example, by his shabby treatment of the poet Firdawsí. Nevertheless, he ardently desired the glory and prestige accruing to a sovereign whose court formed the rallying-point of all that was best in the literary and scientific culture of the day, and such was Ghazna in the eleventh century. Besides the brilliant group of Persian poets, with Firdawsí at their head, we may mention among the Arabic-writing authors who flourished under this dynasty the historians al-'Utbí and al-Bírúní.

The Ḥamdánids (929–1003 A.D.).

While the Eastern Empire of Islam was passing into the hands of Persians and Turks, we find the Arabs still holding their own in Syria and Mesopotamia down to the end of the tenth century. These Arab and generally nomadic dynasties were seldom of much account. The Ḥamdánids of Aleppo alone deserve to be noticed here, and that chiefly for the sake of the peerless Sayfu 'l-Dawla, a worthy descendant of the tribe of Taghlib, which in the days of heathendom produced the poet-warrior, 'Amr b. Kulthúm. 'Abdulláh b. Ḥamdán was appointed governor of Mosul and its dependencies by the Caliph Muktafí in 905 A.D., and in 942 his sons Ḥasan and 'Alí received the complimentary titles of Náṣiru 'l-Dawla (Defender of the State) and Sayfu 'l-Dawla (Sword of the State). Two years later Sayfu 'l-Dawla captured Aleppo and brought the whole of Northern Syria under his dominion. During a reign of twenty-three years he was continuously engaged in harrying the Byzantines on the frontiers of Asia Minor, but although he gained some glorious victories, which his laureate Mutanabbí has immortalised, the fortune of war went in the long run steadily against him, and his successors were unable to preserve their little kingdom from being crushed between the Byzantines in the north and the Fáṭimids in the south. The Ḥamdánids have an especial claim on our sympathy, because they revived for a time the fast-decaying and already almost broken spirit of Arabian nationalism. It is this spirit that

speaks with a powerful voice in Mutanabbí and declares itself, for example, in such verses as these :— [1]

> "Men from their kings alone their worth derive,
> But Arabs ruled by aliens cannot thrive :
> Boors without culture, without noble fame,
> Who know not loyalty and honour's name.
> Go where thou wilt, thou seest in every land
> Folk driven like cattle by a servile band."

The reputation which Sayfu 'l-Dawla's martial exploits and his repeated triumphs over the enemies of Islam richly earned for him in the eyes of his contemporaries was enhanced by the conspicuous energy and munificence with which he cultivated the arts of peace. Considering the brevity of his reign and the relatively small extent of his resources, we may well be astonished to contemplate the unique assemblage of literary talent then mustered in Aleppo. There was, first of all, Mutanabbí, in the opinion of his countrymen the greatest of Moslem poets ; there was Sayfu 'l-Dawla's cousin, the chivalrous Abú Firás, whose war-songs are relieved by many a touch of tender and true feeling ; there was Abu 'l-Faraj of Iṣfahán, who on presenting to Sayfu 'l-Dawla his *Kitábu 'l-Aghání*, one of the most celebrated and important works in all Arabic literature, received one thousand pieces of gold accompanied with an expression of regret that the prince was obliged to remunerate him so inadequately ; there was also the great philosopher, Abú Naṣr al-Fárábí, whose modest wants were satisfied by a daily pension of four dirhems (about two shillings) from the public treasury. Surely this is a record not easily surpassed even in the heyday of 'Abbásid patronage. As for the writers of less note whom Sayfu 'l-Dawla attracted to Aleppo, their name is legion. Space must be found for the poets Sarí al-Raffá, Abu 'l-'Abbás al-Námí, and Abu 'l-Faraj al-Babbaghá ;

The circle of Sayfu 'l-Dawla.

[1] Mutanabbí, ed. by Dieterici, p. 148, last line and foll.

for the preacher (*khaṭíb*) Ibn Nubáta, who would often rouse the enthusiasm of his audience while he urged the duty of zealously prosecuting the Holy War against Christian Byzantium; and for the philologist Ibn Khálawayh, whose lectures were attended by students from all parts of the Muḥammadan world. The literary renaissance which began at this time in Syria was still making its influence felt when Tha'álibí wrote his *Yatíma*, about thirty years after the death of Sayfu 'l-Dawla, and it produced in Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí (born 973 A.D.) an original and highly interesting personality, to whom we shall return on another occasion.

The Fáṭimids (909–1171 A.D.).

The dynasties hitherto described were political in their origin, having generally been founded by ambitious governors or vassals. These upstarts made no pretensions to spiritual authority, which they left in the hands of the Caliph even while they forced him at the sword's point to recognise their political independence. The Sámánids and Buwayhids, Shí'ites as they were, paid the same homage to the Pontiff in Baghdád as did the Sunnite Ghaznevids. But in the beginning of the tenth century there arose in Africa a great Shí'ite power, that of the Fáṭimids, who took for themselves the title and spiritual prerogatives of the Caliphate, which they asserted to be theirs by right Divine. This event was only the climax of a deep-laid and skilfully organised plot—one of the most extraordinary in all history. It had been put in train half a century earlier by a certain 'Abdulláh the son of Maymún, a Persian oculist (*qaddáḥ*) belonging to Aḥwáz. Filled with a fierce hatred of the Arabs and with a free-thinker's contempt for Islam, 'Abdulláh b. Maymún 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*. Modern readers may find a parallel for this romantic project in the pages of Dumas, although the Aramis of *Twenty Years After* is a simpleton beside 'Abdulláh. He saw that the movement, in order to succeed, must be started on a religious basis, and he therefore identified himself with an obscure Shí'ite sect, the Ismá'ílís, who were so called because they regarded Muḥammad, son of Ismá'íl, son of Ja'far al-Ṣádiq, as the Seventh Imám. Under 'Abdulláh the Ismá'ílís developed their mystical and antinomian doctrines, of which an excellent account has been given by Professor Browne in the first volume of his *Literary History of Persia* (p. 405 sqq.). Here we can only refer to the ingenious and fatally insidious methods which he devised for gaining proselytes on a gigantic scale, and with such amazing success that from this time until the Mongol invasion—a period of almost four centuries—the Ismá'ílites (Fáṭimids, Carmathians, and Assassins) either ruled or ravaged a great part of the Muḥammadan Empire. It is unnecessary to discuss the question whether 'Abdulláh b. Maymún was, as Professor Browne thinks, primarily a religious enthusiast, or whether, according to the view commonly held, his real motives were patriotism and personal ambition. The history of Islam shows clearly enough that the revolutionist is nearly always disguised as a religious leader, while, on the other hand, every founder of a militant sect is potentially the head of a state. 'Abdulláh may have been a fanatic first and a politician afterwards; more probably he was both at once from the beginning. His plan of operations was briefly as follows :—

The Ismá'ílite propaganda.

The *dá'í* or missionary charged with the task of gaining adherents for the Hidden Imám (see p. 216 seq.), in whose name allegiance was demanded, would settle in some place, representing himself to be a merchant, Ṣúfí, or the like. By renouncing worldly pleasures, making a show of strict piety, and performing apparent miracles, it was easy for him to pass as a saint with the common folk. As soon

as he was assured of his neighbours' confidence and respect, he began to raise doubts in their minds. He would suggest difficult problems of theology or dwell on the mysterious significance of certain passages of the Koran. May there not be (he would ask) in religion itself a deeper meaning than appears on the surface? Then, having excited the curiosity of his hearers, he suddenly breaks off. When pressed to continue his explanation, he declares that such mysteries cannot be communicated save to those who take a binding oath of secrecy and obedience and consent to pay a fixed sum of money in token of their good faith. If these conditions were accepted, the neophyte entered upon the second of the nine degrees of initiation. He was taught that mere observance of the laws of Islam is not pleasing to God, unless the true doctrine be received through the Imáms who have it in keeping. These Imáms (as he next learned) are seven in number, beginning with 'Alí; the seventh and last is Muḥammad, son of Ismá'íl. On reaching the fourth degree he definitely ceased to be a Moslem, for here he was taught the Ismá'ilite system of theology in which Muḥammad b. Ismá'íl supersedes the founder of Islam as the greatest and last of all the Prophets. Comparatively few initiates advanced beyond this grade to a point where every form of positive religion was allegorised away, and only philosophy was left. "It is clear what a tremendous weapon, or rather machine, was thus created. Each man was given the amount of light which he could bear and which was suited to his prejudices, and he was made to believe that the end of the whole work would be the attaining of what he regarded as most desirable."[1] Moreover, the Imám Muḥammad b. Ismá'íl having disappeared long ago, the veneration which sought a visible object was naturally transferred to his successor and representative on earth, viz., 'Abdulláh b. Maymún, who filled the same office in relation to him as Aaron to Moses and 'Alí to Muḥammad.

About the middle of the ninth century the state of the Moslem Empire was worse, if possible, than it had been in the latter days of Umayyad rule. The peasantry of 'Iráq were impoverished by the desolation into which that flourishing province was beginning to fall in consequence of the frequent and prolonged civil wars. In 869 A.D. the negro slaves (*Zanj*) employed in the saltpetre industry, for which Basra was famous, took up arms at the call of an 'Alid Messiah, and

[1] D. B. Macdonald, *Muslim Theology*, p. 43 seq.

during fourteen years carried fire and sword through Khúzistán and the adjacent territory. We can imagine that all this misery and discontent was a godsend to the Ismá'ílites. The old cry, "A deliverer of the Prophet's House," which served the 'Abbásids so well against the Umayyads, was now raised with no less effect against the 'Abbásids themselves.

'Abdulláh b. Maymún died in 875 A.D., but the agitation went on, and rapidly gathered force. One of the leading spirits was Ḥamdán Qarmaṭ, who gave his name to the Carmathian branch of the Ismá'ílís. These Carmathians (*Qarámiṭa*, sing. *Qirmiṭí*) spread over Southern Persia and Yemen, and in the tenth century they threatened Baghdád, repeatedly waylaid the pilgrim-caravans, sacked Mecca and bore away the Black Stone as a trophy; in short, established a veritable reign of terror. We must return, however, to the main Ismá'ílite faction headed by the descendants of 'Abdulláh b. Maymún. Their emissaries discovered a promising field of work in North Africa among the credulous and fanatical Berbers. When all was ripe, Sa'íd b. Ḥusayn, the grandson of 'Abdulláh b. Maymún, left Salamiyya in Syria, the centre from which the wires had hitherto been pulled, and crossing over to Africa appeared as the long-expected Mahdí under the name of 'Ubaydu'lláh. He gave himself out to be a great-grandson of the Imám Muḥammad b. Ismá'íl and therefore in the direct line of descent from 'Alí b. Abí Ṭálib and Fáṭima the daughter of the Prophet. We need not stop to discuss this highly questionable genealogy from which the Fáṭimid dynasty derives its name. In 910 A.D. 'Ubaydu'lláh entered Raqqáda in triumph and assumed the title of Commander of the Faithful. Tunis, where the Aghlabites had ruled since 800 A.D., was the cradle of Fáṭimid power, and here they built their capital, Mahdiyya, near the ancient Thapsus. Gradually advancing eastward, they conquered Egypt and Syria as far as Damascus (969–970 A.D.). At this

The Fáṭimid dynasty founded by the Mahdí 'Ubaydu'lláh (909 A.D.).

time the seat of government was removed to the newly-founded city of Cairo (*al-Qáhira*), which remained for two centuries the metropolis of the Fáṭimid Empire.[1]

The Shí'ite Anti-Caliphs maintained themselves in Egypt until 1171 A.D., when the famous Saladin (Ṣaláḥu 'l-Dín b. Ayyúb) took possession of that country and restored the Sunnite faith. He soon added Syria to his dominions, and "the fall of Jerusalem (in 1187) roused Europe to undertake the Third Crusade." The Ayyúbids were strictly orthodox, as behoved the champions of Islam against Christianity. They built and endowed many theological colleges. The Ṣúfí pantheist, Shihábu 'l-Dín Yaḥyá al-Suhrawardí, was executed at Aleppo by order of Saladin's son, Malik al-Ẓáhir, in 1191 A.D.

