdall, *The Religion of the Crescent*, p. 161.

not know how to bury it. A raven was there and by its side was a dead raven. The live bird made a hole in the ground and buried the dead one. Adam saw this and said, 'I will do as the raven has done,' and so Abel was buried. This legend is incorporated in Sûratu'l-Mâ'ida v. 35, an early Madîna Sûra. Muḥammad slightly altered it by saying that the raven showed Cain, not Adam, how to bury the body.

In the *Pirke Rabbi Eliezer*, Rabbi Zadok is reported as saying that from the union of the sons of God with the daughters of men (Gen. vi. 2) sprang a race of giants. It is also said that two angels, Shambazi and Azazel were now allowed to descend upon the earth. One of them tried to seduce the maiden Ishtahar. She said that he must first teach her the explicit name of God, so that by its aid she might rise up to heaven. The angel taught it to her, and at once she soared up to the heavens and was placed by God as a star in the Pleiades to be seen for ever. In Sûratu'l-Baqara ii. 96 we have a similar story of the angels Hârût and Mârût to whom sorcery had been revealed. In the Muslim story, the beautiful woman Zuhra is introduced. She leads the angels astray and is changed into a shooting star and so disappeared.¹

A Rabbinical legend states that at the time of the Flood, men mocked and said that, if the waters rose up from the depths, they would stop up the

¹ For a full account see *The Faith of Islâm* (4th ed.), pp. 281-4. These angels seem to have been worshipped in ancient times and in the *Avesta* are called Haurvat and Ameretat. See Tisdall's *Sources of the Qur'ân*, p. 99; *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. iv, p. 618.

holes with their feet. Then the Holy One so heated the waters that their feet were burnt. In *Sûratu'l-Mu'minûn* xxiii. 28 it is said in connection with these men who mocked Noah that 'The earth's surface *boiled up*' and in *Sûratu Hûd* xi. 42 it is said that 'until the sentence came to pass, and the earth's surface *boiled up*.' It was a Rabbinical notion that the generation of the Deluge was punished by hot water; the Qur'ân adopted the Rabbinical view.

Abraham is said to have been brought out of Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. xv. 7). Now Ur also means fire, and is so translated in Isa. xlv. 16. The legend is that he was cast into a fiery furnace. The Qur'ân gives the legend in a slightly different form, but accepts it, and, after describing Abraham's trial, represents his judges as saying to the fire, 'burn him,' and describes God as saying, 'O fire! be thou cold and to Abraham a safety!' *Sûratu'l-Anbiyâ'* xxi. 68-9.

In the Midrash of Rabbi Eliezer an account of the command to sacrifice Isaac is given and many curious details are added to the simple Scripture account. A ram¹ came running by and Abraham offered up the ram instead of Isaac. In the *Book of Jubilees* xvii a similar account is given. The incident is referred in the Qur'ân in *Sûratu's-Şaffât* xxxvii. 100-9. It is there said that Isaac was 'ransomed with a costly victim.' The *Tafsîr-i-Husayni* says that this refers to the ram which Abel had offered in sacrifice, and that it was now again

¹ For legends about this ram see my *Talmud, Mishnah and Midrash*, p. 38.

used by Abraham for a similar purpose.¹ This shows that the account given is taken from Rabbinical legends.

In *Sotah*, xii. 2, it is said of the infant Moses that he refused the breast of all the Egyptian women, for the Holy One, blessed be He, had said, 'Shall the mouth that is to speak with me suck an unclean thing?' In the Qur'anic account of the finding of Moses it is said, 'We caused him to refuse the nurses, until his sister came and said, "Shall I point out to you the family of a house that will rear him." So we restored him to his mother.' *Sûratu'l-Qaşaş* xxviii. 2-12.

In *Sûratu'l-A'raf* vii. 105, Muḥammad says that, in the presence of Pharaoh, Moses as a sign 'drew forth his hand, and lo! it was white (leprous) to the beholders.' This is not a Biblical statement, but one borrowed from Rabbi Eliezer's Midrash in which it is said, 'He placed his hand in his bosom, and drew it forth white as snow with leprosy.'

Rabbi Akiba describes the hesitation of the Egyptians to follow the Israelites through the Red Sea. Then the Holy One appeared before them riding on a mare and went forward. Pharaoh's horse pursued the mare. Pharaoh could not restrain it and so had to enter the spot which the Israelites and just passed over. His men followed him. The waters then returned and all were drowned. In the *Qişaşu'l-Anbiyâ'* (p. 210) this legend is reproduced almost verbatim, and published as a traditional saying of the Prophet. Muslim theologians never

¹ For fuller details of the Muslim view of the legend, see *Qişaşu'l-Anbiyâ'*, p. 87.

acknowledge their borrowings from Rabbinical Judaism.

In *Chagigah* xvi. 1, we read that 'the demons learn by listening behind the veil what is revealed in heaven to the angels.' In *Berechoth* vi. 1 a long account is given of the activities of the demons and how they worry and annoy the Rabbis. Now this idea of the listening by angels and demons has found a place in Muslim theology. A tradition (*hadîth*), recorded on the authority of 'Āyisha, states that evil angels listen and hear the orders given to the good angels, and then give the information gathered to the magicians. The tradition is apparently based on the Qur'ân, which again is based on Rabbinical statements. Thus in *Sûratu'l-Hijr* xv. 26-8 we read, 'We have set the signs of the Zodiac in the heavens . . . and we guard them from every stoned Satan, save such as steal a hearing, and him doth a visible flame pursue,' and also 'We have adorned the lower heavens with the adornment of the stars, they also serve as a guard against every rebellious Satan that they overhear not what passeth in the assembly on high.' *Sûratu's-Saffât* xxxvii. 6-9.¹ The signs of the Zodiac keep away the prying demons, the Talmudic story about whom was evidently well known to the Prophet. The idea of a 'stoned Satan' is kept alive in the ceremony of the *Hajj*, known as the *Ramy'l-jamr*, the casting of stones at three pillars, representing three great devils.

In the *Book of Jubilees* it is said that the Law,

¹ See *The Faith of Islâm* (4th ed.), p. 408.

though revealed in time, had previously been written in heaven by God, and engraven on 'heavenly tablets' (iii. 31; vi. 17; xxx. 20; xlix. 8) and kept safely guarded by angels from the beginning. So an angel brought from heaven seven tablets to Jacob (xxxii. 21). This idea of the pre-mundane existence of the Torah and of its inscription on tablets was well known to the Jews at Madîna, and, therefore, probably known to Muḥammad. Anyhow it is a curious coincidence that we read in *Sûratu'l-Burûj* lxxxv. 21-2, the words 'yet it is a glorious Qur'ân, written on the Preserved Table (*Lauhul-Mahfûz*).' At Mecca the opponents of the Prophet called his statements, 'Fables of the ancients that he hath put in writing and they were dictated to him morning and evening' (*Sûratu'l-Furqân* xxv. 6); and 'A certain person' teacheth him' (*Sûratu'n-Nahl* xvi. 103); but these are the words of his enemies and so too much stress must not be laid on them.

In the *Book of Enoch* xlvi. 3 concerning the Judgement Day we read, 'In those days I saw the Head of Days, when He seated himself upon the throne of His glory, and the books of the living were opened before Him.' And in the *Book of Jubilees* xxx. 22 we read, 'If they transgress and work uncleanness in every way, they will be recorded in the heavenly tablets as adversaries and they will be destroyed out of the book of life, and they will be recorded in the book of those who will be destroyed.' In *Baruch* xxiv. 1 we read, 'For

¹ Baiḍāwī says that this was Salmân the Persian.

behold! the days come and the books shall be opened on which are written the sins of those who have sinned, and again also the treasures in which the righteousness of all those who have been righteous in creation is gathered.' The Apocalyptic books were known to the Jews at Madína and so this idea may have been passed on. We find the same idea in the Qur'án. The deeds of men are said to be entered in books which will be produced at the Last Day. Then 'He into whose right hand his book shall be given, shall be reckoned with an easy reckoning, and he whose book shall be given behind his back (that is, into his left hand) shall invoke destruction' Súratu'l-Inshiqáq lxxxiv. 8-11.

In *The Testament of Abraham* mention is made of two recording angels; so in the Qur'án we read of two fierce angels. Munkar and Nakír, who visit every man in his grave and examine him with regard to his faith in God and in Muḥammad.¹ Muslims look forward with great dread to this ordeal. The poet Ma'arrí contrasts with it the happy state of the Hindus thus:—

The Hindus who cremate their dead and never visit them again,

Win peace from straitness of the grave, and ordeals from the angels twain.²

The Apocryphal Gospels are made much use of in narrating the history of the Virgin Mary, who is confused with Miriam, the sister of Aaron. In Súratu Áli 'Imrán iii. 39 we read, 'To thee (Muḥammad) do we reveal it, for thou wast not with them when they cast lots with reeds which of them should

¹ Súratu Muḥammad xlvii. 29 is said to refer to these angels.

² Nicholson, *Studies in Islāmic Poetry*, p. 138.

rear Mary, nor with them when they disputed about it.' This agrees with a fable then well known. In the *Protevangelium Jacobi Minoris* (second century A.D.) we read, 'He (the priest) gave to each one his rod, and a dove came forth from the rod and flew upon Joseph's head, and the priest said to him, "Thou hast obtained by lot to receive the Virgin of the Lord."'

In Súratu Maryam xix. 23, 25 it is said, 'The throes came upon her by the trunk of a palm . . . and one cried to her, "Shake the trunk of the palm-tree toward thee: It will drop fresh ripe dates upon thee."' The legend is found in the *History of the Nativity of Mary* (fifth or sixth century A.D.) and in the *Infancy of the Saviour*.²

The legend about Christ speaking in the cradle and of his making birds of clay and breathing life into them (Súratu'l-Má'ida v. 109-10) is taken from the *Apocryphal Gospel of Thomas the Israelite*.³

In Súratu'n-Nisá' iv. 156 it is said, 'They slew him (Jesus) not, and they crucified him not, but only his likeness.'⁴ This is the view of the Gnostic heretic Basilides and of Manes or Mani.⁵

² *Chrestomathia Baidāwana*, pp. 28, 159. For the original Greek, see *Yanābī'u'l-Islām*, p. 133.