The Ayyúbids (1171–1250 A.D.).

The two centuries preceding the extinction of the 'Abbásid Caliphate by the Mongols witnessed the rise and decline of the Seljúq Turks, who "once more re-united Muḥammadan Asia from the western frontier of Afghanistan to the Mediterranean under one sovereign." Seljúq b. Tuqáq was a Turcoman chief. Entering Transoxania, he settled near Bukhárá and went over with his whole people to Islam. His descendants, Ṭughril Beg and Chagar Beg, invaded Khurásán, annexed the western provinces of the Ghaznevid Empire, and finally absorbed the remaining dominions of the Buwayhids. Baghdád was occupied by Ṭughril Beg in 1055 A.D. It has been said that the Seljúqs contributed almost nothing to culture, but this perhaps needs some qualification. Although Alp Arslán, who succeeded Ṭughril, and his son Malik Sháh devoted their energies in the first place to military affairs, the

The Seljúqs (1037–1300 A.D.).

[1] I regret that lack of space compels me to omit the further history of the Fáṭimids. Readers who desire information on this subject may consult Stanley Lane-Poole's *History of Egypt in the Middle Ages*; Wüstenfeld's *Geschichte der Fatimiden-Chalifen* (Göttingen, 1881); and Professor Browne's *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 196 sqq.

latter at least was an accomplished and enlightened monarch. "He exerted himself to spread the benefits of civilisation: he dug numerous canals, walled a great number of cities, built bridges, and constructed *ribáṭs* in the desert places."[1] He was deeply interested in astronomy, and scientific as well as theological studies received his patronage. Any shortcomings of Alp Arslán and Malik Sháh in this respect were amply repaired by their famous minister, Ḥasan b. 'Alí, the Niẓámu 'l-Mulk or 'Constable of the Empire,' to give him the title which he has made his own. Like so many great Viziers, he was a Persian, and his achievements must not detain us here, but it may be mentioned that he founded in Baghdád and Naysábúr the two celebrated academies which were called in his honour al-Niẓámiyya.

We have now taken a general, though perforce an extremely curtailed and disconnected, view of the political conditions which existed during the 'Abbásid period in most parts of the Muḥammadan Empire except Arabia and Spain. The motherland of Islam had long sunk to the level of a minor province: leaving the Holy Cities out of consideration, one might compare its inglorious destiny under the Caliphate to that of Macedonia in the empire which Alexander bequeathed to his successors, the Ptolemies and Seleucids. As regards the political history of Spain a few words will conveniently be said in a subsequent chapter, where the literature produced by Spanish Moslems will demand our attention. In the meantime we shall pass on to the characteristic literary developments of this period, which correspond more or less closely to the historical outlines.

Arabia and Spain.

The first thing that strikes the student of mediæval Arabic literature is the fact that a very large proportion of the leading writers are non-Arabs, or at best semi-Arabs, men whose fathers

[1] Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. iv, p. 441.

or mothers were of foreign, and especially Persian, race. They wrote in Arabic, because down to about 1000 A.D. that language was the sole medium of literary expression in the Muḥammadan world, a monopoly which it retained in scientific compositions until the Mongol Invasion of the thirteenth century. I have already referred to the question whether such men as Bashshár b. Burd, Abú Nuwás, Ibn Qutayba, Ṭabarí, Ghazálí, and hundreds of others should be included in a literary history of the Arabs, and have given reasons, which I need not repeat in this place, for considering their admission to be not only desirable but fully justified on logical grounds.[1] The absurdity of treating them as Persians—and there is no alternative, if they are not to be reckoned as Arabs—appears to me self-evident.

"It is strange," says Ibn Khaldún, "that most of the learned among the Moslems who have excelled in the religious or intellectual sciences are non-Arabs (*'Ajam*) with rare exceptions; and even those savants who claimed Arabian descent spoke a foreign language, grew up in foreign lands, and studied under foreign masters, notwithstanding that the community to which they belonged was Arabian and the author of its religion an Arab." The historian proceeds to explain the cause of this singular circumstance in an interesting passage which may be summarised as follows :—

Ibn Khaldún's explanation of the fact that learning was chiefly cultivated by the Persian Moslems.

The first Moslems were entirely ignorant of art and science, all their attention being devoted to the ordinances of the Koran, which they "carried in their breasts," and to the practice (*sunna*) of the Prophet. At that time the Arabs knew nothing of the way by which learning is taught, of the art of composing books, and of the means whereby knowledge is enregistered. Those, however, who could repeat the Koran and relate the Traditions of Muḥammad were called Readers (*qurrá*). This oral transmission continued until the reign of Hárún al-Rashíd, when the need of

[1] See the Introduction.

securing the Traditions against corruption or of preventing their total loss caused them to be set down in writing; and in order to distinguish the genuine Traditions from the spurious, every *isnád* (chain of witnesses) was carefully scrutinised. Meanwhile the purity of the Arabic tongue had gradually become impaired: hence arose the science of grammar; and the rapid development of Law and Divinity brought it about that other sciences, *e.g.*, logic and dialectic, were professionally cultivated in the great cities of the Muḥammadan Empire. The inhabitants of these cities were chiefly Persians, freedmen and tradesmen, who had been long accustomed to the arts of civilisation. Accordingly the most eminent of the early grammarians, traditionists, and scholastic theologians, as well as of those learned in the principles of Law and in the interpretation of the Koran, were Persians by race or education, and the saying of the Prophet was verified—"*If Knowledge were attached to the ends of the sky, some amongst the Persians would have reached it.*" Amidst all this intellectual activity the Arabs, who had recently emerged from a nomadic life, found the exercise of military and administrative command too engrossing to give them leisure for literary avocations which have always been disdained by a ruling caste. They left such studies to the Persians and the mixed race (*al-muwalladún*), which sprang from intermarriage of the conquerors with the conquered. They did not entirely look down upon the men of learning but recognised their services—since after all it was Islam and the sciences connected with Islam that profited thereby.[1]

Even in the Umayyad period, as we have seen, the maxim that Knowledge is Power was strikingly illustrated by the immense social influence which Persian divines exerted in the Muḥammadan community.[2] Nevertheless, true Arabs of the old type regarded these *Mawálí* and their learning with undisguised contempt. To the great majority of Arabs, who prided themselves on their noble lineage and were content to know nothing beyond the glorious traditions of heathendom and the virtues practised by their sires, all literary culture seemed petty and degrading. Their overbearing attitude

[1] Ibn Khaldún, *Muqaddima* (Beyrout, 1900), p. 543 seq.=De Slane, *Prolegomena*, vol iii, p. 296 sqq.

[2] *Cf.* Goldziher, *Muhamm. Studien*, Part I, p. 114 seq.

towards the *Mawálí*, which is admirably depicted in the first part of Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien*, met with a vigorous response. Non-Arabs and Moslem pietists alike appealed to the highest authority—the Koran ; and since they required a more definite and emphatic pronouncement than was forthcoming from that source, they put in the mouth of the Prophet sayings like these : "He that speaks Arabic is thereby an Arab" ; "whoever of the people of Persia accepts Islam is (as much an Arab as) one of Quraysh." This doctrine made no impression upon the Arabian aristocracy, but with the downfall of the Umayyads the political and social equality of the *Mawálí* became an accomplished fact. Not that the Arabs were at all disposed to abate their pretensions. They bitterly resented the favour which the foreigners enjoyed and the influence which they exercised. The national indignation finds a voice in many poems of the early 'Abbásid period, *e.g.* :—

"See how the asses which they used to ride
They have unsaddled, and sleek mules bestride !
No longer kitchen-herbs they buy and sell,[1]
But in the palace and the court they dwell ;
Against us Arabs full of rage and spleen,
Hating the Prophet and the Moslem's *dín*.[2]

The side of the non-Arabs in this literary quarrel was vehemently espoused by a party who called themselves the Shu'úbites (*al-Shu'úbiyya*),[3] while their opponents gave them

[1] Read *mashárati 'l-buqúl* (beds of vegetables), not *mushárát* as my rendering implies. The change makes little difference to the sense, but *mashára*, being an Aramaic word, is peculiarly appropriate here.

[2] *Aghání*, xii, 177, l. 5 sqq ; Von Kremer, *Culturgesch. Streifzüge*, p. 32. These lines are aimed, as has been remarked by S. Khuda Bukhsh (*Contributions to the History of Islamic Civilisation*, Calcutta, 1905, p. 92), against Nabaṭæans who falsely claimed to be Persians.

[3] The name is derived from Koran, xlix, 13 : "*O Men, We have created you of a male and a female and have made you into peoples* (shu'úb[an]) *and tribes, that ye might know one another. Verily the noblest of you in*

the name of Levellers (*Ahlu 'l-Taswiya*), because they contended for the equality of all Moslems without regard to distinctions of race. I must refer the reader who seeks information concerning the history of the movement to Goldziher's masterly study,[1] where the controversial methods adopted by the Shu'úbites are set forth in ample detail. He shows how the bolder spirits among them, not satisfied with claiming an *equal* position, argued that the Arabs were absolutely inferior to the Persians and other peoples. The question was hotly debated, and many eminent writers took part in the fray. On the Shu'úbite side Abú 'Ubayda, Bírúní, and Ḥamza of Iṣfahán deserve mention. Jáḥiẓ and Ibn Durayd were the most notable defenders of their own Arabian nationality, but the 'pro-Arabs' also included several men of Persian origin, such as Ibn Qutayba, Baládhurí, and Zamakhsharí. The Shu'úbites directed their attacks principally against the racial pride of the Arabs, who were fond of boasting that they were the noblest of all mankind and spoke the purest and richest language in the world. Consequently the Persian genealogists and philologists lost no opportunity of bringing to light scandalous and discreditable circumstances connected with the history of the Arab tribes or of particular families. Arabian poetry, especially the vituperative pieces (*mathálib*), furnished abundant matter of this sort, which was adduced by the Shu'úbites as convincing evidence that the claims of the Arabs to superior nobility were absurd. At the same time the national view as to the unique and incomparable excellence of the Arabic language received some rude criticism.

The Shu'úbites.

So acute and irreconcilable were the racial differences between Arabs and Persians that one is astonished to see how thoroughly the latter became Arabicised in the course of a

the sight of God are they that do most fear Him." Thus the designation 'Shu'úbite' emphasises the fact that according to Muḥammad's teaching the Arab Moslems are no better than their non-Arab brethren.

[1] *Muhamm. Studien*, Part I, p. 147 sqq.

few generations. As clients affiliated to an Arab tribe, they assumed Arabic names and sought to disguise their foreign extraction by fair means or foul. Many provided themselves with fictitious pedigrees, on the strength of which they passed for Arabs. Such a pretence could have deceived nobody if it had not been supported by a complete assimilation in language, manners, and even to some extent in character. On the neutral ground of Muḥammadan science animosities were laid aside, and men of both races laboured enthusiastically for the common cause. When at length, after a century of bloody strife and engrossing political agitation, the great majority of Moslems found themselves debarred from taking part in public affairs, it was only natural that thousands of ardent and ambitious souls should throw their pent-up energies into the pursuit of wealth or learning. We are not concerned here with the marvellous development of trade under the first 'Abbásid Caliphs, of which Von Kremer has given a full and entertaining description in his *Culturgeschichte des Orients*. It may be recalled, however, that many commercial terms, *e.g.*, tariff, names of fabrics (muslin, tabby, &c.), occurring in English as well as in most European languages are of Arabic origin and were brought to Europe by merchants from Baghdád, Mosul, Baṣra, and other cities of Western Asia. This material expansion was accompanied by an outburst of intellectual activity such as the East had never witnessed before. It seemed as if all the world from the Caliph down to the humblest citizen suddenly became students, or at least patrons, of literature. In quest of knowledge men travelled over three continents and returned home, like bees laden with honey, to impart the precious stores which they had accumulated to crowds of eager disciples, and to compile with incredible industry those works of encyclopædic range and erudition from which modern Science, in the widest sense of the word, has derived far more than is generally supposed.

Assimilation of Arabs and Persians.

Enthusiasm for learning in the early 'Abbásid period.

Development of the Moslem sciences.

The Revolution which made the fortune of the ʿAbbásid House was a triumph for Islam and the party of religious reform. While under the worldly Umayyads the studies of Law and Tradition met with no public encouragement and were only kept alive by the pious zeal of oppressed theologians, the new dynasty drew its strength from the Muḥammadan ideas which it professed to establish, and skilfully adapted its policy to satisfying the ever-increasing claims of the Church. Accordingly the Moslem sciences which arose at this time proceeded in the first instance from the Koran and the Ḥadíth. The sacred books offered many difficulties both to provincial Arabs and especially to Persians and other Moslems of foreign extraction. For their right understanding a knowledge of Arabic grammar and philology was essential, and this involved the study of the ancient Pre-islamic poems which supplied the most authentic models of Arabian speech in its original purity. The study of these poems entailed researches into genealogy and history, which in the course of time became independent branches of learning. Similarly the science of Tradition was systematically developed in order to provide Moslems with practical rules for the conduct of life in every conceivable particular, and various schools of Law sprang into existence.

Their classification.

Muḥammadan writers usually distinguish the sciences which are connected with the Koran and those which the Arabs learned from foreign peoples. In the former class they include the Traditional or Religious Sciences (*al-ʿUlúm al-Naqliyya awi 'l-Sharʿiyya*) and the Linguistic Sciences (*ʿUlúmu 'l-Lisáni 'l-ʿArabí*); in the latter the Intellectual or Philosophical Sciences (*al-ʿUlúm al-ʿAqliyya awi 'l-Ḥikmiyya*), which are sometimes called 'The Sciences of the Foreigners' (*ʿUlúmu 'l-ʿAjam*) or 'The Ancient Sciences' (*al-ʿUlúm al-Qadíma*).

The general scope of this division may be illustrated by the following table :—

I. The Native Sciences.

1. Koranic Exegesis (*'Ilmu 'l-Tafsír*).
2. Koranic Criticism (*'Ilmu 'l-Qirá'át*).
3. The Science of Apostolic Tradition (*'Ilmu 'l-Ḥadíth*).
4. Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*).
5. Scholastic Theology (*'Ilmu 'l-Kalám*).
6. Grammar (*Naḥw*).
7. Lexicography (*Lugha*).
8. Rhetoric (*Bayán*).
9. Literature (*Adab*).

II. The Foreign Sciences.

1. Philosophy (*Falsafa*).[1]
2. Geometry (*Handasa*).[2]
3. Astronomy (*'Ilmu 'l-Nujúm*).
4. Music (*Músíqí*).
5. Medicine (*Ṭibb*).
6. Magic and Alchemy (*al-Siḥr wa-'l-Kímiyá*).

The religious phenomena of the Period will be discussed in a separate chapter, and here I can only allude cursorily to their general character. We have seen that during the whole Umayyad epoch, except in the brief reign of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azíz, the professors of religion were out of sympathy with the court, and that many of them withdrew from all participation in public affairs. It was otherwise when the 'Abbásids established themselves in power. Theology now dwelt in the shadow of the throne and directed the policy of the Government. Honours were showered on eminent jurists and divines, who frequently held official posts of high importance and stood in the most confidential and intimate relations to the Caliph ; a classical example is the friendship of the Cadi Abú Yúsuf and Hárún al-Rashíd. The century after the Revolution gave birth to the four great schools of Muḥammadan Law, which are still called by the

The early 'Abbásid period favourable to free-thought.

[1] The term *Falsafa* properly includes Logic, Metaphysics, Mathematics Medicine, and the Natural Sciences.

[2] Here we might add the various branches of Mathematics, such as Arithmetic, Algebra, Mechanics, &c.

names of their founders—Málik b. Anas, Abú Ḥanífa, Sháfi'í, and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. At this time the scientific and intellectual movement had free play. The earlier Caliphs usually encouraged speculation so long as it threatened no danger to the existing *régime*. Under Ma'mún and his successors the Mu'tazilite Rationalism became the State religion, and Islam seemed to have entered upon an era of enlightenment. Thus the first 'Abbásid period (750-847 A.D.) with its new learning and liberal theology may well be compared to the European Renaissance; but in the words of a celebrated Persian poet—

Khil'atí bas fákhir ámad 'umr 'aybash kútahíst.[1]

"Life is a very splendid robe: its fault is brevity."

The Caliph Mutawakkil (847-861 A.D.) signalised his accession by declaring the Mu'tazilite doctrines to be heretical and by returning to the traditional faith. Stern measures were taken against dissenters. Henceforth there was little room in Islam for independent thought. The populace regarded philosophy and natural science as a species of infidelity. Authors of works on these subjects ran a serious risk unless they disguised their true opinions and brought the results of their investigations into apparent conformity with the text of the Koran. About the middle of the tenth century the reactionary spirit assumed a dogmatic shape in the system of Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arí, the father of Muḥammadan Scholasticism, which is essentially opposed to intellectual freedom and has maintained its petrifying influence almost unimpaired down to the present time.

The triumph of orthodoxy.

I could wish that this chapter were more worthy of the title which I have chosen for it, but the foregoing pages will have served their purpose if they have enabled my readers to form some idea of the politics of the Period and of the broad features marking the course of its literary and religious history.

[1] 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán Jámí († 1492 A.D.).

CHAPTER VII

POETRY, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE IN THE ʿABBÁSID PERIOD

Pre-islamic poetry was the natural expression of nomad life. We might therefore have expected that the new conditions and ideas introduced by Islam would rapidly work a corresponding revolution in the poetical literature of the following century. Such, however, was far from being the case. The Umayyad poets clung tenaciously to the great models of the Heroic Age and even took credit for their skilful imitation of the antique odes. The early Muḥammadan critics, who were philologists by profession, held fast to the principle that Poetry in Pre-islamic times had reached a perfection which no modern bard could hope to emulate, and which only the lost ideals of chivalry could inspire.[1] To have been born after Islam was in itself a proof of poetical inferiority.[2] Linguistic considerations, of course, entered largely into this prejudice. The old poems were studied as repositories of the pure classical tongue and were estimated mainly from a grammarian's standpoint.

The Pre-islamic poets regarded as classical

These ideas gained wide acceptance in literary circles and gradually biassed the popular taste to such an extent that learned pedants could boast, like Khalíl b. Aḥmad,

[1] I am deeply indebted in the following pages to Goldziher's essay entitled *Alte und Neue Poesie im Urtheile der Arabischen Kritiker* in his *Abhand. zur Arab. Philologie*, Part I, pp. 122–174.

[2] *Cf.* the remark made by Abú ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlá about the poet Akhṭal (p. 242 *supra*).

the inventor of Arabic prosody, that it lay in their power to make or mar the reputation of a rising poet as they deemed fit. Originality being condemned in advance, those who desired the approval of this self-constituted Academy were obliged to waste their time and talents upon elaborate reproduction of the ancient masterpieces, and to entertain courtiers and citizens with borrowed pictures of Bedouin life in which neither they nor their audience took the slightest interest. Some, it is true, recognised the absurdity of the thing. Abú Nuwás († *circa* 810 A.D.) often ridicules the custom, to which reference has been made elsewhere, of apostrophising the deserted encampment (*aṭlál* or *ṭulúl*) in the opening lines of an ode, and pours contempt on the fashionable glorification of antiquity. In the passage translated below he gives a description of the desert and its people which recalls some of Dr. Johnson's sallies at the expense of Scotland and Scotsmen :—

Abú Nuwás as a critic.

"Let the south-wind moisten with rain the desolate scene
And Time efface what once was so fresh and green!
Make the camel-rider free of a desert space
Where high-bred camels trot with unwearied pace;
Where only mimosas and thistles flourish, and where,
For hunting, wolves and hyenas are nowise rare!
Amongst the Bedouins seek not enjoyment out:
What do they enjoy? They live in hunger and drought.
Let them drink their bowls of milk and leave them alone,
To whom life's finer pleasures are all unknown."[1]

Ibn Qutayba, who died towards the end of the ninth century A.D., was the first critic of importance to declare that ancients and moderns should be judged on their merits without regard to their age. He writes as follows in the Introduction

[1] *Diwan des Abu Nowas, Die Weinlieder*, ed. by Ahlwardt, No. 10, vv. 1–5.

to his 'Book of Poetry and Poets' (*Kitábu 'l-Shi'r wa-'l-Shu'ará*):—[1]

Ibn Qutayba on ancient and modern poets.

"In citing extracts from the works of the poets I have been guided by my own choice and have refused to admire anything merely because others thought it admirable. I have not regarded any ancient with veneration on account of his antiquity nor any modern with contempt on account of his being modern, but I have taken an impartial view of both sides, giving every one his due and amply acknowledging his merit. Some of our scholars, as I am aware, pronounce a feeble poem to be good, because its author was an ancient, and include it among their chosen pieces, while they call a sterling poem bad though its only fault is that it was composed in their own time or that they have seen its author. God, however, did not restrict learning and poetry and rhetoric to a particular age nor appropriate them to a particular class, but has always distributed them in common amongst His servants, and has caused everything old to be new in its own day and every classic work to be an upstart on its first appearance."

Revolt against classicism.

The inevitable reaction in favour of the new poetry and of contemporary literature in general was hastened by various circumstances which combined to overthrow the prevalent theory that Arabian heathendom and the characteristic pagan virtues—honour, courage, liberality, &c.—were alone capable of producing poetical genius. Among the chief currents of thought tending in this direction, which are lucidly set forth in Goldziher's essay, pp. 148 sqq., we may note (*a*) the pietistic and theological spirit fostered by the 'Abbásid Government, and (*b*) the influence of foreign, pre-eminently Persian, culture. As to the former, it is manifest that devout Moslems would not be at all disposed to admit the exclusive pretensions made on behalf of the *Jáhiliyya* or to agree with those who exalted chivalry (*muruwwa*) above religion (*dín*). Were not the language and style of the Koran incomparably excellent? Surely the Holy Book was a more proper subject for study

[1] Ed. by De Goeje, p. 5, ll. 5–15.

than heathen verses. But if Moslems began to call Pre-islamic ideals in question, it was especially the Persian ascendancy resulting from the triumph of the 'Abbásid House that shook the old arrogant belief of the Arabs in the intellectual supremacy of their race. So far from glorying in the traditions of paganism, many people thought it grossly insulting to mention an 'Abbásid Caliph in the same breath with heroes of the past like Ḥátim of Ṭayyi' and Harim b. Sinán. The philosopher al-Kindí († about 850 A.D.) rebuked a poet for venturing on such odious comparisons. "Who are these Arabian vagabonds" (*ṣa'álliku 'l-'Arab*), he asked, "and what worth have they?"[1]

While Ibn Qutayba was content to urge that the modern poets should get a fair hearing, and should be judged not chronologically or philologically, but *æsthetically*, some of the greatest literary critics who came after him do not conceal their opinion that the new poetry is superior to the old. Tha'álibí († 1038 A.D.) asserts that in tenderness and elegance the Pre-islamic bards are surpassed by their successors, and that both alike have been eclipsed by his contemporaries. Ibn Rashíq († *circa* 1070 A.D.), whose *'Umda* on the Art of Poetry is described by Ibn Khaldún as an epoch-making work, thought that the superiority of the moderns would be acknowledged if they discarded the obsolete conventions of the Ode. European readers cannot but sympathise with him when he bids the poets draw inspiration from nature and truth instead of relating imaginary journeys on a camel which they never owned, through deserts which they never saw, to a patron residing in the same city as themselves. This seems to us a very reasonable and necessary protest, but it must be remembered that the Bedouin *qaṣída* was not easily adaptable to the conditions of urban life, and needed complete remoulding rather than modification in detail.[2]

Critics in favour of the modern school.