³ *Yanābī'u'l-Islām*, p. 123.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁵ Bell in the *Origin of Islām in its Christian Environment*, p. 155 has some remarks on this subject and points out that Muḥammad believed that prophets were always delivered from the catastrophe, and he knew that Christians believed in a living Christ. 'In that, I think, we have sufficient to generate in Muḥammad's mind the account which he gives, without attributing to him any intimate knowledge of Christian speculation, or supposing him to have been influenced by obscure sects. Muḥammad believed in the human nature of Christ and did not accept the docetic view of His person, though he accepted the conclusion these heretics drew from their principles in denying His actual crucifixion.'

⁶ See Rodwell's Koran, p. 427 and note and *Yanābī'u'l-Islām*, pp. 149-50 for the exact words of Basilides. On the subject of borrowing

For an account of the immaculate conception of Jesus, see *Súratu'l-Anbiyá'* xxi. 91; *Súratu 'Alí 'Imrán* iii. 52.¹

The material gained from Jewish Apocalyptic literature may have come partly through Christian channels, for after the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 the Jews paid less attention to the Apocalypses,² the books of which were preserved by the Christian Church, and it was in popular rather than in official Christianity that Apocalyptic was really alive. So it was easy for Muḥammad to gather some notions of it from Christians in Arabia, with whom at first, at least, he was friendly.

In addition to the material collected from Rabbinical sources, we also find credence given to legends in no way connected with the previous Scriptures. The fable of the Seven Sleepers and the story of the meeting of Moses with Al-Khiḍr, who is supposed to have lived in the time of Abraham, are given in *Súratu'l-Kahf* xviii. 8-27, 64-81. All the principal Muslim commentators say that, though his name is not mentioned in the *Qur'án*, Al-Khiḍr is the servant referred to in v. 64. These were popular stories in the East, and are now reproduced as part of a divine revelation.

'The biblical lore of the Prophet is a truly marvellous farrago. It is very difficult to discern with any certainty where he got it; probably he hardly knew himself, a bit here, and a bit there;

Christian legends, see article *The Muḥammadan Agrapha* in *The Expository Times* for January and February, 1928.

¹ For the views of Muslim commentators confirming the doctrine, see *The Historical Development of the Qur'án* (4th ed.), p. 40.

² See my *The Apocalypses*, p. 152, note 2.

from Jews, from Christians, from heretics, from the Talmud, from Apocryphal Gospels, and from fleeting traditions which he had gathered and stored as he went about the East on the good *Khadíja's* service. Tales are set down just as he picked them up and thoughts came into his mind.'¹

The material derived from Zoroastrian sources are the night journey (*Mi'rāj*) of the Prophet to heaven; the Muslim Paradise with its *Húrís*; the light of Muḥammad (*Núr-i-Muḥammadí*) and *Aṣ-Ṣirát*, or the Bridge. The night journey is thus described: 'Praise be to Him who carried His servant by night from the second temple to the temple that is more remote, whose precincts we have blessed that we might show him our signs' (*Súratu Baní Isrá'íl* xvii. 1). The orthodox view is that it was an actual journey, but some hold that it was only a vision and quote in support of their view verse 62 of the same *Súra*, 'We ordained the vision that we showed thee.' But whether a vision or an actual migration of the body, the idea of such a journey is ancient. Such an ascension is described in the *Arta Viraf*,² in terms very like those of Muḥammad's ascension. The Apocryphal *Book of Enoch* (xviii-xix) contains an account of a wonderful journey away from the earth. These stories were well known in Arabia.

In the Meccan *Súras* the description given of Paradise and the *Húrís* is very realistic. Muslims of the Modernist school say that the description given is purely allegorical, and that the teaching about them is derived from Zoroastrian sources.

¹ *The British Quarterly*, April 1877, p. 350.

² Quoted in the *Yanābī'u'l-Islām*, pp. 192-4.

Sayyid Amír 'Alí says, 'The Húrís are creatures of Zoroastrian origin, so is paradise, whilst hell in the severity of its punishment is Talmudic.'¹ Maulavi Muḥammad 'Alí, a Qádiáni commentator, in a note on Súratu't-Túr lii. 20 says that 'damsels with large dark eyes' (Húrín 'Ainin) means 'pure beautiful ones,' and that they are plurals of words which apply also to men, to qualities and good deeds; that they refer to the 'heavenly blessings, which righteous women shall enjoy with righteous men.' 'Womenhood stands for a symbol of purity and beauty,' and so as 'purity of character and the beautiful deeds of the righteous' are here referred to, these 'blessings are described in words which apply to women.'² It is a clever apology but not orthodox nor convincing.

The notion of the Light of Muḥammad, the Núr-i-Muḥammadí, is important in connection with Shí'ah claims (ante p. 70). It is not clear whether the words 'Fain would they put out God's light with their mouths' (Súratu't-Tauba ix. 32) refer to the Núr-i-Muḥammadí. In the *Khulāṣatu't-Tafāsír* it is said that this is a proof that the light of Muḥammad and the religion of Aḥmad are permanent. The traditions refer to it. The idea is clearly Zoroastrian. In the Pahlavi *Minūkchind* and the *Khashitā* a similar description is given of the light of Jamshed.³

Aṣ-Ṣirát, or the bridge, is referred to in the following verses, 'If we pleased we would surely

put out their eyes; yet even then would they speed on with rivalry in their path (or Ṣirát)' (Súratu Yá Sín xxxvi. 60). 'Gather together those who have acted unjustly and their consorts and the gods whom they have adored beside God and guide them to the road (Ṣirát) for hell' (Súratu's-Ṣaffát xxxvii. 28). Al-Ghazālí says that Ṣirát 'is a bridge stretched over the back of hell, sharper than a sword, finer than a hair. The feet of the unbelievers slip upon it by the decree of God, and fall with them into the fire; but the feet of believers stand firm upon it by the grace of God, and they pass into the abiding abode.'¹ This idea of Ṣirát is entirely Zoroastrian. It is referred to in the *Dinkart*, where the speaker prays that he may be saved from hell and pass over Chinvat (the bridge) and enter the blessed above. The Zoroastrians believe that after the final judgement, comes 'the awful crossing of the Chinvat Bridge which reaches over Hell. It is broad and easy for the soul of the righteous man, but when it is crossed by the soul of the sinner it grows narrow and narrower, until at last he totters and falls into the depth of the gulf.'²

Rabbi Geiger in his famous Essay *Was hat Mahomet aus dem Judenthum aufgenommen*³ shows in various ways to what extent Islām has borrowed from Judaism. He makes it clear how the Prophet, by the way in which he speaks of various personages and by the confused order in which he places them,

¹ *Spirit of Islām*, p. 394.

² Maulavi Muḥammad 'Alí, *Holy Qur'án*, p. 1009.

³ For the original text see *Yanābī'u'l-Islām*, p. 211.

¹ *Ihyá' ulámu'd-dín*, p. 306.

² Huart, *Ancient Persia and Iranian Civilization*, p. 176.

³ An English translation under the title of *Judaism and Islām* has been published by the Diocesan Press, Madras.

had no direct acquaintance with Jewish History.¹ Some prophets and apostles he ignored altogether and to meet any charge of lack of knowledge a revelation came. 'We sent down apostles before you: there are some of them that we have mentioned to you, and there are others whom we have not mentioned to you' (Súratu'l-Mú'min xl. 78). Under the terms of Tabút (Ark), Taurat, Jannátu 'Adn, Jahannam, Abhár, Darasa, Taghút (error), Furqán,¹ Má'ún and Malakát, all derived from Rabbinical Hebrew, Rabbi Geiger shows how all the conceptions associated with these words have passed from Judaism into Islám. His demonstration of the great debt Islám owes to Rabbinical Judaism is complete and convincing. In Súratu'l-Furqán xxv. 6 we read, 'The Infidels say: "The Qur'án is a mere fraud of his own devising, and others have helped him with it."' Baidáwí on this verse says that by 'others' the Jews are meant.

In three places (Súras ii. 59; v. 73; xxii. 17) the Šábi'ín are associated with Jews and Christians as

¹ The Qur'án is named Qur'ánu Sharíf, noble Qur'án; Qur'ánu Majíd, glorious Qur'án; Mušhaf, the Book; the Furqán. The latter term occurs most frequently in the Madína Súras in the general sense of illumination, a revelation. Some commentators argue from this that the earlier sacred books were to be interpreted by the Qur'án, which being a Furqán, could explain or illuminate them. Such a view ignores the fact that in Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 50 and in Súratu'l-Anbíyá' xxi. 49 the name Furqán is given to the Law of Moses. Rabbi Geiger has shown (in *Judaism and Islám*, p. 41) that the idea of illumination, or interpretation is not the primary meaning of Furqán, which is rather that of redemption or deliverance. In Súratu'l-Anfál viii. 42 the day of the battle of Badr is called 'the day of the Furqán,' that is, the day of separation, or decision. Nöldeke considers that the Arabic root furq (فَرَقَ) to separate, influenced the meaning of Furqán. It is derived from the Hebrew word faraq in the sense of deliverance (Ps. cxxxvi. 24). A similar Syriac word is pūrgána, or salvation. The Prophet evidently borrowed the word and adapted it to his own purpose as indicating that in his opinion the Qur'án was a deliverance, redemption, salvation; or separation of truth from error. See *The Historical Development of the Qur'án*, p. 114.

believers in the true God. They are by some authorities supposed to be a remnant of the Jewish sect of the Elkasaites, founded by Elkasai about A.D. 200. He professed to have received direct from heaven a series of revelations which he afterward incorporated into one book, just as Muḥammad did with the Qur'án. His watchword was 'I am a witness over you on the day of judgement,' a position Muḥammad also took. It would be rash to say that Muḥammad knew of and borrowed ideas from Alkasai, but the coincidence is curious.¹

In Súratu'l-Muddaththir lxxiv. 5, we read 'The abomination—flee it.' The word rujz, which Rodwell translates as 'abomination,' the Qádiáni commentator translates as 'unclean' and Ḥusayn as 'all sins.' The word is only used once in the Qur'án; but a similar word rijz is used in the sense of punishment, which confirms Ḥusayn's rendering of rujz as 'conduct leading to calamity.' Rujz was an Aramaic Christian word meaning wrath. In the Syriac version of Matt. iii. 7 it occurs in the phrase 'the wrath to come.' Muḥammad evidently knew this use of rujz and used it as meaning 'flee from the wrath to come.'

There is no evidence that Muḥammad ever had the Bible before him. The Old Testament traditions recorded in the Qur'án resemble more the embellished Haggadic tales than they do the original history, whilst the New Testament ones are quite legendary and are similar to the reports of the Apocryphal Gospels. The only text from the Old

¹ See *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. v, pp. 262-8.