[1] *Cf.* the story told of Abú Tammám by Ibn Khallikán (De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 350 seq.).

[2] See Nöldeke, *Beiträge*, p. 4.

"In the fifth century," says Goldziher—*i.e.*, from about 1000 A.D.—"the dogma of the unattainable perfection of the heathen poets may be regarded as utterly demolished." Henceforth popular taste ran strongly in the other direction, as is shown by the immense preponderance of modern pieces in the anthologies—a favourite and characteristic branch of Arabic literature—which were compiled during the 'Abbásid period and afterwards, and by frequent complaints of the neglect into which the ancient poetry had fallen. But although, for Moslems generally, Imru'u 'l-Qays and his fellows came to be more or less what Chaucer is to the average Englishman, the views first enunciated by Ibn Qutayba met with bitter opposition from the learned class, many of whom clung obstinately to the old philological principles of criticism, and even declined to recognise the writings of Mutanabbí and Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí as poetry, on the ground that those authors did not observe the classical 'types' (*asálib*).[1] The result of such pedantry may be seen at the present day in thousands of *qaṣídas*, abounding in archaisms and allusions to forgotten far-off things of merely antiquarian interest, but possessing no more claim to consideration here than the Greek and Latin verses of British scholars in a literary history of the Victorian Age.

Popularity of the modern poets.

Passing now to the characteristics of the new poetry which followed the accession of the 'Abbásids, we have to bear in mind that from first to last (with very few exceptions) it flourished under the patronage of the court. There was no organised book trade, no wealthy publishers, so that poets were usually dependent for their livelihood on the capricious bounty of the Caliphs and his favourites whom they belauded. Huge sums were paid

Characteristics of the new poetry.

[1] Ibn Khaldún, *Muqaddima* (Beyrout, 1900), p. 573, l. 21 seq.; *Prolegomena* of Ibn K., translated by De Slane, vol. iii, p. 380.

for a successful panegyric, and the bards vied with each other in flattery of the most extravagant description. Even in writers of real genius this prostitution of their art gave rise to a great deal of the false glitter and empty bombast which are often erroneously attributed to Oriental poetry as a whole.[1] These qualities, however, are absolutely foreign to Arabian poetry of the best period. The old Bedouins who praised a man only for that which was in him, and drew their images directly from nature, stand at the opposite pole to Tha'álibí's contemporaries. Under the Umayyads, as we have seen, little change took place. It is not until after the enthronement of the 'Abbásids, when Persians filled the chief offices at court, and when a goodly number of poets and eminent men of learning had Persian blood in their veins, that an unmistakably new note makes itself heard. One might be tempted to surmise that the high-flown, bombastic, and ornate style of which Mutanabbí is the most illustrious exponent, and which is so marked a feature in later Muḥammadan poetry, was first introduced by the Persians and Perso-Arabs who gathered round the Caliph in Baghdád and celebrated the triumph of their own race in the person of a noble Barmecide; but this would scarcely be true. The style in question is not specially Persian; the earliest Arabic-writing poets of Íránian descent, like Bashshár b. Burd and Abú Nuwás, are (so far as I can see) without a trace of it. What the Persians brought into Arabian poetry was not a grandiose style, but a lively and graceful fancy, elegance of diction, depth and tenderness of feeling, and a rich store of ideas.

The process of transformation was aided by other causes besides the influx of Persian and Hellenistic culture: for example, by the growing importance of Islam in public life and the diffusion of a strong religious spirit among the community at large—a spirit which attained its most perfect

[1] See Professor Browne's *Literary History of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 14 sqq.

expression in the reflective and didactic poetry of Abu 'l-'Atáhiya. Every change of many-coloured life is depicted in the brilliant pages of these modern poets, where the reader may find, according to his mood, the maddest gaiety and the shamefullest frivolity; strains of lofty meditation mingled with a world-weary pessimism; delicate sentiment, unforced pathos, and glowing rhetoric; but seldom the manly self-reliance, the wild, invigorating freedom and inimitable freshness of Bedouin song.

It is of course impossible to do justice even to the principal 'Abbásid poets within the limits of this chapter, but the following five may be taken as fairly representative: Muṭí' b. Iyás, Abú Nuwás, Abu 'l-'Atáhiya, Mutanabbí, and Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí. The first three were in close touch with the court of Baghdád, while Mutanabbí and Abu 'l-'Alá flourished under the Ḥamdánid dynasty which ruled in Aleppo.

Five typical poets of the Abbásid period.

Muṭí' b. Iyás only deserves notice here as the earliest poet of the New School. His father was a native of Palestine, but he himself was born and educated at Kúfa. He began his career under the Umayyads, and was devoted to the Caliph Walíd b. Yazíd, who found in him a fellow after his own heart, "accomplished, dissolute, an agreeable companion and excellent wit, reckless in his effrontery and suspected in his religion."[1] When the 'Abbásids came into power Muṭí' attached himself to the Caliph Manṣúr. Many stories are told of the debauched life which he led in the company of *zindíqs*, or free-thinkers, a class of men whose opinions we shall sketch in another chapter. His songs of love and wine are distinguished by their lightness and elegance. The best known is that in which he laments his separation from the daughter of a *Dihqán* (Persian landed

Muṭí' b. Iyás.

[1] *Aghání*, xii, 80, l. 3.

proprietor), and invokes the two palm-trees of Ḥulwán, a town situated on the borders of the Jibál province between Hamadhán and Baghdád. From this poem arose the proverb, "Faster friends than the two palm-trees of Ḥulwan."[1]

THE YEOMAN'S DAUGHTER.

"O ye two palms, palms of Ḥulwán,
Help me weep Time's bitter dole!
Know that Time for ever parteth
Life from every living soul.

Had ye tasted parting's anguish,
Ye would weep as I, forlorn.
Help me! Soon must ye asunder
By the same hard fate be torn.

Many are the friends and loved ones
Whom I lost in days before.
Fare thee well, O yeoman's daughter!—
Never grief like this I bore.
Her, alas, mine eyes behold not,
And on me she looks no more!"

Abú Nuwás († *circa* 810 A.D.).

By Europeans who know him only through the *Thousand and One Nights* Abú Nuwás is remembered as the boon-companion and court jester of "the good Haroun Alraschid," and as the hero of countless droll adventures and facetious anecdotes—an Oriental Howleglass or Joe Miller. It is often forgotten that he was a great poet who, in the opinion of those most competent to judge, takes rank above all his contemporaries and successors, including even Mutanabbí, and is not surpassed in poetical genius by any ancient bard.

[1] Freytag, *Arabum Proverbia*, vol. i, p. 46 seq., where the reader will find the Arabic text of the verses translated here. Rückert has given a German rendering of the same verses in his *Hamâsa*, vol. i, p. 311. A fuller text of the poem occurs in *Aghání*, xii, 107 seq.

Ḥasan b. Háni' gained the familiar title of Abú Nuwás (Father of the lock of hair) from two locks which hung down on his shoulders. He was born of humble parents, about the middle of the eighth century, in Aḥwáz, the capital of Khúzistán. That he was not a pure Arab the name of his mother, Jallabán, clearly indicates, while the following verse affords sufficient proof that he was not ashamed of his Persian blood :—

"Who are Tamím and Qays and all their kin?
The Arabs in God's sight are nobody."[1]

He received his education at Baṣra, of which city he calls himself a native,[2] and at Kúfa, where he studied poetry and philology under the learned Khalaf al-Aḥmar. After passing a 'Wanderjahr' among the Arabs of the desert, as was the custom of scholars at that time, he made his way to Baghdád and soon eclipsed every competitor at the court of Hárún the Orthodox. A man of the most abandoned character, which he took no pains to conceal, Abú Nuwás, by his flagrant immorality, drunkenness, and blasphemy, excited the Caliph's anger to such a pitch that he often threatened the culprit with death, and actually imprisoned him on several occasions; but these fits of severity were brief. The poet survived both Hárún and his son, Amín, who succeeded him in the Caliphate. Age brought repentance—"the Devil was sick, the Devil a monk would be." He addressed the following lines from prison to Faḍl b. al-Rabí', whom Hárún appointed Grand Vizier after the fall of the Barmecides :—

"Faḍl, who hast taught and trained me up to goodness
(And goodness is but habit), thee I praise.
Now hath vice fled and virtue me revisits,
And I have turned to chaste and pious ways.

[1] *Díwán*, ed. by Ahlwardt, *Die Weinlieder*, No. 26, v. 4.
[2] Ibn Qutayba, *K. al-Shi'r wa-'l-Shu'ará*, p. 502, l. 13.

To see me, thou would'st think the saintly Baṣrite,
Ḥasan, or else Qatáda, met thy gaze,[1]
So do I deck humility with leanness,
While yellow, locust-like, my cheek o'erlays.
Beads on my arm; and on my breast the Scripture,
Where hung a chain of gold in other days."[2]

The Díwán of Abú Nuwás contains poems in many different styles—*e.g.*, panegyric (*madiḥ*), satire (*hijá*), songs of the chase (*ṭardiyyát*), elegies (*maráthí*), and religious poems (*zuhdiyyát*); but love and wine were the two motives by which his genius was most brilliantly inspired. His wine-songs (*khamriyyát*) are generally acknowledged to be incomparable. Here is one of the shortest:—

"Thou scolder of the grape and me,
I ne'er shall win thy smile!
Because against thee I rebel,
'Tis churlish to revile.

Ah, breathe no more the name of wine
Until thou cease to blame,
For fear that thy foul tongue should smirch
Its fair and lovely name!

Come, pour it out, ye gentle boys,
A vintage ten years old,
That seems as though 'twere in the cup
A lake of liquid gold.

And when the water mingles there,
To fancy's eye are set
Pearls over shining pearls close strung
As in a carcanet."[3]

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[1] For the famous ascetic, Ḥasan of Baṣra, see pp. 225–227. Qatáda was a learned divine, also of Baṣra and contemporary with Ḥasan. He died in 735 A.D.

[2] These verses are quoted by Ibn Qutayba, *op. cit.*, p. 507 seq. 'The Scripture' (*al-maṣḥaf*) is of course the Koran.

[3] *Die Weinlieder*, ed. by Ahlwardt, No. 47.

Another poem begins—

"Ho! a cup, and fill it up, and tell me it is wine,
For I will never drink in shade if I can drink in shine!
Curst and poor is every hour that sober I must go,
But rich am I whene'er well drunk I stagger to and fro.
Speak, for shame, the loved one's name, let vain disguise alone:
No good there is in pleasures o'er which a veil is thrown."[1]

Abú Nuwás practised what he preached, and hypocrisy at any rate cannot be laid to his charge. The moral and religious sentiments which appear in some of his poems are not mere cant, but should rather be regarded as the utterance of sincere though transient emotion. Usually he felt and avowed that pleasure was the supreme business of his life, and that religious scruples could not be permitted to stand in the way. He even urges others not to shrink from any excess, inasmuch as the Divine mercy is greater than all the sins of which a man is capable:—

"Accumulate as many sins thou canst:
The Lord is ready to relax His ire.
When the day comes, forgiveness thou wilt find
Before a mighty King and gracious Sire,
And gnaw thy fingers, all that joy regretting
Which thou didst leave thro' terror of Hell-fire!"[2]

We must now bid farewell to Abú Nuwás and the licentious poets (*al-shu'arâ al-mujján*) who reflect so admirably the ideas and manners prevailing in court circles and in the upper classes of society which were chiefly influenced by the court. The scenes of luxurious dissipation and refined debauchery which they describe show us, indeed, that Persian culture was not an unalloyed blessing to the Arabs any more

[1] *Ibid.*, No. 29, vv. 1–3.