Testament quoted in the Qur'án is 'Since the Law was given, have we written in the Psalms that my servants, "the righteous, shall inherit the earth" ' (Súratu'l-'Anbiyá' xxi. 105).

In Súratu'l-A'ráf vii. 156, 158 Muḥammad is called the Nabí'l-Ummí, which Muslims generally translate as the 'Unlettered Prophet' and say that he could not read or write. From this the conclusion is drawn that, as he could not have written such an eloquent book as the Qur'án, it must be the words of God and not his statements; a divine and not a human composition.

The Arabic phrase Nabí'l-Ummí² bears on this question. In Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 73 we read 'and amongst them (Jews) are illiterates (ummiyyún), who are unacquainted with the Book, but with lies only; ' that is, they did not know the Scriptures. The term Ummí applied to the Prophet would thus mean that he had no previous knowledge of the Bible. It does not mean that, in the general sense of the term, he was an ignorant man. In a comment on Súratu'l-'Ankabút xxix. 47 a Qádiáni commentator says that 'Muḥammad had never read the Scriptures of any religion' and 'had not read even a single book,' and goes on to argue that in this respect he was superior to all other prophets and teachers, and that the source from which 'the teaching was drawn was far above the knowledge possessed by any human being.' (*Holy Qur'án*, p. 784.) It may be admitted that it makes him different to other great teachers, but how ignorance can make him superior is extremely difficult to understand.

² Ps. xxxvii. 29.

³ انبيى الامى

It is difficult to know why Muḥammad altered many Scripture names, unless he used some now forgotten traditions, such as Azar for Terah, Abraham's father. In this case in Jewish circles Terah was sometimes called Athar. But why we have Jálút for Goliath; Kárún for Korah; Tálút for Saul; Idrís for Enoch; Dhu'l-Khiḥl for Ezekiel, I do not know. He certainly did not get them from the Old Testament. The confusion of names is remarkable. Miriam, the sister of Aaron, is confounded with the Virgin Mary (Súratu Maryam xix. 28) and Haman is named as a servant of Pharaoh instead of Ahasuerus (Súratu'l-Qaşaḥ xxviii. 38). There is ignorance of the condition of other lands. The fertility of Egypt is made to depend on rain, which is seldom seen, and not on the inundations of the Nile (Súratu Yúsuf xii. 49). Such mistakes are a blot on a book declared to be perfect and to have come down from heaven, and they cannot be condoned by the following words, 'We (Alláh) relate unto thee a most excellent history, by revealing unto thee the Qur'án, whereas before thou wast one of the negligent' (Súratu Yúsuf xii. 3). 'I (Muḥammad) had no knowledge of the exalted princes when they disputed about the creation of man; it is revealed unto me only as a proof that I am a public preacher' (Súratu's-Şád xxxviii. 67-70).

Among the Prophet's early converts were two Jews, named Jabr and Yasár, from whom doubtless he gained some information. Hurgronje says, 'Muḥammad's account of the past contains more elements of Jewish than of Christian origins, and

he ignores the principal dogmas of the Christian Church. . . . Yet the influence of Christianity upon Muḥammad's vocation was very great; without the Christian idea of the final scene of human history, of the Resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgement, Muḥammad's mission would have had no meaning.¹

The number of foreign words is very great. They are borrowed from many languages. In the *Mutawakkil* by Jalálu'd-Dín as-Syúfi one hundred and seven foreign words are enumerated and commented on. This valuable book has been translated by W. V. Bell, Yale University. The Arabic text is also given.² It incidentally shows how many ideas have been borrowed.

Tisdall in *The Religion of the Crescent* (p. 174), has an interesting note on the word *dín* (دين) meaning religion as coming from the word *daēna* in the *Avesta*, where it means law, doctrine, religion. In the phrase 'day of judgement' (Súratu'l-Fátiḥa 1. 3) the word *dín* comes from a Semitic root meaning to judge. The Hebrew form also is *dín* in Ps. lxxvi. 9. Bell in *The Origin of Islām in its Christian Environment* gives much useful information on this subject. He says of Muḥammad that 'He had rather a liking for introducing unfamiliar words some of which he explains, others of which he leaves unexplained, a certain obscurity being appropriate to a divine revelation' (p. 51). He also shows how Aramaic and Abyssinian words used by Christians have been borrowed.

¹ *Mohammedanism*, p. 33.

² It is printed by the Nile Mission Press, Cairo.

Soon after the death of the Prophet a voluminous literature on the Qur'án was produced. The object of the philological literature was to construct an Arabic grammar, by seeking in the pre-Islamic poetry for forms, words, phrases and idioms which would throw light on the sacred text; the object of the other, which we may call the traditional, was to gather together in the form of commentaries the opinions of the Companions of the Prophet.

The influx of foreign converts to Islām rendered it necessary to compose grammars and to compile dictionaries of the Arabic language. The earliest grammarian was Abú'l-Aswáb, an inhabitant of Baṣra and a follower of 'Alí. One day he found 'Alí in deep thought over the faults of language which he had heard in Baṣra. 'Alí directed him to prepare a grammar. He made some notes, though he did not publish them till later on, when the governor of Baṣra requested him to do so. The subject received much attention in the reign of the *Khalífa* Ḥárún. Al-Kisá'í and Al-Farra, both of Persian origin, were famous grammarians. The former was entrusted with the education of the *Khalífa's* two sons. Al-Ma'mún when he became *Khalífa* supplied Al-Farra with a number of copyists and encouraged him in every possible way to prosecute his work. Some of the more orthodox Muslims doubted the lawfulness of these grammatical studies as applied to the Qur'án. They looked upon it as an undue exercise of private judgement. One of Al-Farra's pupils, when about to die, expressed to a friend doubts as to the propriety of his work as a grammarian. His friend had a vision

in which he saw the Prophet, who said, 'Give my greeting to Thálab and say to him, "Thou art master of the superior science."' This settled the matter and henceforth the study of grammar became a most praiseworthy occupation. We have already dealt with some of its details and so may pass on to consider the second class of literature the exegetical.

The Companions of the Prophet were believed to be perfectly acquainted with the interpretation of the Qur'án.¹ This knowledge they passed on orally to their successors, the Tábi'ún, who passed it to the next generation the Tabá'u't-Tábi'ún. The duty of a commentator was to reproduce this information, taking care that the isnád, or chain of authorities for a given statement, was sound. According to the commentators the dogmatic theology of Islám falls under two heads, uşúl and farú', that is, roots and branches. The former includes the doctrine about God; the latter consists of truths which result from the acceptance of the former. Reason has only to do with the farú'. The verses of the Qur'án are divided into two classes—the perspicuous, and the figurative. The authority for this division is found in Súratu Áli 'Imrán iii. 5, which reads thus: 'He it is who

hath sent down to thee the Book. Some of its verses are perspicuous (muḥkam); these are the basis (mother) of the book, and others are figurative (mutashábih).¹ But those whose hearts are given to err, follow its figures, craving discord, craving an interpretation; yet none knoweth its interpretation but God. And the stable in knowledge say, "We believe in it; it is all from our Lord." But none will bear this in mind, save men endued with understanding.' This is one of the most important verses in the Qur'án; it affords an excellent illustration of the importance of correct punctuation.

Here it is clearly stated (1) that no one except God can understand the mutashábih (figurative) verses and (2) that wise men, though they know not the interpretation of such verses, yet believe them all. Many learned men, however, say that the full stop should not be placed after the word God, but after knowledge. The difference will be seen thus:—

First Reading

None knoweth its interpretation but God. And the stable in knowledge say, 'We believe in it.'

Second Reading

None knoweth its interpretation but God, and the stable in knowledge. They say, 'We believe in it.'

On this slight change in punctuation, which shows that the stable in knowledge can interpret the mustashábih verses, opposite schools of theology have arisen in Islám. The second reading opens

¹ Of these the most famous were (1) Abú ibn Ka'b, called 'The Master of the Qur'án Readers.' (2) Ibn Mas'úd, a combatant at Badr. He had charge of the shoes and toothpick of the Prophet. He learnt the correct way of reciting the Qur'án from the Prophet himself. (3) Abú Músa'u'l-Ash'arí also received and wrote down the Qur'án from Muḥammad's dictation. His voice was so sweet and musical that Muḥammad compared it to the soft strains of the harp of David. (4) Abú'l-Durda, called 'The Wise among the Readers.' He became a judge in Damascus and each morning collected a large number of people in the Mosque and taught them the correct way of reciting the Qur'án.

¹ Baidáwí says that this is 'in order that the excellence of the learned may be displayed over them, and so their zeal for learning be encouraged.'

the way to a fearless investigation of subjects which all the early Muslim avoided as beyond their province. Inquiries into the nature of God and His attributes were not lawful. The Prophet said, 'Think of God's gifts, not of His nature; you have no power for that.'¹ Men should mistrust their own perceptive powers and should obey the inspired legislator, Muḥammad, who had revealed all that was sufficient for them to know and to do. In the early days of Islām it was held that all parts of the Qur'án, except the muḥkam verses and the purely narrative portions, were mutashábih, a term which includes all verses which referred to the attributes of God, to the existence of angels and genii, to the appearance of Antichrist, to the period and signs of the Judgement Day, and generally to all matters beyond the daily experience of mankind. It was strongly felt that not only must there be no discussion on them, but no attempt should be made to understand or to act on them. Ibn 'Abbás, a Companion, said, 'One must believe the mutashábih verses, but not take them for a rule of conduct.' 'Áyisha said, 'Avoid those persons who dispute about the meaning of the Qur'án, for they are those whom God has referred to in the words, "Whose hearts are given to err."'

The first reading which puts the full stop after God is the one accepted by the Aṣḥáb, the Tábi'ún and the Tabá'u't-Tábi'ún (the Companions, their successors and their followers) and the great

¹ This is the Jewish view. 'The Rabbis do not inculcate metaphysical notions or dogmatic teachings concerning the divine nature.' Lazarus, *The Ethics of Judaism*, vol. i, p. 114.

majority of commentators, though there are others who take the opposite view. The scholastic theologians (Mutakallimún) generally adopt the second reading which places the full stop after the word 'knowledge.'¹ They argued thus: How could men believe what they did not know? To this their opponents answered, that the act of belief in the unknown is the very thing here praised by God. The scholastics then enquired why, since the Qur'án was sent to be a guide and direction to men, were not all its verses muḥkam or perspicuous? The answer was that the Arabs acknowledged two kinds of eloquence, one kind was to arrange words and ideas in a plain and simple style, so that the meaning might be at once apparent; the other was to speak in figurative language. Now, if the Qur'án had not contained both these styles of composition, it could not have claimed the position it does as a book absolutely perfect in form as well in matter.