[2] Ibn Khallikán, ed. by Wüstenfeld, No. 169, p. 100; De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 393.

than were the arts of Greece to the Romans; but this is only the darker side of the picture. The works of a contemporary poet furnish evidence of the indignation which the libertinism fashionable in high places called forth among the mass of Moslems who had not lost faith in morality and religion.

Abu 'l-'Atáhiya, unlike his great rival, came of Arab stock. He was bred in Kúfa, and gained his livelihood as a young man by selling earthenware. His poetical talent, however, promised so well that he set out to present himself before the Caliph Mahdí, who richly rewarded him; and Hárún al-Rashíd afterwards bestowed on him a yearly pension of 50,000 dirhems (about £2,000), in addition to numerous extraordinary gifts. At Baghdád he fell in love with 'Utba, a slave-girl belonging to Mahdí, but she did not return his passion or take any notice of the poems in which he celebrated her charms and bewailed the sufferings that she made him endure. Despair of winning her affection caused him, it is said, to assume the woollen garb of Muḥammadan ascetics,[1] and henceforth, instead of writing vain and amatorious verses, he devoted his powers exclusively to those joyless meditations on mortality which have struck a deep chord in the hearts of his countrymen. Like Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí and others who neglected the positive precepts of Islam in favour of a moral philosophy based on experience and reflection, Abu 'l-'Atáhiya was accused of being a freethinker (*zindíq*).[2] It was alleged that in his poems he often spoke of

Abu 'l-'Atáhiya (748–828 A.D.).

[1] *Cf. Díwán* (ed. of Beyrout, 1886), p. 279, l. 9, where he reproaches one of his former friends who deserted him because, in his own words, "I adopted the garb of a dervish" (*ṣirtu fi ziyyi miskíni*). Others attribute his conversion to disgust with the immorality and profanity of the court-poets amongst whom he lived.

[2] Possibly he alludes to these aspersions in the verse (*ibid.*, p. 153, l. 10): "*Men have become corrupted, and if they see any one who is sound in his religion, they call him a heretic*" (*mubtadi'*).

death but never of the Resurrection and the Judgment—a calumny which is refuted by many passages in his Díwán. According to the literary historian al-Ṣúlí († 946 A.D.), Abu 'l-'Atáhiya believed in One God who formed the universe out of two opposite elements which He created from nothing; and held, further, that everything would be reduced to these same elements before the final destruction of all phenomena. Knowledge, he thought, was acquired naturally (*i.e.*, without Divine Revelation) by means of reflection, deduction, and research.[1] He believed in the threatened retribution (*al-wa'íd*) and in the command to abstain from commerce with the world (*taḥrímu 'l-maḳásib*).[2] He professed the opinions of the Butrites,[3] a subdivision of the Zaydites, as that sect of the Shí'a was named which followed Zayd b. Alí b. Ḥusayn b. 'Alí b. Abí Ṭálib. He spoke evil of none, and did not approve of revolt against the Government. He held the doctrine of predestination (*jabr*).[4]

Abu 'l-'Atáhiya may have secretly cherished the Manichæan views ascribed to him in this passage, but his poems contain little or nothing that could offend the most orthodox Moslem. The following verse, in which Goldziher finds an allusion to Buddha,[5] is capable of a different interpretation. It rather

[1] Abu 'l-'Atáhiya declares that knowledge is derived from three sources, logical reasoning (*qiyás*), examination (*'iyár*), and oral tradition (*samá'*). See his *Díwán*, p. 158, l. 11.

[2] *Cf. Mání, seine Lehre und seine Schriften*, by G. Flügel, p. 281, l. 3 sqq. Abu 'l-'Atáhiya did not take this extreme view (*Díwán*, p. 270, l. 3 seq.).

[3] See Shahrastání, Haarbrücker's translation, Part I, p. 181 sqq. It appears highly improbable that Abu 'l-'Atáhiya was a Shí'ite. *Cf.* the verses (*Díwán*, p. 104, l. 13 seq.), where, speaking of the prophets and the holy men of ancient Islam, he says :—

> "*Reckon first among them Abú Bakr, the veracious,*
> *And exclaim 'O 'Umar!' in the second place of honour.*
> *And reckon the father of Ḥasan after 'Uthmán,*
> *For the merit of them both is recited and celebrated.*"

[4] *Aghání*, iii, 128, l. 6 sqq.

[5] *Transactions of the Ninth Congress of Orientalists*, vol. ii. p. 114.

seems to me to exalt the man of ascetic life, without particular reference to any individual, above all others :—

> "If thou would'st see the noblest of mankind,
> Behold a monarch in a beggar's garb."[1]

But while the poet avoids positive heresy, it is none the less true that much of his *Díwán* is not strictly religious in the Muḥammadan sense and may fairly be called 'philosophical.' This was enough to convict him of infidelity and atheism in the eyes of devout theologians who looked askance on moral teaching, however pure, that was not cast in the dogmatic mould. The pretended cause of his imprisonment by Hárún al-Rashíd—namely, that he refused to make any more love-songs—is probably, as Goldziher has suggested, a popular version of the fact that he persisted in writing religious poems which were supposed to have a dangerous bias in the direction of free-thought.

His poetry breathes a spirit of proround melancholy and hopeless pessimism. Death and what comes after death, the frailty and misery of man, the vanity of worldly pleasures and the duty of renouncing them—these are the subjects on which he dwells with monotonous reiteration, exhorting his readers to live the ascetic life and fear God and lay up a store of good works against the Day of Reckoning. The simplicity, ease, and naturalness of his style are justly admired. Religious

[1] *Díwán*, p. 274, l. 10. *Cf.* the verse (p. 199, penultimate line) :—

> "*When I gained contentment, I did not cease* (*thereafter*)
> *To be a king, regarding riches as poverty.*"

The ascetic "lives the life of a king" (*ibid.*, p. 187, l. 5). Contented men are the noblest of all (p. 148, l. 2). So the great Persian mystic, Jalálu 'l-Dín Rúmí, says in reference to the perfect Ṣúfí (*Díván-i Shams-i Tabríz*, No. viii, v. 3 in my edition) : *Mard-i khudá sháh buvad zír-i dalq*, "the man of God is a king 'neath dervish-cloak ;" and eminent spiritualists are frequently described as "kings of the (mystic) path." I do not deny, however, that this metaphor may have been originally suggested by the story of Buddha.

poetry, as he himself confesses, was not read at court or by scholars who demanded rare and obscure expressions, but only by pious folk, traditionists and divines, and especially by the vulgar, "who like best what they can understand."[1] Abu 'l-'Atáhiya wrote for 'the man in the street.' Discarding conventional themes tricked out with threadbare artifices, he appealed to common feelings and matters of universal experience. He showed for the first and perhaps for the last time in the history of Arabic literature that it was possible to use perfectly plain and ordinary language without ceasing to be a poet.

Although, as has been said, the bulk of Abu 'l-'Atáhiya's poetry is philosophical in character, there remains much specifically Islamic doctrine, in particular as regards the Resurrection and the Future Life. This combination may be illustrated by the following ode, which is considered one of the best that have been written on the subject of religion, or, more accurately, of asceticism (*zuhd*) :—

"Get sons for death, build houses for decay!
All, all, ye wend annihilation's way.
For whom build we, who must ourselves return
Into our native element of clay?
O Death, nor violence nor flattery thou
Dost use, but when thou com'st, escape none may.
Methinks, thou art ready to surprise mine age,
As age surprised and made my youth his prey.
What ails me, World, that every place perforce
I lodge thee in, it galleth me to stay?
And, O Time, how do I behold thee run
To spoil me? Thine own gift thou tak'st away!
O Time! inconstant, mutable art thou,
And o'er the realm of ruin is thy sway.

[1] *Díwán*, p. 25, l. 3 sqq. Abu 'l-'Atáhiya took credit to himself for introducing 'the language of the market-place' into his poetry (*ibid.*, p. 12, l. 3 seq.).

What ails me that no glad result it brings
Whene'er, O World, to milk thee I essay?
And when I court thee, why dost thou raise up
On all sides only trouble and dismay?
Men seek thee every wise, but thou art like
A dream; the shadow of a cloud; the day
Which hath but now departed, nevermore
To dawn again; a glittering vapour gay.
This people thou hast paid in full: their feet
Are on the stirrup—let them not delay!
But those that do good works and labour well
Hereafter shall receive the promised pay.
As if no punishment I had to fear,
A load of sin upon my neck I lay;
And while the world I love, from Truth, alas,
Still my besotted senses go astray.
I shall be asked of all my business here:
What can I plead then? What can I gainsay?
What argument allege, when I am called
To render an account on Reckoning-Day?
Dooms twain in that dread hour shall be revealed,
When I the scroll of these mine acts survey:
Either to dwell in everlasting bliss,
Or suffer torments of the damned for aye!" [1]

I will now add a few verses culled from the Díwán which bring the poet's pessimistic view of life into clearer outline, and also some examples of those moral precepts and sententious criticisms which crowd his pages and have contributed in no small degree to his popularity.

"The world is like a viper soft to touch that venom spits." [2]

"Men sit like revellers o'er their cups and drink,
From the world's hand, the circling wine of death." [3]

"Call no man living blest for aught you see
But that for which you blessed call the dead." [4]

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[1] *Diwán* (Beyrout, 1886), p. 23, l. 13 *et seqq.*
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 51, l. 2.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 132, l. 3.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 46, l. 16.

FALSE FRIENDS.

"'Tis not the Age that moves my scorn,
But those who in the Age are born.
I cannot count the friends that broke
Their faith, tho' honied words they spoke;
In whom no aid I found, and made
The Devil welcome to their aid.
May I—so best we shall agree—
Ne'er look on them nor they on me!"[1]

"If men should see a prophet begging, they would turn and scout him.
Thy friend is ever thine as long as thou canst do without him;
But he will spew thee forth, if in thy need thou come about him."[2]

THE WICKED WORLD.

"'Tis only on the culprit sin recoils,
The ignorant fool against himself is armed.
Humanity are sunk in wickedness;
The best is he that leaveth us unharmed."[3]

"'Twas my despair of Man that gave me hope
God's grace would find me soon, I know not how."[4]

LIFE AND DEATH.

"Man's life is his fair name, and not his length of years;
Man's death is his ill-fame, and not the day that nears.
Then life to thy fair name by deeds of goodness give:
So in this world two lives, O mortal, thou shalt live."[5]

MAXIMS AND RULES OF LIFE.

"Mere falsehood by its face is recognised,
But Truth by parables and admonitions."[6]

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[1] *Díwán*, p. 260, l. 11 *et seqq.*
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 295, l. 14 *et seqq.*
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 287, l. 10 seq.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 119, l. 11.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 259, penultimate line *et seq.*
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 115, l. 4.