It is now that the doctrine of tanzíh (transcendence) is brought in. That doctrine is defined to be 'a declaration of the exemption of God in His absolute unity from all things.' The logical conclusion is that it places Him outside the world of things² and

¹ Baiḍáwí says, 'Some consider that the letter waw (and) after the word God is a copulative conjunction, or waw'l-'attf, and that consequently there is no full stop after the word God: others, however, say that the waw is waw'l-isti'náf and that it must be preceded by a full stop and so commence a new sentence. Baiḍáwí accepts the second reading which puts the full stop after knowledge. Zamakhshari also accepts this view. He interprets the verse thus, 'None are directed to the right interpretation thereof, that interpretation which should be placed upon it, except God and those of His servants whose knowledge is profound.' The opinion of these famous commentators is of great value, and in this respect places the Mu'tazilís in the right.

² So amongst the ninety-nine names of God the Asmá'u'l-Ḥusna, we do not find the name of father. 'That the creature should ever be lifted up to a filial relationship with God the creator seems to contradict the idea of God. Even when God is called the Creator the

world of thought also, and so leads to agnosticism. The orthodox theologians saw the difficulty made by this dogma, and so they say that all anthropomorphic expressions, such as sitting and rising, face and hands and so on are *mutashábih* and that their meaning is known only to God. They cannot even be discussed for, according to a tradition, 'argument about the nature of God is blasphemy.'¹ The doctrine of *tanzih* has been so exaggerated that the Muslim idea of the immanence of God is defective, though *Shúfism* is a revolt against the orthodox view. Islám thus gives no clear and adequate view of the nature of God as both transcendent and immanent.

The prevalent explanation of Muḥammad's teaching on the Qur'án is that Gabriel brought it down from heaven and taught the Prophet the exact words of it, which he then made known to the Companions, his immediate followers. According to this view, accepted by the orthodox in all ages, neither the words nor the doctrine are Muḥammad's, and so the book is above all criticism.

The Arabic arrangement of the contents of the Qur'án in its one hundred and fourteen Súras² or chapters, is so confused that it conveys no idea whatever of the growth of any plan in the mind of the Prophet. As a general rule the shorter Súras,

Maker, the Fashioner, commentators explain that no nearness of the Creator to the creature is implied in these names.' Holmes, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 140.

¹ *Al-baḥāth 'an dhāṭu'llāh kufr*. See also *The Faith of Islām* (4th ed.), pp. 238-9 and notes for the opinion of Muslim theologians.

² The word is generally supposed to be derived from the Hebrew *Shura*, a row, or arrangement. Another possible derivation is the Aramaic *Súratā*, which is used in the sense of a writing, and for a portion of Scripture.

which contain the theology of Islám, belong to the Meccan period of the Prophet's career, and the larger ones, relating chiefly to social duties, to the organization of Islám as a civil polity, belong to the time when he was consolidating his power at Madína. The plan adopted was to place the longer chapters, generally late ones, first and the shorter ones last without the least reference to their historical setting. We have the authority of Jalálu'd-Dín As-Syúṭī for the attempt to place the Súras in chronological order. Rodwell has also successfully done this, and now we can trace the gradual development of the purpose Muḥammad had in view in establishing the theocratic system of Islám. We can now see the workings of the mind of one who, whatever view we may take of his claims and position, was undoubtedly a very great man, a skilful administrator according to an Eastern fashion; one who by the fervour of his appeals and his use of spiritual weapons, as well as more earthly ones, attracted and captivated his hearers. It is impossible to gain an intelligent knowledge of the Qur'án unless we read it in its chronological order so far as that can be ascertained.¹

There is a very marked difference in the style of the Meccan and the Madína Súras. The language of the latter is more prosaic and the poetic fire so prominent in the Meccan ones has died out, though there are occasional passages of great beauty. (Cf. *Súratu'l-Baqara* ii. 256; *Súratu'l-Hadid* lvii. 2-3.)

¹For this purpose Nöldeke's *Geschichte des Qorans* and Sell's *Historical Development of the Qur'án* should be read. The latter uses the works of Arabic, Persian and Urdu commentators and is up to date.

Still the later Súras, on the whole, are tedious. It has been well said that, 'if it were not for the exquisite flexibility of the Arabic language itself, which, however, is to be attributed more to the age in which the author lived than to his individuality, it would be scarcely bearable to read the second portion of the Qur'án a second time. . . . But, for the rich eloquence of the old Arabic tongue, which gives charm even to inextricable sentences and dull stories, the Qur'án at this period would be unreadable.'¹

The divisions of the Qur'án, the nature and number of its verses and of its words, and the variety of its sentences form too technical a subject to deal with here.² Maulavi Muḥammad 'Alí, a Qádiání commentator, asserts that the whole Qur'án was committed to writing in the Prophet's lifetime, and that the present arrangements of chapters and verses was made under the Prophet's own superintendence.³ If this be so, it is difficult to understand why the recensions of Abú Bakr and of 'Uthmán were necessary. It is impossible to conceive that so capable a person as Muḥammad would have left his book in so unintelligible a form. We prefer to accept the view of the great theologian Jalálu'd-Dín As-Syúfí that the book does need rearranging and that its contents should be placed in proper historical order.

The Prophet was reproached for not possessing a complete revelation and answered the reproach thus:

¹ Stanley Lane-Poole, *Selections from the Koran*, pp. cv, cvi.

² On this technical subject see *The Faith of Islām* (4th ed.), pp. 84-99.

³ Maulavi Muḥammad 'Alí, *Holy Qur'án*, pp. xxx-xlii.

'The infidels say, "Unless the Qur'án be sent down to thee all at once."—But in this way would we stablish thy heart by it; in parcels have we parcelled it out to thee' (Súratu'l-Furqán xxv. 34). Again we read, 'We have parcelled out the Qur'án into sections that thou mightest recite it unto men by slow degrees, and we have sent it down piecemeal'¹ (Súratu Bani Isrá'íl xvii. 107). 'The best of recitals hath God sent down, a book in unison with itself, and teaching by iteration' (Súratu'z-Zumar xxxix. 24). The term 'iteration' (*matháni*) has caused much perplexity. According to Rabbi Geiger it is derived from the Hebrew mishnah, to repeat.² The theory of the piecemeal mode of revelation proved very convenient, when previous statements had to be modified, or abrogated. The Muslims won a great victory over the Meccans at Badr and this is attributed to God's favour. Soon after they suffered a severe defeat at Uhud, and the Jews declared that no true claimant of the prophetic dignity had ever been beaten. So some excuse had to be given. Súratu 'Alí 'Imrán was then revealed, and it explained that these alternate days of successes and reverses amongst men were in order that God might know those who believed and, after other reasons given, the Muslims were assured that their Lord knew all about it and they were not to be faint-hearted.³

In the early Madína verses, when there was a friendly relationship with the Jews we have, 'Let

¹ The Arabic text *نزلناه تفرقة*, Baidāwí interprets as *على حسب الحوادث* or 'according to circumstances.'

² For the critical views of Muslim theologians see *The Historical Development of the Qur'án* (4th ed.), p. 50.

³ Cf. verses 134-5; 138-9; 140; 145-6; 149; 154; 160; 163-5.

there be no compulsion in religion'¹ (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 257). 'Verily, those who believe (Muslims) and they who follow the Jewish religion, and Christians, and the Šabians—whosoever of them believeth in God and the Last Day and doeth that which is right will have their reward with their Lord'² (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 59). Later on, when circumstances changed, we are told that 'whoso desireth any other religion than Islám it shall not be accepted of him and in the next world he shall be of those who perish' (Súratu 'Alī 'Imrān iii. 79). This is said to abrogate all verses which enjoin attention to previous Scriptures. Again, 'O ye who believe take not the Jews and Christians as your friends' (Súratu'l-Má'ida v. 56). Another instance of a change of action, requiring a second revelation, 'according to the circumstances,' is the change of the Qibla from Jerusalem to Mecca.

The doctrine of abrogation is founded on the verses 'When we change one verse for another, and God knoweth the best which He revealeth' (Súratu'n-Nahl xvi. 103) and 'Whatever verses we cancel or cause thee to forget, we give thee better

¹ According to Muslim commentators this does not lay down a general principle of toleration. It is said to refer to two lads who were led astray by a Syrian fire-worshipper. Their father wished to restrain them, but Muḥammad would not allow him to interfere. As regards Jews, Šabians and Christians there is to be no interference so long as they pay the *jizya*, or poll-tax; as regards the Arabs, the commentator Ḥusayn says that the verse is abrogated by the 'verse of the killing,' which reads thus, 'Kill them wherever ye find them' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 187). Baiḍāwī says the verse 'O Prophet, contend against the infidels and hypocrites and be rigorous with them' (Súratu't-Tauba ix. 74) abrogates the milder verse. For the original authorities for the above, see *The Historical Development of the Qur'án*, pp. 175-6.

² For Muslim views, see *Op. cit.* (4th ed.), pp. 77-8. Baiḍāwī says that the words 'doeth what is right' mean 'enter Islám with sincere entrance.'

in their stead, or the like thereof' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 100).¹ The Qādiānī commentator denies the doctrine of abrogation, which is accepted by all the great Muslim commentaries, including that of the Shī'ah Imām Jā'far Šādiq,² whose reputation as a Qur'ānic scholar was high. Professor Macdonald says that 'he has been unable to find in the extant works of any author one who denies that one part of the Qur'án has been abrogated by another and that such has been the consistent agreement (Ijníá') from the first.'³ In the *Holy Qur'án* (the Qādiānī *Tafsír*) p. 54, it is said that the word Áyat here translated verse really means a message or communication, and so not a verse of the Qur'án, 'but the message of the law given to the Jews . . . now abrogated to give place to one better.'

Now, as the Prophet had never learnt the law of Moses, he cannot be said to have forgotten it; whereas he might easily forget a verse of the Qur'án. This commentator airily dismisses the opinions of the greatest Muslim theologians of the past, as 'based on mere conjecture.'⁴

In Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 234 it is said that a widow must be supported for four months and ten days, after which responsibility for her support ceases; but in v. 241 the obligation lasts for one year. Imām Jā'far Šādiq says that the earlier verse abrogates the latter one.⁵ A tradition related by

¹ On the whole question of abrogation see *The Faith of Islám* (4th ed.), pp. 101-9.

² Sayyid Maqbūl Aḥmad's *Tafsír*, vol. 1, p. 21 note.

³ *The Moslem World*, October 1917, p. 420.

⁴ See *Criticism of a Qādiānī Commentary*, pp. 3-5 (C.L.S.).

⁵ Sayyid Maqbūl Aḥmad's *Tafsír*, p. 61. For a notable case of abrogation, see my *Life of Muḥammad*, p. 204.

Ja'bir states that Muḥammad said, 'My words do not abrogate the words of God, but the words of God abrogate mine, and some of the words of God abrogate others.'¹

The various portions which now form the Qur'án were recited by the Prophet during a period of twenty-three years, but were not collected into a book during his life-time. Individual hearers wrote down passages on palm leaves or on other materials. The great store-house of the Qur'án was also the marvellous memory of the Arab people. It was an act of great reverence to recite portions at each act of worship and its committal to memory was an act of great merit. A collection was then made.

Zayd was assisted by Anas bin Málík and others and the work whilst in progress was superintended by 'Umar, who, it is said, accepted nothing as part of the Qur'án which had not been written down and which was not testified to by two persons. A case in point is the stoning verse, 'The married man and the married woman when they commit adultery then stone them without doubt.' 'Umar said he could not vouch for this, but that he would have inserted it had he not feared that he might be charged with having added something to the Qur'án. He himself knew the verse, but could not find corroborative testimony.² The punishment decreed in the Qur'án

¹ *Mishkátu'l-Muṣāḃih*, Book 1. A list of the abrogated and the abrogating verses is given by Hughes in his *Dictionary of Islám*, p. 520.

² See Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qurans*, p. 194. Margoliouth states that 'Áyisha said that this verse, in which stoning was enjoined as a punishment for adultery, was on a slip (of parchment) deposited under her bed and was afterwards lost. *Mohammad*, p. 219.

In commenting on *Súratu'l-Mā'idā* v. 18, in which the Jews are charged with concealing their Scriptures, Husayn and Baiḏāwī say

for adultery is one hundred stripes,¹ but as a matter of fact stoning is the Muḥammadan legal punishment for adultery and no other basis for it is known except this verse which 'Umar withdrew. This seems to show that he had good authority for his statement. Anyhow its omission shows the care taken with this recension.

It seems to be an open question whether the Prophet intended to make a book. He seems to have been satisfied with reciting portions from time to time, and then leaving their permanence to the memory of his hearers. This theory receives some support from Zayd ibn Thábit's reply to Abú Bakr's request that he should collect the portions recited by the Prophet. He said, 'What right have I to gather in the form of a book what the Prophet had never intended to transmit to posterity by this channel? And since the Prophet never designed to give his message in this way, is it a lawful work that I am commanded to do?'

But something had to be done, for shortly after the death of the Prophet, at the battle of Yemana, many of the Qur'án reciters were slain, which caused 'Umar, afterwards the second *Khalífa*, to fear lest the true text should be lost. With some difficulty he persuaded the *Khalífa* Abú Bakr to order a proper collection to be made.² In order to do

that one of the matters concealed was the *آية* 'the verse of stoning'—which was in the Pentateuch. *Tafsír-i-Husaynī*, vol. i, p. 140. Baiḏāwī, vol. i, p. 257.

¹ The verses are in *Súratu'n-Nur* xxiv. 1-4. These and the succeeding four verses are said to have abrogated the verse of stoning which 'Umar hesitated to put permanently in the Qur'án.

² According to Mir Khond (*Ranḡatu's-Safa*, Part II, vol. iii, p. 41) 'When Abú Bakr heard of the disaster of the battle he feared lest the

this, Zayd ibn Thábit, an intelligent young man, was requested to do the work, which after some hesitation he did. When it was completed one copy came into the possession of Hafaṣa, a daughter of 'Umar and a widow of the Prophet. This recension was the accepted copy for ten years, when it was superseded by 'Uthmān's recension. Still, though no copies are now extant, it was of great importance, as it formed the basis of the revised edition. Zayd apparently from day to day heard verses recited, and received, on the testimony of two witnesses, some verses which had been written down by those who heard the Prophet deliver them. One day it would be an inhabitant of Mecca, another day a man of Madína. All these verses were mixed up together, regardless of chronological order. Zayd, though lacking in historical insight, seems in his task to have exercised care, but he put the various passages together without much regard to their sense, or to their historical order; still, if his intellectual faculty was slight, his honesty of purpose may be admitted.

The people, however, went on reciting the Qur'án as they had been accustomed to do and paid little attention to Zayd's arrangement. Then at the battle of Kadesia (A.D. 637) a great many Qur'án reciters (Qurrá') were slain, amongst whom were the best reciters. So various discrepancies arose even amongst the most intelligent reciters. The inhabitants of Hims stood by the readings of Al-Miqdád, the men of Kúfa by those of Ibn

words of the Lord Most High should be blotted out from the minds of the people and so ordered the Qur'án to be collected.'

Mas'úd,¹ the people of Baṣra by those of Abú Músá, so great confusion arose. This led the Khalífa 'Uthmān to order a new recension to be made. He borrowed from Hafaṣa the copy in her possession and had copies made of it for the use of the revisers. The learned men from amongst the Quraysh of Mecca set to work and took Abú Bakr's compilation as the basis of their work. When the work was finished 'Uthmān destroyed all the existing copies,² except the one in the possession of Hafaṣa. This, however, was secured and destroyed later on by Marwán, the governor of Mecca, lest it should cause doubts in the minds of the people.³ Zayd, the convenor, when there was a difference of opinion, had to give way to the views of the Quraysh members, or finally to the decision of the Khalífa.⁴ Thus the Qur'án was

¹ One of the Prophet's sayings is thus recorded: 'Whoever wishes to recite the Qur'án correctly and with elegance, let him follow the reading of Ibn Mas'úd.' When a new recension was undertaken, Ibn Mas'úd refused to give up his copy to the revision committee. The Khalífa caused him to be so severely beaten that he died.—*Journal Asiatique* Décembre, 1843, p. 385.

² Sir 'Abdu'r-Rahím says that 'Uthmān caused all the remaining editions to be destroyed, and it is due to this fact that at the present day only one authoritative and uniform text is in use throughout the Muslim world.' (*Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, p. 20.)

³ 'Uthmān said, 'I am accused of having burnt Qur'áns, but by thus proceeding I aimed at the extinction of differences among the people with regard to the word of God.' (*Randatu's-Safa*, Part ii, vol. iii, p. 166.)

The Shi'ahs say that this burning of the Qur'án was a great crime. Haqqu'l-Yaqín, quoted in *Journal Asiatique*, Décembre, 1848, p. 384.

⁴ The critic may fairly ask why, if the first recension of Zayd contained the actual words of Muhammad, he did not re-establish it and why a new recension was needed. If the memory of the reciters who contributed to the first recension was defective, what guarantee is there that the memory of the reciters listened to in the preparation of the second recension was more accurate.

⁵ Zayd wished to write تَابِعْ with ذ, the Khalífa said 'do it with ت, as تَابِعْ, in order to agree with the Quraysh dialect. This is rather an unfortunate illustration as تَابِعْ is not an Arabic word, for Muhammad borrowed it from Rabbinical Hebrew. See Geiger, *Judaism and Islam*, p. 31. On the differences amongst the revisers, see *The Apology of al-Kindi*, edited by Sir William Muir, pp. 26-8.

preserved in the Meccan dialect. The *Khalífa* collected all the revelations he could procure and apparently took great pains. Ibn Zubayr says that he read to 'Uthmán the verse 'such of you as shall die and leave wives shall bequeath their wives a year's maintenance' (Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 241), and then pointed out to him that the time limit had been abrogated by verse 234 which prescribed only 'four months and ten days,' so why had he written it. The *Khalífa* said, 'O nephew, leave it, I will not change anything from its place.'¹

Muslims believe that the Qur'án is perfect and complete—'A book whose verses are established in wisdom and then set forth with clearness' (Súratu Húd xi. 1); but the fact that 'Uthmán and his company of revisers had to consider a variety of readings, to weigh their authority and, if necessary, discard them in favour of the Meccan readings caused much scandal. But a way was found out of the difficulty. Abú ibn Ka'b, one of the companions (Aṣḥáb) of the Prophet was very famous as a Qur'án reciter.² The Prophet had said, 'Read the Qur'án under Abú ibn Ka'b.' In

¹ A Qádiání commentator (*Holy Qur'án*, p. 112) rather inconclusively argues that there is no abrogation. The Shí'ah Imám Ja'far Ṣádiq (Sayyid Maqbúl Aḥmad's *Tafsír*, vol. i, p. 21) says Ibn Zubayr was right as regards the abrogation.

² Other reciters who were considered by the Prophet to be good were 'Abdu'lláh ibn Mas'úd, Salím bin Ma'qal, Mu'áz bin Jabal. Their knowledge of the Prophet's words was so correct that he said, 'Learn the Qur'án from them.' Zayd outlived them all. Syúfí, (*Itqán*, i. 88) says that of the companions (Aṣḥáb) of the Prophet seven were celebrated as Reciters, namely, 'Uthmán, 'Alí, Ubay, Zayd, Ibn Mas'úd, Abú Darday, Abú Músá'u'l-Ash'arí. From them the knowledge descended to their successors, known as the followers,

the Mosque one day Abú ibn Ka'b, heard men reciting the Qur'án in different ways and spoke to Muḥammad about it. The Prophet said, 'O Abú ibn Ka'b, intelligence was sent to me to read the Qur'án in seven dialects, and I was attentive to the Court of heaven and said, "Make easy the reading of the Qur'án to my sects." ' The instruction came: 'Read it in seven dialects.' 'Umar said that he complained to the Prophet about a man who recited in a manner from that which he adopted. The man was beaten by 'Umar's orders, but he declared that he recited just as he had heard the Prophet do. When Muḥammad heard of the dispute he said, 'In truth the Qur'án is revealed in seven dialects, read it in as many ways as you can.'¹ A tradition recorded by Muslim states that the Prophet said, 'This Qur'án was sent down in seven dialects. Recite in whichever of them is easy for you.' This removed all difficulty and the foresight displayed

¹ *Journal Asiatique*, Décembre, 1843, p. 378. This tradition concerning the 'seven readings' is referred to in well-known books thus:—

أُنزِلَ الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى سَبْعَةِ أَحْرَفٍ—The Qur'án was revealed in seven readings' (words).—*Mishkātul-Masābih*.