"I keep the bond of love inviolate
Towards all humankind, for I betray
Myself, if I am false to any man." [1]

"Far from the safe path, hop'st thou to be saved?
Ships make no speedy voyage on dry land." [2]

"Strip off the world from thee and naked live,
For naked thou didst fall into the world." [3]

"Man guards his own and grasps his neighbours' pelf,
And he is angered when they him prevent;
But he that makes the earth his couch will sleep
No worse, if lacking silk he have content." [4]

"Men vaunt their noble blood, but I behold
No lineage that can vie with righteous deeds." [5]

"If knowledge lies in long experience,
Less than what I have borne suffices me." [6]

"Faith is the medicine of every grief,
Doubt only raises up a host of cares." [7]

"Blame me or no, 'tis my predestined state:
If I have erred, infallible is Fate." [8]

Abu 'l-'Atáhiya found little favour with his contemporaries, who seem to have regarded him as a miserly hypocrite. He died, an aged man, in the Caliphate of Ma'mún.[9] Von

[1] *Díwán*, p. 51, l. 10.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 133, l. 5.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 74, l. 4.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 149, l. 12 seq.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 195, l. 9. *Cf.* p. 243, l. 4 seq.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 274, l. 6.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 262, l. 4.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 346, l. 11. *Cf.* p. 102, l. 11; p. 262, l. 1 seq.; p. 267, l. 7. This verse is taken from Abu 'l-'Atáhiya's famous didactic poem composed in rhyming couplets, which is said to have contained 4,000 sentences of morality. Several of these have been translated by Von Kremer in his *Culturgeschichte des Orients*, vol. ii, p. 374 sqq.

[9] In one of his poems (*Díwán*, p. 160, l. 11), he says that he has lived ninety years, but if this is not a mere exaggeration, it needs to be corrected. The words for 'seventy' and 'ninety' are easily confused in Arabic writing.

Kremer thinks that he had a truer genius for poetry than Abú Nuwás, an opinion in which I am unable to concur. Both, however, as he points out, are distinctive types of their time. If Abú Nuwás presents an appalling picture of a corrupt and frivolous society devoted to pleasure, we learn from Abu 'l-'Atáhiya something of the religious feelings and beliefs which pervaded the middle and lower classes, and which led them to take a more earnest and elevated view of life.

With the rapid decline and disintegration of the 'Abbásid Empire which set in towards the middle of the ninth century, numerous petty dynasties arose, and the hitherto unrivalled splendour of Baghdád was challenged by more than one provincial court. These independent or semi-independent princes were sometimes zealous patrons of learning—it is well known, for example, that a national Persian literature first came into being under the auspices of the Sámánids in Khurásán and the Buwayhids in 'Iráq—but as a rule the anxious task of maintaining, or the ambition of extending, their power left them small leisure to cultivate letters, even if they wished to do so. None combined the arts of war and peace more brilliantly than the Ḥamdánid Sayfu 'l-Dawla, who in 944 A.D. made himself master of Aleppo, and founded an independent kingdom in Northern Syria.

Tha'álibí's eulogy of Sayfu 'l-Dawla.

"The Ḥamdánids," says Tha'álibí, "were kings and princes, comely of countenance and eloquent of tongue, endowed with open-handedness and gravity of mind. Sayfu 'l-Dawla is famed as the chief amongst them all and the centre-pearl of their necklace. He was—may God be pleased with him and grant his desires and make Paradise his abode!—the brightest star of his age and the pillar of Islam: by him the frontiers were guarded and the State well governed. His attacks on the rebellious Arabs checked their fury and blunted their teeth and tamed their stubbornness and secured his subjects against their barbarity. His campaigns exacted vengeance from the Emperor of the Greeks, decisively broke their hostile onset,

and had an excellent effect on Islam. His court was the goal of ambassadors, the dayspring of liberality, the horizon-point of hope, the end of journeys, a place where savants assembled and poets competed for the palm. It is said that after the Caliphs no prince gathered around him so many masters of poetry and men illustrious in literature as he did; and to a monarch's hall, as to a market, people bring only what is in demand. He was an accomplished scholar, a poet himself and a lover of fine poetry; keenly susceptible to words of praise."[1]

Sayfu 'l-Dawla's cousin, Abú Firás al-Ḥamdání, was a gallant soldier and a poet of some mark, who if space permitted would receive fuller notice here.[2] He, however, though superior to the common herd of court poets, is overshadowed by one who with all his faults—and they are not inconsiderable—made an extraordinary impression upon his contemporaries, and by the commanding influence of his reputation decided what should henceforth be the standard of poetical taste in the Muḥammadan world.

Mutanabbí (915–965 A.D.).

Abu 'l-Ṭayyib Aḥmad b. Ḥusayn, known to fame as al-Mutanabbí, was born and bred at Kúfa, where his father is said to have been a water-carrier. Following the admirable custom by which young men of promise were sent abroad to complete their education, he studied at Damascus and visited other towns in Syria, but also passed much of his time among the Bedouins, to whom he owed the singular knowledge and mastery of Arabic displayed in his poems. Here he came forward as a prophet (from which circumstance he was afterwards entitled al-Mutanabbí, *i.e.*, 'the pretender to prophecy'), and induced a great multitude to believe in him; but ere long he was captured by Lúlú, the governor of Ḥimṣ (Emessa), and thrown into prison. After his release he

[1] Tha'álibí, *Yatímatu 'l-Dahr* (Damascus, 1304 A.H.), vol. i, p. 8 seq.

[2] See Von Kremer's *Culturgeschichte*, vol. ii, p. 381 sqq.; Ahlwardt, *Poesie und Poetik der Araber*, p. 37 sqq.; R. Dvorak, *Abú Firás, ein arabischer Dichter und Held* (Leyden, 1895).

wandered to and fro chanting the praises of all and sundry, until fortune guided him to the court of Sayfu 'l-Dawla at Aleppo. For nine years (948–957 A.D.) he stood high in the favour of that cultured prince, whose virtues he celebrated in a series of splendid eulogies, and with whom he lived as an intimate friend and comrade in arms. The liberality of Sayfu 'l-Dawla and the ingenious impudence of the poet are well brought out by the following anecdote :—

Mutanabbí on one occasion handed to his patron the copy of an ode which he had recently composed in his honour, and retired, leaving Sayfu 'l-Dawla to peruse it at leisure. The prince began to read, and came to these lines—

Aqil anil aqṭi' iḥmil 'alli salli a'id
zid hashshi bashshi tafaḍḍal adni surra ṣili.[1]

"Pardon, bestow, endow, mount, raise, console, restore,
Add, laugh, rejoice, bring nigh, show favour, gladden, give!"

Far from being displeased by the poet's arrogance, Sayfu 'l-Dawla was so charmed with his artful collocation of fourteen imperatives in a single verse that he granted every request. Under *pardon* he wrote 'we pardon thee'; under *bestow*, 'let him receive such and such a sum of money'; under *endow*, 'we endow thee with an estate,' which he named (it was beside the gate of Aleppo); under *mount*, 'let such and such a horse be led to him'; under *raise*, 'we do so'; under *console*, 'we do so, be at ease'; under *restore*, 'we restore thee to thy former place in our esteem'; under *add*, 'let him have such and such in addition'; under *bring nigh*, 'we admit thee to our intimacy'; under *show favour*, 'we have done so'; under *gladden*, 'we have made thee glad'[2]; under *give*, 'this we have already done.' Mutanabbí's rivals envied his good fortune, and one of them said to Sayfu 'l-Dawla—"Sire, you have done all that he asked, but when he uttered the words *laugh, rejoice*, why did not you answer, 'Ha, ha, ha'?" Sayfu 'l-Dawla laughed, and said, "You too, shall have your wish," and ordered him a donation.

[1] Mutanabbí, ed. by Dieterici, p. 493. Wáḥidí gives the whole story in his commentary on this verse.

[2] Mutanabbí, it is said, explained to Sayfu 'l-Dawla that by *surra* (gladden) he meant *surriyya;* whereupon the good-humoured prince presented him with a slave-girl.

Mutanabbí was sincerely attached to his generous master, and this feeling inspired a purer and loftier strain than we find in the fulsome panegyrics which he afterwards addressed to the negro Káfúr. He seems to have been occasionally in disgrace, but Sayfu 'l-Dawla could deny nothing to a poet who paid him such magnificent compliments. Nor was he deterred by any false modesty from praising himself: he was fully conscious of his power and, like Arabian bards in general, he bragged about it. Although the verbal leger-demain which is so conspicuous in his poetry cannot be reproduced in another language, the lines translated below may be taken as a favourable and sufficiently characteristic specimen of his style.

"How glows mine heart for him whose heart to me is cold,
Who liketh ill my case and me in fault doth hold!
Why should I hide a love that hath worn thin my frame?
To Sayfu 'l-Dawla all the world avows the same.
Tho' love of his high star unites us, would that we
According to our love might so divide the fee!
Him have I visited when sword in sheath was laid,
And I have seen him when in blood swam every blade:
Him, both in peace and war the best of all mankind,
Whose crown of excellence was still his noble mind.

Do foes by flight escape thine onset, thou dost gain
A chequered victory, half of pleasure, half of pain.
So puissant the fear thou strik'st them with, it stands
Instead of thee, and works more than thy warriors' hands.
Unfought the field is thine: thou need'st not further strain
To chase them from their holes in mountain or in plain.
What! 'fore thy fierce attack whene'er an army reels,
Must thy ambitious soul press hot upon their heels?
Thy task it is to rout them on the battle-ground:
No shame to thee if they in flight have safety found.
Or thinkest thou perchance that victory is sweet
Only when scimitars and necks each other greet?

O justest of the just save in thy deeds to me!
Thou art accused and thou, O Sire, must judge the plea.

Look, I implore thee, well! Let not thine eye cajoled
See fat in empty froth, in all that glisters gold![1]
What use and profit reaps a mortal of his sight,
If darkness unto him be indistinct from light?

My deep poetic art the blind have eyes to see,
My verses ring in ears as deaf as deaf can be.
They wander far abroad while I am unaware,
But men collect them watchfully with toil and care.
Oft hath my laughing mien prolonged the insulter's sport,
Until with claw and mouth I cut his rudeness short.
Ah, when the lion bares his teeth, suspect his guile,
Nor fancy that the lion shows to you a smile.
I have slain the man that sought my heart's blood many a time,
Riding a noble mare whose back none else may climb,
Whose hind and fore-legs seem in galloping as one;
Nor hand nor foot requireth she to urge her on.
And O the days when I have swung my fine-edged glaive
Amidst a sea of death where wave was dashed on wave!
The cavaliers, the night, the desert know me; then,
The battle and the sword, the paper and the pen!"[2]

Finally an estrangement arose between Mutanabbí and Sayfu 'l-Dawla, in consequence of which he fled to Egypt and attached himself to the Ikhshídite Káfúr. Disappointed in his new patron, a negro who had formerly been a slave, the poet set off for Baghdád, and afterwards visited the court of the Buwayhid 'Aḍudu 'l-Dawla at Shíráz. While travelling through Babylonia he was attacked and slain by brigands in 965 A.D.

The popularity of Mutanabbí is shown by the numerous commentaries[3] and critical treatises on his *Díwán*. By his countrymen he is generally regarded as one of the greatest of Arabian poets, while not a few would maintain that he ranks

[1] Literally, "Do not imagine fat in one whose (apparent) fat is (really) a tumour."

[2] *Díwán*, ed. by Dieterici, pp. 481–484.