أُنزِلَ الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى سَبْعِ لُغَاتٍ—The Qur'án was revealed in seven dialects.—*Majma'u'l-Gharā'ib*.

نَزَلَ الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى سَبْعَةِ أَحْرَفٍ كُلِّهَا كَابٍ شَافٍ—The Qur'án descended with seven readings, all perfect and sacred.—*Majma'u'l-Bihār*.

It is said that the seven dialects were those of the Quraysh, Hawādhin, Tai, Hazil, Himyar, Shaqif and Yaman. Others say that the 'seven readings' represent seven different copies, of which two were in use in Madína, one in Mecca, one in Kúfa, one in Baṣra, one in Syria, and one called the 'common edition' which is the one now in use. Mírzá Kāzím Beg points out that this last explanation is untenable, as the seven different copies did not come into existence until after the death of the Prophet.

by the Prophet in thus obtaining a divine sanction for the various ways of reciting the Qur'án was looked upon as a proof of his inspiration. Thus arose the *Haft qir'at*, or 'seven readings' of the Qur'án which are now recognized. They are called after the seven men most famous as Qur'án reciters.¹ Each one is called a *Qárí*, a reader, and each one had two disciples, called *Ráwís*, or narrators. 'Uthmán's Qur'án had no vowel points and great differences in pronunciation arose. In course of time public opinion settled down on two of the styles as most appropriate. The reading style of *Hafṣ*, a *Ráwí*, or disciple of Imám 'Āsim, is followed in India, and that of Imám Nāfi in Africa and Arabia. Jalálu'd-Dín in his commentary follows the *qir'at* of the *Qárí* Imám Abú 'Umar. Those who belong to the legal school (*madhhab*) of Ash-Sháfi'í also prefer the same *qir'at*.² In many cases the meaning is not affected, though sometimes there are disputes about them. The vowel points (اَ اِ اُ) were invented by Khalíl ibn Aḥmad of Baṣra, who was born A.D. 718. He is said to have been the inventor of the hamza, a semi-guttural consonant in frequent use. A good *Háfiz* must be conversant with all the different readings of the

¹ These are Imám ibn Kathír; Imám 'Āsim; Imám Abú 'Umar; Imám Hamza; Imám Nāfi; Imám Kísá'i; Imám ibn 'Amir. Syúfí, *Iqán*, i. 92.

² These variants are divided into several classes, according to the authority on which they rest and the value they consequently possess. They are:—

- (1) *Qir'at*, when it is based on the direct authority of one of the seven Imáms.
- (2) *Riwayat*, when some one gives it; quoting the authority of one Imám.
- (3) *Tariq*, when mentioned by some learned man.
- (4) *Wajah*, when the reader may choose between the various readings. See Syúfí, *Iqán*, i. 93-7.

seven famous *Qáris*. It is an extraordinary feat of memory.

Probably 'Uthmán made the best recension possible, but there are traditions about omissions and alterations in it. Ubai ibn Ka'b is said to have brought *Súras* cv and cvi together and to have added two new ones, called *Súratu'l-Khala* and *Súratu'l-Hafd*. These are: 'O God, we pray thee for help and forgiveness; we praise Thee and are not unthankful towards thee, and we let go and forsake every one who trespasses against thee.' 'O God, we serve thee and to thee do we pray, and thee do we worship; we hasten to thee; we strive after thee; we hope for thy pity, and we fear thy punishment.' The oldest book in which Nöldeke found these verses is one written in the fifth century of the Hijra. One objection raised against them is that in them man addresses God and not God man, but *Súratu'l-Fátiḥa* (i) is similar in style, and in any case the word 'say' may be understood as preceding the petition.

Ibn Mas'úd's copy omitted *Súras* i, cxiii and cxiv. 'Alí's copy is said to have been arranged chronologically *Súra* xcvi being put first, but as it is not extant, it is impossible to say whether the statement is correct. Ibn Mas'úd, a Companion, refused to give up his copy to the Revision Committee. The *Khalífa* was angry and publicly chastised him, an act which was strongly disapproved of. The Shí'ah objections to the recension were strong. 'Alí said that he received from the Prophet a copy. He refused to lend it to 'Umar, saying that it was accurate and could not be changed. It would be kept until the coming of

Imám Mahdí.¹ If this is so, the question naturally arises why 'Alí could not get it sanctioned as the authoritative one. His rivals were in the majority, and he could not circulate his copy, or have gotten it accepted, unless he could have called in 'Uthmán's copy, a thing impossible to do. After the troubles which arose over the assassinations of 'Alí and his sons, the Shí'ahs accepted 'Uthmán's recension, and defend their position by saying that the complete copy will be revealed when Imám Mahdi comes. Some, however, claim that certain alleged verses now omitted are still authoritative, and charge 'Umar and 'Uthmán with having suppressed or altered them.² I have given a list of these on pages 64-5. But the most serious charge in the complete omission of a whole Súra, the Súratu'n-Núrain, or the chapter of the Two Lights, that is, Muḥammad and 'Alí. It is as follows:—

SÚRATU'N-NÚRAIN

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

O ye who believe, believe in the two lights we have sent down, who have recited our signs and warned you of the

¹ *Journal Asiatique*, Décembre, 1843, p. 387. Shí'ahs say that the original Qur'án is in the keeping of the Hidden Imám, and has undergone no change or corruption. 'Aqá'idn'sh-Shí'a, quoted in Browne's *Literary History of Persia in Modern Times*, p. 381.

² Shí'ahs say that Muḥammad's Secretary, 'Abdu'lláh bin Sa'd corrupted the text and refer to Súratu'l-An'am vi. 53. There seems some truth in this, as he was one of the ten persons proscribed at the taking of Mecca. See Rodwell's *Qur'án*, page 325, and the *Tahríf-i-Qur'án*, p. 115. Chapter iii of this book states, but in terms too general to be of much use, the Shí'ah contention that changes, adverse to their claims, were made. Bukhārī and Muslim record a Tradition that in his last illness Muḥammad wished to write and said, 'Come here that I may write for you a writing that after me you may not go astray.' 'Umar would not bring the writing materials and nothing was done. Sunnīs say that he simply wished to write some commands and prohibitions; Shí'ahs say that he wished to re-affirm the succession of 'Alí and that 'Umar prevented it. I cannot vouch for the genuineness of the Tradition, but I give it for what it is worth.

punishments of the Last Day. These two lights (proceed) the one from the other.' Truly, I am the Hearer, the Knower.

For those who obey the orders of God and of His Prophet, for them, according to these verses, there is a Paradise of delights; but those who disbelieve after they have believed, and who break their promise and that which the Prophet had stipulated for them, shall be cast into Hell.

They who have injured their own souls and have been disobedient to the executor of the Prophet² (i.e., 'Alí), they shall drink of the scalding water.

Truly, God is He who gives light to the heavens and to the earth, and who chooses the angels, the prophets, and who makes believers; they are His creation, He creates what He wills; there is no god but He, the Merciful and Gracious.

Truly, those who were before them have deceived their prophets. I have punished them for their deceit, and my punishment is severe and strong.

Truly, God has destroyed 'Ád and Šamúd³ on account of what they did and has made them as a memorial to you, but ye did not believe. And He did the same with regard to

¹ A reference to the Shí'ah interpretation of Súratu Húd xi. 20, according to which 'Alí proceeds from Muḥammad.

² 'Alí is called رسول الله ومي—executor of the Prophet of God.

³ The tribe of 'Ád dwelt to the north of Mecca and that of Šamúd near by. The prophet Húd was rejected by the 'Ádites and the prophet Šálh by the Šamúdites. These men were probably Jewish teachers or Christian evangelists. The destruction of the tribes is referred to in Súratu'l-A'ráf vii. 71-7, and the Súratu'l-Fajr lxxxix. 5-13. Muḥammad attributed the disappearance of these tribes to supernatural causes, but a very simple explanation of the fact can be given. The Roman merchants, by opening up direct communication between the Indian Ocean and Suez, destroyed to a great extent the caravan trade of Arabia. Syria and Northern Arabia also became the arena of conflict between Persia and Byzantium. The whole country fell into disorder, cities were ruined and the people in large numbers returned to a wandering life and some tribes disappeared altogether. Muḥammad made skilful use of a perfectly natural event to show how divine vengeance followed a people who rejected a prophet. Assuming that this súra is genuine, it is a warning to people who might be tempted to reject him.

Pharaoh for his opposition to Moses and his brother Aaron. He drowned him and all who followed him as a sign to you, yet most of you are perverse. Truly, God will gather them together in the day of resurrection, and they will not be able to answer when questioned; for them is the Hell, for God is Knowing and Wise.

O Prophet! publish my warnings, perhaps they will follow them. In truth, they who turned from my signs and my orders have perished. As to those who keep thy covenant, I reward them with the Paradise of delights. Truly, God is the pardoner and the great rewarder.

Truly, 'Alí is one of the pious men, and we will restore his rights to him at the Day of Judgement. We are not ignorant of the injustice done to Him. We have exalted him above all thy family, and he and his posterity are patient and his enemies are the chief of sinners.

Say to those who have disbelieved after they had believed, 'You have sought the glory of worldly life and have hastened to gain it, and have forgotten what God and His prophet promised you, and you broke the promises after a strict order about them.' We have given you examples, perhaps, you may be guided.

O Prophet! We have sent thee manifest signs; in them are shown who will believe on him ('Alí) and who after thee will turn away from him ('Alí).

Turn from them; certainly they turn aside and certainly we will summon them on the Day (of Judgement), when nothing shall avail them and no one shall pity them. Truly, there is a place for them in Hell and they shall not return. Praise the name of thy Lord and be of those who worship Him.

Truly, we sent Moses and Aaron with what was needed and they rebelled against Aaron, Patience is good, so we changed them to monkeys and pigs,¹ and have cursed them

¹ Súratu'l-Baqara ii. 62; Súratu'l-Má'ida v. 65; Súratu'l-A'râf vii. 166.

In the first and third of these references, the punishment is awarded on account of Sabbath breaking, in the second for the rejection of the Scriptures. It is not in any way connected with Moses and

till the day of resurrection. Be patient, they will be punished. We have sent thee an order, as we did to preceding prophets. We have appointed to thee a successor from among them: perhaps they will return. He who turns from my order, from him I will turn, they get but little benefit from their unbelief. Do not ask about those who break the law.

O Prophet! We have made for thee a compact on the neck of those who believe; possess it and be of the number of those who are thankful.

Truly, 'Alí is constant in prayer at night making the prescribed prostrations, and he fears the Last Day and hopes for mercy from his God.

Say, 'How can those be compared who make tyranny, and those who know my troubles.' They will place charms on their necks and they will repent of their works.

We gave good news to thee of pious descendants, and they will not be disobedient; my peace and my mercy is on them, living or dead, and on the day when they shall rise again. My anger is on those who after thee transgress amongst them. Truly, they are a bad people and will wander from the right way; but those who go on in the way, on them is my mercy and they will be safe in the lofty rooms (of Paradise).

Praise be to the Lord of both worlds. Amen.

The following is the Arabic text of this Súra.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِالنُّورَيْنِ أَتَيْنَا هُمَا يَتْلُوَانِ عَلَيْكُمُ آيَاتِي وَيُخَوِّدَانِيكُم
عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ٥ نُورَانِ بَعْضُهُمَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَإِنَّا لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٥ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
يُؤْفِقُونَ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولَهُ فِي آيَاتٍ دَلَّاهُمْ جَنَاتٍ نَعِيمٍ ٥ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ
بَعْدِ مَا آمَنُوا بِنَفْسِهِمْ مَیْقَاتَهُمْ لَا وَمَا عَاهَدَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْهِ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ فِي الْجَحِيمِ ٥

Aaron. The orthodox leaders, therefore, hold this passage to be spurious and so the whole Súra to be void of any authority.

مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ۝ وَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ بِمَا اسْتُخْلِفَ فِيهِ تَبِعُوا هَارُونَ
فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ فَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ الْفِرْدَوْسَ الْأَعْلَىٰ وَالْخَازِئِرَ وَالْعَنَّاهُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يَبْعَثُونَ ۝ فَأَمَّا
يَسُوفَ يَبْكُونَ ۝ وَقَدْ أَتَيْنَا بِكَ الْحُكْمَ كَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ۝
وَجَعَلْنَا لَكَ مِنْهُمْ رِصَالًا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ۝ وَمَنْ يَقُولْ عَنِ امْرِئِي فَأَنْتَىٰ مَرْجِعُهُ ۖ
فَلْيَتَمَتَّعُوا بِكُفْرِهِمْ قَلِيلًا ۖ فَلَا تَسْأَلُ عَنِ النَّاكِثِينَ ۝ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ قَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَكَ
فِي أَعْيُنِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَهْدًا ۖ فَخُذْهُ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّكَّارِينَ ۝ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا فَاكِهًا
بِالْأَيْلِ مَسَاجِدًا ۖ يَخْتَرُ الْأَعْرَاجَ وَيَرْجُو ثَوَابَ رَبِّهِ ۖ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَهُمْ
بِعَذَابِي يَعْلَمُونَ ۝ سَيَجْعَلُ الْأَعْلَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ ۖ وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْمَالِهِمْ يَنْدِمُونَ ۝
إِنَّا بَشَرْنَاكَ بِذِكْرِكَ الْفَالِاحِينَ ۝ وَانْهَمِ لَامِرًا لَا يَخْلُقُونَ ۝ فَعَلَيْهِمْ مِتْيَ مَلُوءٌ
وَرَحْمَةٌ أَحْيَاءُ أَوْ أَمْوَاتًا وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ ۝ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ
عَقَابٌ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ خَاسِرِينَ ۝ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ سَلَكَوا مَسَاجِدَهُمْ مِتْيَ
رَحْمَةً ۖ وَهُمْ فِي الْغُرَفَاتِ آمِنُونَ ۝ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ آمِينَ - تم

مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ۝ وَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ بِمَا اسْتُخْلِفَ فِيهِ تَبِعُوا هَارُونَ
فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ ۖ فَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ الْفِرْدَوْسَ الْأَعْلَىٰ وَالْخَازِئِرَ وَالْعَنَّاهُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يَبْعَثُونَ ۝ فَأَمَّا
يَسُوفَ يَبْكُونَ ۝ وَقَدْ أَتَيْنَا بِكَ الْحُكْمَ كَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ۝
وَجَعَلْنَا لَكَ مِنْهُمْ رِصَالًا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ۝ وَمَنْ يَقُولْ عَنِ امْرِئِي فَأَنْتَىٰ مَرْجِعُهُ ۖ
فَلْيَتَمَتَّعُوا بِكُفْرِهِمْ قَلِيلًا ۖ فَلَا تَسْأَلُ عَنِ النَّاكِثِينَ ۝ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ قَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَكَ
فِي أَعْيُنِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَهْدًا ۖ فَخُذْهُ وَكُنْ مِنَ الشَّكَّارِينَ ۝ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا فَاكِهًا
بِالْأَيْلِ مَسَاجِدًا ۖ يَخْتَرُ الْأَعْرَاجَ وَيَرْجُو ثَوَابَ رَبِّهِ ۖ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَهُمْ
بِعَذَابِي يَعْلَمُونَ ۝ سَيَجْعَلُ الْأَعْلَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ ۖ وَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْمَالِهِمْ يَنْدِمُونَ ۝
إِنَّا بَشَرْنَاكَ بِذِكْرِكَ الْفَالِاحِينَ ۝ وَانْهَمِ لَامِرًا لَا يَخْلُقُونَ ۝ فَعَلَيْهِمْ مِتْيَ مَلُوءٌ
وَرَحْمَةٌ أَحْيَاءُ أَوْ أَمْوَاتًا وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُونَ ۝ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ
عَقَابٌ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ خَاسِرِينَ ۝ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ سَلَكَوا مَسَاجِدَهُمْ مِتْيَ
رَحْمَةً ۖ وَهُمْ فِي الْغُرَفَاتِ آمِنُونَ ۝ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ آمِينَ - تم

M. Garcin de Tassy, in a foot-note to Mírzá Kázim Beg's article, expresses the great joy he feels at the discovery of this unknown Súra,¹ and he evidently considers that it is not to be lightly set aside. He thinks that there is nothing improbable in the idea that it was recited by Muḥammad and that it formed part of 'Alí's copy; but he does not consider himself bound to uphold its authenticity,

¹ Je suis charmé d'avoir appelé attention des orientalistes sur le chapitre du Coran inconnu jusqu'à l'époque où je le publiai, l'an passé, pour la première fois.—*Journal Asiatique*, Décembre, 1843, p. 427.

while on the other hand he declines to say that it is a forgery.

On the whole, the weight of evidence seems to be against the Shí'ah claim. 'Alí and his followers were a powerful body during the *Khalífate* of 'Uthmán; they must have known very well whatever the Prophet had said about 'Alí; and it is not easy to believe that, powerful as they were, they would have allowed 'Uthmán to suppress all such passages. Then when 'Alí became *Khalífa* he could, if he had so willed, have produced his copy of the Qur'án. The passions raised by civil war were already so strong, that it is not likely that such an action as that would have so increased them as to lead to still further danger to the *Khalífate*. The fact is that the cult of 'Alí, a most curious and interesting phase of religious thought, is of very much later growth; and when it developed it needed all the support that these supposed revelations could give it.

The Qádiání commentator dismisses the Shí'ah claim in his usual contemptuous manner by calling their views absurd and says of Jalalu'd-Dín Syúfí, author of the *Itqán*, that he is 'looked upon as the last person on whom any reliance can be placed.' He also says concerning the Shí'ah statement about omissions in the Qur'án that it 'is largely the ignorant masses' that think so.¹

The way in which the various recensions were made and the need for them shows that the Qur'án, like other ancient books, is open to criticism, and that the orthodox mechanical view of inspiration

¹ *Holy Qur'án*, pp. lxxvi, lxxvii, xc. 1.

needs to be very much modified; but they do not prove that the present copies are not authentic. We may accept these recensions as the work of men who dealt faithfully with the material before them, and, if there are omissions, we may believe that they were unintentional. The real drawback to the inestimable value of the Qur'án, as a contemporary record of the Prophet's actions, is its bad arrangement, which makes it very difficult to follow the development of the Prophet's mind. Nothing is lost, but much is to be gained by a reverent criticism of the Qur'án. A book, which commands the reverence of so many millions of the human race is worthy of the closest critical study, for, 'at the present day every literary product of a past age is subjected to a minute and searching examination before it can be assigned to its proper place in history, and before the contribution it makes to history and to the development of life can be properly appreciated.'¹

The Qur'án is the great bond of union between all the sects of Islám. Men may differ on the expression of some difficult passages; in the details of its exegesis there is some variety; but all reverence the letter, though they may not imbibe its spirit. It has given rise to a vast and varied literature. Its decision is final in all controversies of faith. Side by side with it has grown up a vast body of tradition, on which the Sunna—a most important factor in the religion of Islám—is based; but the most interesting of all studies to the young Muslim is still the Qur'án, its grammar and its commentaries. Every Muslim must learn some portion

¹ *Contentio Veritas*, p. 22.

by heart, and to learn the whole is an act of great merit. This feat, however, will be of little use unless the Háfiz, when reciting it, observes all the rules and regulations framed for such an act. This recital is called *tiláwat*, -but before any one can recite correctly he must have some acquaintance with what is called 'Ilmu't-Tajwíd. This includes a knowledge of the punctuation and peculiar spelling (*Rasmu'l-Khaṭṭ*) of the Qur'án. The subject is too technical to enter fully upon here, so I only give a brief outline of the subject.¹

The object of the special punctuation is to show the reciter where proper pauses are to be made. These pauses are elaborated in great detail. Each has its appropriate symbol, which is written (or printed) in the text of the Qur'án. Thus a necessary pause is called *Waqf-i-lázim* (وقف لازم) and its sign is م. In *Suratu'l-Baqara* ii. 7 'yet are they not believers م. Fain would they deceive God.' if there were no *waqf* after believers it would seem as if believers would deceive God. *Waqf-i-Muṭlaq* (وقف مطلق) is used where its absence would affect the sense. Thus, 'King of the day of reckoning thee only do we worship' (*Súratu'l-Fátiḥa* i. 3-4). The sign of this *waqf* is ط and so we read 'King of the day of reckoning ط thee only do we worship.' The reason is that between the expression of God's attributes and man's need, a pause must be made. Some pauses are optional, the signs of which are ج and ج. These are all ancient; in later days others

¹ A full account will be found in my book, '*Ilmu't-Tajwíd*, published by the C. L. S.

were invented. The *Waqf-i-Ghufrán*, the pause of pardon, is one of great merit. It is observed in nine places¹ and he who does so, according to a tradition, will enter into paradise. There are many more symbols, which we need not mention as they do not affect the sense.