[3] The most esteemed commentary is that of Wáḥidí († 1075 A.D.), which has been published by Fr. Dieterici in his edition of Mutanabbí (Berlin, 1858–1861).

absolutely first. Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí, himself an illustrious poet and man of letters, confessed that he had sometimes wished to alter a word here and there in Mutanabbí's verses, but had never been able to think of any improvement. "As to his poetry," says Ibn Khallikán, "it is perfection." European scholars, with the exception of Von Hammer,[1] have been far from sharing this enthusiasm, as may be seen by referring to what has been said on the subject by Reiske,[2] De Sacy,[3] Bohlen,[4] Brockelmann,[5] and others. No doubt, according to our canons of taste, Mutanabbí stands immeasurably below the famous Pre-islamic bards, and in a later age must yield the palm to Abú Nuwás and Abu 'l-'Atáhiya. Lovers of poetry, as the term is understood in Europe, cannot derive much æsthetic pleasure from his writings, but, on the contrary, will be disgusted by the beauties hardly less than by the faults which Arabian critics attribute to him. Admitting, however, that only a born Oriental is able to appreciate Mutanabbí at his full worth, let us try to realise the Oriental point of view and put aside, as far as possible, our preconceptions of what constitutes good poetry and good taste. Fortunately we possess abundant materials for such an attempt in the invaluable work of Tha'álibí, which has been already mentioned.[6] Tha'álibí (961–1038 A.D.) was nearly contemporary with Mutanabbí. He began to write his *Yatíma* about thirty years after the poet's death, and while he bears witness to

[1] *Motenebbi, der grösste arabische Dichter* (Vienna, 1824).

[2] *Abulfedæ Annales Muslemici* (Hafniæ, 1789, &c.), vol. ii, p. 774. *Cf.* his notes on Ṭarafa's *Mu'allaqa*, of which he published an edition in 1742.

[3] *Chrestomathie Arabe* (2nd edition), vol. iii, p. 27 sqq. *Journal des Savans*, January, 1825, p. 24 sqq.

[4] *Commentatio de Motenabbio* (Bonn, 1824).

[5] *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (Weimar, 1898, &c.), vol. i, p. 86.

[6] I have made free use of Dieterici's excellent work entitled *Mutanabbi und Seifuddaula aus der Edelperle des Tsaâlibi* (Leipzig, 1847), which contains on pp. 49–74 an abstract of Tha'álibí's criticism in the fifth chapter of the First Part of the *Yatíma*.

the unrivalled popularity of the *Dîwán* amongst all classes of society, he observes that it was sharply criticised as well as rapturously admired. Tha'álibí himself claims to hold the balance even. "Now," he says, "I will mention the faults and blemishes which critics have found in the poetry of Mutanabbí; for is there any one whose qualities give entire satisfaction?—

Kafa 'l-mar'a faḍlᵃⁿ an tu'adda ma'áyibuh.

'Tis the height of merit in a man that his faults can be numbered.

Then I will proceed to speak of his beauties and to set forth in due order the original and incomparable characteristics of his style.

> The radiant stars with beauty strike our eyes
> Because midst gloom opaque we see them rise."

It was deemed of capital importance that the opening couplet (*maṭla'*) of a poem should be perfect in form and meaning, and that it should not contain anything likely to offend. Tha'álibí brings forward many instances in which Mutanabbí has violated this rule by using words of bad omen, such as 'sickness' or 'death,' or technical terms of music and arithmetic which only perplex and irritate the hearer instead of winning his sympathy at the outset. He complains also that Mutanabbí's finest thoughts and images are too often followed by low and trivial ones: "he strings pearls and bricks together" (*jama'a bayna 'l-durrati wa-'l-ájurrati*). "While he moulds the most splendid ornament, and threads the loveliest necklace, and weaves the most exquisite stuff of mingled hues, and paces superbly in a garden of roses, suddenly he will throw in a verse or two verses disfigured by far-fetched metaphors, or by obscure language and confused thought, or by extravagant affectation and excessive

profundity, or by unbounded and absurd exaggeration, or by vulgar and commonplace diction, or by pedantry and grotesqueness resulting from the use of unfamiliar words." We need not follow Tha'álibí in his illustration of these and other weaknesses with which he justly reproaches Mutanabbí, since we shall be able to form a better idea of the prevailing taste from those points which he singles out for special praise.

In the first place he calls attention to the poet's skill in handling the customary erotic prelude (*nasíb*), and particularly to his brilliant descriptions of Bedouin women, which were celebrated all over the East. As an example of this kind he quotes the following piece, which "is chanted in the *salons* on account of the extreme beauty of its diction, the choiceness of its sentiment, and the perfection of its art":—

"Shame hitherto was wont my tears to stay,
But now by shame they will no more be stayed,
So that each bone seems through its skin to sob,
And every vein to swell the sad cascade.
She uncovered: pallor veiled her at farewell:
No veil 'twas, yet her cheeks it cast in shade.
So seemed they, while tears trickled over them,
Gold with a double row of pearls inlaid.
She loosed three sable tresses of her hair,
And thus of night four nights at once she made;
But when she lifted to the moon in heaven
Her face, two moons together I surveyed."[1]

The critic then enumerates various beautiful and original features of Mutanabbí's style, *e.g.*—

1. His consecutive arrangement of similes in brief symmetrical clauses, thus:—

"She shone forth like a moon, and swayed like a moringa-bough,
And shed fragrance like ambergris, and gazed like a gazelle."

[1] Mutanabbí, ed. by Dieterici, p. 182, vv. 3–9, omitting v. 5.

2. The novelty of his comparisons and images, as when he indicates the rapidity with which he returned to his patron and the shortness of his absence in these lines :—

> "I was merely an arrow in the air,
> Which falls back, finding no refuge there."

3. The *laus duplex* or 'two-sided panegyric' (*al-madḥ al-muwajjah*), which may be compared to a garment having two surfaces of different colours but of equal beauty, as in the following verse addressed to Sayfu 'l-Dawla :—

> "Were all the lives thou hast ta'en possessed by thee,
> Immortal thou and blest the world would be!"

Here Sayfu 'l-Dawla is doubly eulogised by the mention of his triumphs over his enemies as well as of the joy which all his friends felt in the continuance of his life and fortune.

4. His manner of extolling his royal patron as though he were speaking to a friend and comrade, whereby he raises himself from the position of an ordinary encomiast to the same level with kings.

5. His division of ideas into parallel sentences :—

> "We were in gladness, the Greeks in fear,
> The land in bustle, the sea in confusion."

From this summary of Tha'álibí's criticism the reader will easily perceive that the chief merits of poetry were then considered to lie in elegant expression, subtle combination of words, fanciful imagery, witty conceits, and a striking use of rhetorical figures. Such, indeed, are the views which prevail to this day throughout the whole Muḥammadan world, and it is unreasonable to denounce them as false simply because they do not square with ours. Who shall decide when nations disagree? If Englishmen rightly claim to be the best judges of Shakespeare, and Italians of Dante, the almost unanimous

verdict of Mutanabbí's countrymen is surely not less authoritative—a verdict which places him at the head of all the poets born or made in Islam. And although the peculiar excellences indicated by Tha'álibí do not appeal to us, there are few poets that leave so distinct an impression of greatness. One might call Mutanabbí the Victor Hugo of the East, for he has the grand style whether he soars to sublimity or sinks to fustian. In the masculine vigour of his verse, in the sweep and splendour of his rhetoric, in the luxuriance and reckless audacity of his imagination we recognise qualities which inspired the oft-quoted lines of the elegist:—

> "Him did his mighty soul supply
> With regal pomp and majesty.
> A Prophet by his *diction* known;
> But in the *ideas*, all must own,
> His miracles were clearly shown."[1]

One feature of Mutanabbí's poetry that is praised by Tha'álibí should not be left unnoticed, namely, his fondness for sententious moralising on topics connected with human life; wherefore Reiske has compared him to Euripides. He is allowed to be a master of that proverbial philosophy in which Orientals delight and which is characteristic of the modern school beginning with Abu 'l-'Atáhiya, though some of the ancients had already cultivated it with success (*cf.* the verses of Zuhayr, p. 118 *supra*). The following examples are among those cited by Bohlen (*op. cit.*, p. 86 sqq.):—

> "When an old man cries 'Ugh!' he is not tired
> Of life, but only tired of feebleness."[2]

> "He that hath been familiar with the world
> A long while, in his eye 'tis turned about
> Until he sees how false what looked so fair."[3]

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[1] The author of these lines, which are quoted by Ibn Khallikán in his article on Mutanabbí, is Abu 'l-Qásim b. al-Muẓaffar b. 'Alí al-Ṭabasí.

[2] Mutanabbí, ed. by Dieterici, p. 581, v. 27. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 472, v. 5.

"The sage's mind still makes him miserable
In his most happy fortune, but poor fools
Find happiness even in their misery."[1]

The sceptical and pessimistic tendencies of an age of social decay and political anarchy are unmistakably revealed in the writings of the poet, philosopher, and man of letters, Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí, who was born in 973 A.D. at Ma'arratu 'l-Nu'mán, a Syrian town situated about twenty miles south of Aleppo on the caravan road to Damascus. While yet a child he had an attack of small-pox, resulting in partial and eventually in complete blindness, but this calamity, fatal as it might seem to literary ambition, was repaired if not entirely made good by his stupendous powers of memory. After being educated at home under the eye of his father, a man of some culture and a meritorious poet, he proceeded to Aleppo, which was still a flourishing centre of the humanities, though it could no longer boast such a brilliant array of poets and scholars as were attracted thither in the palmy days of Sayfu 'l-Dawla. Probably Abu 'l-'Alá did not enter upon the career of a professional encomiast, to which he seems at first to have inclined: he declares in the preface to his *Saqṭu 'l-Zand* that he never eulogised any one with the hope of gaining a reward, but only for the sake of practising his skill. On the termination of his 'Wanderjahre' he returned in 993 A.D. to Ma'arra, where he spent the next fifteen years of his life, with no income beyond a small pension of thirty dínárs (which he shared with a servant), lecturing on Arabic poetry, antiquities, and philology, the subjects to which his youthful studies had been chiefly devoted. During this period his reputation was steadily increasing, and at last, to adapt what Boswell wrote of Dr. Johnson on a similar occasion, "he thought of trying his fortune in Baghdád, the great field of genius and

Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí (973-1057 A.D.).

[1] Mutanabbí, ed. by Dieterici, p. 341, v. 8.

exertion, where talents of every kind had the fullest scope and the highest encouragement." Professor Margoliouth in the Introduction to his edition of Abu 'l-'Alá's correspondence supplies many interesting particulars of the literary society at Baghdád in which the poet moved. "As in ancient Rome, so in the great Muḥammadan cities public recitation was the mode whereby men of letters made their talents known to their contemporaries. From very early times it had been customary to employ the mosques for this purpose; and in Abu 'l-'Alá's time poems were recited in the mosque of al-Manṣúr in Baghdád. Better accommodation was, however, provided by the Mæcenates who took a pride in collecting savants and *littérateurs* in their houses."[1] Such a Mæcenas was the Sharíf al-Raḍí, himself a celebrated poet, who founded the Academy called by his name in imitation, probably, of that founded some years before by Abú Naṣr Sábúr b. Ardashír, Vizier to the Buwayhid prince, Bahá'u 'l-Dawla. Here Abu 'l-'Alá met a number of distinguished writers and scholars who welcomed him as one of themselves. The capital of Islam, thronged with travellers and merchants from all parts of the East, harbouring followers of every creed and sect—Christians and Jews, Buddhists and Zoroastrians, Ṣábians and Ṣúfís, Materialists and Rationalists—must have seemed to the provincial almost like a new world. It is certain that Abu 'l-'Alá, a curious observer who set no bounds to his thirst for knowledge, would make the best use of such an opportunity. The religious and philosophical ideas with which he was now first thrown into contact gradually took root and ripened. His stay in Baghdád, though it lasted only a year and a half (1009–1010 A.D.), decided the whole bent of his mind for the future.

His visit to Baghdád.