Muslims, when quoting from the Qur'án, if they wish to indicate the position of the verse quoted, name the *juz* and the *rukú'*, not the *Súra* and verse, so the *juz* must be marked in the margin. A *juz* is one-thirtieth part of the whole book. Each *juz* has a distinct name, the first word of each portion serves for this purpose.

The term *rukú'* literally means a prostration. The recital of verses from the Qur'án, ascriptions of praise to God, and various ritual acts connected with these constitute one act of worship called a *rak'at*. After reciting some verses in a *rak'at*, the worshipper makes a *rukú'* or prostration. The portion recited is then called a *rukú'*. Practically it is a division of about ten verses. It is comparatively easy to verify a quotation if the *juz* and the *rukú'* are named, but few Muslim authors give such directions. Every theologian is supposed to know the Qur'án by heart, and so it is considered quite superfluous to give chapter and verse, or *juz* and *rukú'*, in connection with the quotation. In the Qur'án the number of the *rukú'* is noted in the margin.²

¹ *Súras* v. 56; vi. 36; xxxiii. 18; xxxvi. 11, 29, 52, 61, 81; lxvii. 19.

² The sign of a *rukú'* is ع written in the margin. Frequently it

occurs with as many as three figures, thus ع. The ع (3) on the

The various Qárís state the number of verses differently, owing to placing the full stop, the sign of which is o, in different positions. According to the qirá'at of the Qárí 'Āsim there are 6,239 verses, the Baṣra Qárís make out 6,204, the Qárís of Shám (Syria) 6,225.

All copies should now follow the recension of the Khalfā 'Uthmān. Any one who alters a pause, or a letter, even if the sense is not affected, is guilty of a very grave offence. To make a correct copy is difficult, because the spelling of many words in the Qur'án follows special or peculiar rules, to which again there are many exceptions. This is known as the Rasmu'l-Khaṭṭ (رسم الخط). This copying is a technical art and so we need not go into its minute details; but it shows the great care taken to make all copies coincide with the authorized recension.¹

After all, leaving these minute details, it is more important to discover by historical criticism the order in which the various portions of the Qur'án were delivered, and this, by applying to it the general principles of the Higher Criticism, I have tried to show in my *Historical Development of the Qur'án*.²

In 1895 Dr. Agnes Smith Lewis in Suez secured a palimpsest manuscript of rare value. After a re-agent had been applied, some passages of the

top shows that this is the third rukū' from the commencement of the Sūra in which it occurs; the ٩ (9) in the centre gives the number of verses in this rukū'; the ٨ (8) at the bottom shows that this is the eighth rukū' in the juz.

¹ For a complete account see my *Ilmu't-Tajwīd*, pp. 22-37.

² Simpkin, Marshall, Kent, Hamilton & Co., London; Diocesan Press, Madras.

Qur'án were found written beneath the more recent Syrian script. These are written on vellum, and are believed to be words spoken by the Prophet and then written down by Zayd ibn Thábit. When 'Uthmān, after his recension, ordered all copies to be destroyed, this copy of a part of the Qur'án apparently escaped. Vellum could not easily be destroyed, and, as it was scarce and dear, probably the owner, after erasing as far as possible the Arabic script, sold it. Then it was used for a Syrian script. The recovered Arabic verses have now been published¹ and Professor Mingana has annotated the book and has prefaced it by a valuable introduction, describing the two great recensions.

We have now seen that the orthodox Sunnī view is that the Qur'án is the uncreated word of God, which existed from all eternity as one of the attributes of God, and that the whole book, as it stood in heaven, was gradually revealed word by word to the Prophet. This is assumed to be the form of a perfect and final revelation. The great difficulty which scholars find in accepting this theory arises from the fact that parts of its contents were drawn, as we have seen, from pre-existing materials; that Muḥammad left no written copy; that we only know its contents from what people, doubtless in good faith, say that he said; that there were differences of opinion regarding the correctness of some of these reports; that not one only but two recensions had to be made and that one large section of Muslims alleged that important passages had been omitted. Clearly intelligent Muslim scholars must change

¹ The Cambridge University Press,

their views on the old orthodox mechanical idea of inspiration. It is not easy to credit Gabriel or any other angel with bringing some portions of the revelation. 'But there is a wide range of experience in which a man of prophetic power, of divine visions and communings, might often lose himself, and mistake memories, fragments of forgotten knowledge, germinating imaginations and aspirations for words of God.'¹ The Modernist school in Islám is moving in the right direction. Sayyid Amír 'Alí attributes the present stagnation of Islám to the fact that the right of private judgement ceased with the early legists of Islám and that its exercise in modern times is sinful.² Maulavi Cherágh 'Alí says, 'It is only from some oversight on the part of compilers of the Common Law that, in the first place, the civil precepts of a transitory nature were taken as final.'³

I have already referred to the views of this learned Maulavi on inspiration, but I may conveniently repeat them here. He says, 'A prophet feels that his mind is illumined by God and the thoughts which are expressed by him, and spoken or written under His influence, are to be regarded as the words of God. This illumination of the mind, or effect of the divine influence, differs in the prophet, according to the capacity of the recipient, or according to the circumstances in which he is placed.'⁴ This effectively disposes of the orthodox mechanical idea of inspiration. All this leaves

¹ *British Quarterly*, April 1877, p. 346.

² *Spirit of Islám*, p. 287.

³ *Critical Exposition of Jihād*, p. xcii.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. xix.

room for a more liberal system of interpretation and for an exegesis based on sound historical criticism. Whether any considerable body of Muslims will escape from the bondage of taqlíd, which may be defined as blind submission to ecclesiastical authority¹ and precedent, and follow these great leaders is yet to be seen.² There are indications in some parts of such a change. If an intelligent Muslim really believes in all that his orthodox leaders teach him about the inviolability of the Qur'án, he ought not to fear the application of the laws of the Higher Criticism to its origin, structure and teaching. They must cease to look upon criticism of their sacred book as an act of disrespect. Whatever view Oriental scholars may take of it, they will admit that it is a great book³ and worthy of the honour of the most searching criticism. In these days all ancient Scriptures are without hesitation subject to critical investigation. This is a mark of honour paid to them and a great appreciation of their value, and this honour is paid to the Qur'án when it is critically examined. Nawab Muhsinu'l-Mulk, a former Financial Secretary in Hyderabad, pleaded fervently for a more liberal attitude amongst Muslims and thus, perhaps in too

¹ Maulavi Cherágh 'Alí says, 'No regard is to be paid to the opinions and theories of the Muqallids.' *Reforms under Muslim Rule*, p. vii.

² A Turkish patriot said, 'Since, for the confusion of Islám, the prohibition of free criticism and exegesis has become a fundamental dogma of Islámic orthodoxy, it is hardly possible to conceive any modifications which, Islámically speaking, would not be heresies.' *Fortnightly Review*, May, 1897, p. 649. Quite recently the book of a learned majtahid, who advocated free intercourse with Christians and Jews, was confiscated in 'Irâq. *RASJ*, January 1928, p. 202.

³ See Rodwell's *Qur'án* (p. 15) for an appreciation of what is good in it.

pessimistic a tone, concluded his appeal in these words, ' Unless a miracle of reform takes place, we Muḥammadans are doomed to extinction, and shall have deserved our fate.'¹

The following statement by an able scholar in our own day, who has made a profound study of the Islāmic system, is worthy of close attention. He says, ' Christianity escaped from its scholastic shell at the Reformation. Islām still awaits that deliverance and new birth. The West has outstripped the East in science and culture, and is busy just now in paying back the debt it owed to Islām since the revival of learning in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. What will be the effect upon Islām of the infusion of the Western spirit into the East it is impossible to say. At present Islām is doing what it did before, falling back upon tradition. It will learn from the West in everything but religion. But when new life begins to stir no religion can permanently rest upon tradition. Sooner or later the new spirit must affect it. There are indications that it is already beginning to do so, especially in India and Egypt. At any rate the scholastic system of Muḥammadan theology is bound to be loosened and Islām will begin to adapt itself to the modern spirit.'²

The teaching of Christ rests upon His sacred and holy life ; that of Muḥammad is bound up with the letter of a book.

¹ *Causes of the Decline of the Muḥammadan Nation*, p. 80.

² Bell, *The Origin of Islām in its Christian Environment*, p. 216. This is a valuable work which all students of Islām should carefully study.

So, while the world rolls on from change to change,
And realms of thought expand,
The letter stands without expanse or range,
Stiff as a dead man's hand.¹

While, as the life-blood fills the growing form,
The spirit Christ has shed
Flows through the ripening ages fresh and warm,
More felt than heard, or read,

And, therefore, though ancestral sympathies,
And closest ties of race,
May guard Muḥammad's precept and decrees
Through many a tract of space,

Yet in the end the tight-drawn line must break,
The sapless tree must fall,
Nor let the form one time did well to take
Be tyrant over all.

The tide of things rolls forward, surge on surge,
Bringing the blessed hour,
When in Himself the God of Love shall merge
The God of Will and Power.

Lord Houghton.

Possessed of a highly dogmatic system, the dogmas of which are sharp and well defined ; accepting a law supposed to be divine, complete and final ; looking back to a history which records many former successful worldly conquests, with occasioned gleams of borrowed splendour—the Muslim stands erect, proud to be such, and too often scornful of other men and other creeds. Has the Church ever

¹ ' Slavish adherence to the letter, and the taking not the least notice of the spirit of the Qur'ân is the sad characteristic of the Qur'ānic interpreters and of the deductions of the Muḥammadan doctors. . . . A social system for barbarism ought not to be imposed on a people already possessing higher forms of civilization.' Cherāgh 'Alī, *Reforms under Muslim Rule*, p. ii.

realized the greatness of the forces thus arranged against her, or estimated aright the difficulties to be overcome? Century after century passed by and the Church was silent. When, then, we remember our past neglect, the points of contact in some matters of belief between us and Muslims, the conscious groping for light some of them have shown, the repudiation of much that is narrow, superstitious and immoral by a few imbued with a modern spirit and with a wider outlook, whose ideas will doubtless more and more affect the thinking classes—when we remember all these things, are we not distinctly called upon to try and understand this great Islámic system, and then to seek to win the Muslim for his rightful Lord and Master, and to set before him with earnest love and patient sympathy the grace, the glory, and the power of Him, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life?

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