Whether his return to Ma'arra was hastened, as he says, by want of means and the illness of his mother, whom he tenderly loved, or by an indignity which he suffered at the

[1] Margoliouth's Introduction to the *Letters of Abu 'l-'Alá*, p. xxii.

hands of an influential patron,[1] immediately on his arrival he shut himself in his house, adopted a vegetarian diet and other ascetic practices, and passed the rest of his long life in comparative seclusion :—

> "Methinks, I am thrice imprisoned—ask not me
> Of news that need no telling—
> By loss of sight, confinement to my house,
> And this vile body for my spirit's dwelling."[2]

We can only conjecture the motives which brought about this sudden change of habits and disposition. No doubt his mother's death affected him deeply, and he may have been disappointed by his failure to obtain a permanent footing in the capital. It is not surprising that the blind and lonely man, looking back on his faded youth, should have felt weary of the world and its ways, and found in melancholy contemplation of earthly vanities ever fresh matter for the application and development of these philosophical ideas which, as we have seen, were probably suggested to him by his recent experiences. While in the collection of early poems, entitled *Saqṭu 'l-Zand* or 'The Spark of the Fire-stick' and mainly composed before his visit to Baghdád, he still treads the customary path of his predecessors,[3] his poems written after that time and generally known as the *Luzúmiyyát*[4] arrest attention by their boldness and originality as well as by the sombre and earnest tone which pervades them. This, indeed, is not the view of most Oriental critics, who dislike the poet's irreverence and fail to appreciate the fact that he stood considerably in advance of his age ; but in Europe he has received full justice and perhaps higher

[1] *Ibid.*, p. xxvii seq.

[2] *Luzúmiyyát* (Cairo, 1891), vol. i, p. 201.

[3] *I.e.*, his predecessors of the modern school. Like Mutanabbí, he ridicules the conventional types (*asálíb*) in which the old poetry is cast *Cf.* Goldziher, *Abhand. zur Arab. Philologie*, Part I, p. 146 seq.

[4] The proper title is *Luzúmu má lá yalzam*, referring to a technical difficulty which the poet unnecessarily imposed on himself with regard to the rhyme.

praise than he deserves. Reiske describes him as 'Arabice callentissimum, vasti, subtilis, sublimis et audacis ingenii'; [1] Von Hammer, who ranks him as a poet with Abú Tammám, Buḥturí, and Mutanabbí, also mentions him honourably as a philosopher; [2] and finally Von Kremer, who made an exhaustive study of the *Luzúmiyyát* and examined their contents in a masterly essay,[3] discovered in Abu 'l-'Alá, one of the greatest moralists of all time whose profound genius anticipated much that is commonly attributed to the so-called modern spirit of enlightenment. Here Von Kremer's enthusiasm may have carried him too far; for the poet, as Professor Margoliouth says, was unconscious of the value of his suggestions, unable to follow them out, and unable to adhere to them consistently. Although he builded better than he knew, the constructive side of his philosophy was overshadowed by the negative and destructive side, so that his pure and lofty morality leaves but a faint impression which soon dies away in louder, continually recurring voices of doubt and despair.

Abu 'l-'Alá is a firm monotheist, but his belief in God amounted, as it would seem, to little beyond a conviction that all things are governed by inexorable Fate, whose mysteries none may fathom and from whose omnipotence there is no escape. He denies the Resurrection of the dead, *e.g.*:—

> "We laugh, but inept is our laughter;
> We should weep and weep sore,
> Who are shattered like glass, and thereafter
> Re-moulded no more!" [4]

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[1] *Abulfedæ Annales Muslemici*, ed. by Adler (1789–1794), vol. iii, p. 677.

[2] *Literaturgesch. der Araber*, vol. vi, p. 900 sqq.

[3] *Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch-Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. cxvii, 6th Abhandlung (Vienna, 1889). Select passages admirably rendered by Von Kremer into German verse will be found in the *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 29, pp. 304–312; vol. 30, pp. 40–52; vol. 31, pp. 471–483; vol. 38, pp. 499–529.

[4] *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 38, p. 507; Margoliouth, *op. cit.*, p. 131, l. 15 of the Arabic text.

Since Death is the ultimate goal of mankind, the sage will pray to be delivered as speedily as possible from the miseries of life and refuse to inflict upon others what, by no fault of his own, he is doomed to suffer :—

> "Amends are richly due from sire to son :
> What if thy children rule o'er cities great ?
> That eminence estranges them the more
> From thee, and causes them to wax in hate,
> Beholding one who cast them into Life's
> Dark labyrinth whence no wit can extricate." [1]

There are many passages to the same effect, showing that Abu 'l-'Alá regarded procreation as a sin and universal annihilation as the best hope for humanity. He acted in accordance with his opinions, for he never married, and he is said to have desired that the following verse should be inscribed on his grave :—

> "This wrong was by my father done
> To me, but ne'er by me to one." [2]

Hating the present life and weary of its burdens, yet seeing no happier prospect than that of return to non-existence, Abu 'l-'Alá can scarcely have disguised from himself what he might shrink openly to avow—that he was at heart, not indeed an atheist, but wholly incredulous of any Divine revelation. Religion, as he conceives it, is a product of the human mind, in which men believe through force of habit and education, never stopping to consider whether it is true.

"Sometimes you may find a man skilful in his trade, perfect in sagacity and in the use of arguments, but when he comes to religion he is found obstinate, so does he follow the old groove. Piety is implanted in human nature ; it is deemed a sure refuge.

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[1] *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 29, p. 308.
[2] Margoliouth, *op. cit.*, p. 133 of the Arabic text.

To the growing child that which falls from his elders' lips is a lesson that abides with him all his life. Monks in their cloisters and devotees in the mosques accept their creed just as a story is handed down from him who tells it, without distinguishing between a true interpreter and a false. If one of these had found his kin among the Magians, he would have declared himself a Magian, or among the Ṣábians, he would have become nearly or quite like *them*."[1]

Religion, then, is "a fable invented by the ancients," worthless except to those unscrupulous persons who prey upon human folly and superstition. Islam is neither better nor worse than any other creed :—

> "Ḥanífs are stumbling,[2] Christians all astray,
> Jews wildered, Magians far on error's way.
> We mortals are composed of two great schools—
> Enlightened knaves or else religious fools."[3]

Not only does the poet emphatically reject the proud claim of Islam to possess a monopoly of truth, but he attacks most of its dogmas in detail. As to the Koran, Abu 'l-'Alá could not altogether refrain from doubting if it was really the Word of God, but he thought so well of the style that he accepted the challenge flung down by Muḥammad and produced a rival work (*al-Fuṣúl wa-'l-Ghdyát*), which appears to have been a somewhat frivolous parody of the sacred volume, though in the author's judgment its inferiority was simply due to the fact that it was not yet polished by the tongues of four centuries of readers. Another work which must have sorely offended orthodox Muḥammadans is the *Risálatu 'l-Ghufrán* (Epistle of Forgiveness).[4] Here the Paradise of the Faithful becomes

[1] This passage occurs in Abu 'l-'Alá's *Risálatu 'l-Ghufrán* (see *infra*), *J.R.A.S.* for 1902, p. 351. *Cf.* the verses translated by Von Kremer in his essay on Abu 'l-'Alá, p. 23.

[2] For the term 'Ḥaníf' see p. 149 *supra*. Here it is synonymous with 'Muslim.'

[3] *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 38, p. 513.

[4] This work, of which only two copies exist in Europe—one at Constantinople and another in my collection—has been described and partially translated in the *J.R.A.S.* for 1900, pp. 637–720, and for 1902, pp. 75–101, 337–362, and 813–847.

a glorified salon tenanted by various heathen poets who have been forgiven—hence the title—and received among the Blest. This idea is carried out with much ingenuity and in a spirit of audacious burlesque that reminds us of Lucian. The poets are presented in a series of imaginary conversations with a certain Shaykh 'Alí b. Manṣúr, to whom the work is addressed, reciting and explaining their verses, quarrelling with one another, and generally behaving as literary Bohemians. The second part contains a number of anecdotes relating to the *zindíqs* or freethinkers of Islam interspersed with quotations from their poetry and reflections on the nature of their belief, which Abu 'l- 'Alá condemns while expressing a pious hope that they are not so black as they paint themselves. At this time it may have suited him—he was over sixty—to assume the attitude of charitable orthodoxy. Like so many wise men of the East, he practised dissimulation as a fine art—

"I lift my voice to utter lies absurd,
But when I speak the truth, my hushed tones scarce are heard." [1]

In the *Luzúmiyyát*, however, he often unmasks. Thus he describes as idolatrous relics the two Pillars of the Ka'ba and the Black Stone, venerated by every Moslem, and calls the Pilgrimage itself 'a heathen's journey' (*riḥlatu jáhiliyya*[tun]). The following sentiments do him honour, but they would have been rank heresy at Mecca :—

"Praise God and pray,
Walk seventy times, not seven, the Temple round—
And impious remain!
Devout is he alone who, when he may
Feast his desires, is found
With courage to abstain." [2]

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[1] Margoliouth, *op. cit.*, p. 132, last line of the Arabic text.
[2] *Z.D.M.G*, vol. 31, p. 483.

It is needless to give further instances of the poet's contempt for the Muḥammadan articles of faith. Considering that he assailed persons as well as principles, and lashed with bitter invective the powerful class of the *'Ulamá*, the clerical and legal representatives of Islam, we may wonder that the accusation of heresy brought against him was never pushed home and had no serious consequences. The question was warmly argued on both sides, and though Abu 'l-'Alá was pronounced by the majority to be a freethinker and materialist, he did not lack defenders who quoted chapter and verse to prove that he was nothing of the kind. It must be remembered that his works contain no philosophical system; that his opinions have to be gathered from the ideas which he scatters incoherently, and for the most part in guarded language, through a long succession of rhymes; and that this task, already arduous enough, is complicated by the not infrequent occurrence of sentiments which are blamelessly orthodox and entirely contradictory to the rest. A brilliant writer, familiar with Eastern ways of thinking, has observed that in general the conscience of an Asiatic is composed of the following ingredients: (1) an almost bare religious designation; (2) a more or less lively belief in certain doctrines of the creed which he professes; (3) a resolute opposition to many of its doctrines, even if they should be the most essential; (4) a fund of ideas relating to completely alien theories, which occupies more or less room; (5) a constant tendency to get rid of these ideas and theories and to replace the old by new.[1] Such phenomena will account for a great deal of logical inconsistency, but we should beware of invoking them too confidently in this case. Abu 'l- 'Alá with his keen intellect and unfanatical temperament was not the man to let himself be mystified. Still lamer is the explanation offered by some Muḥammadan critics, that his thoughts were decided by the

[1] De Gobineau, *Les religions et les philosophies dans l'Asie centrale*, p. 11 seq.

necessities of the difficult metre in which he wrote. It is conceivable that he may sometimes have doubted his own doubts and given Islam the benefit, but Von Kremer's conclusion is probably near the truth, namely, that where the poet speaks as a good Moslem, his phrases if they are not purely conventional are introduced of set purpose to foil his pious antagonists or to throw them off the scent. Although he was not without religion in the larger sense or the word, unprejudiced students of the later poems must recognise that from the orthodox standpoint he was justly branded as an infidel. The following translations will serve to illustrate the negative side of his philosophy :—

"Falsehood hath so corrupted all the world
That wrangling sects each other's gospel chide;
But were not hate Man's natural element,
Churches and mosques had risen side by side."[1]

"What is Religion? A maid kept close that no eye may view her;
The price of her wedding-gifts and dowry baffles the wooer.
Of all the goodly doctrine that I from the pulpit heard
My heart has never accepted so much as a single word!"[2]

"The pillars of this earth are four,
Which lend to human life a base;
God shaped two vessels, Time and Space,
The world and all its folk to store.

That which Time holds, in ignorance
It holds—why vent on it our spite?
Man is no cave-bound eremite,
But still an eager spy on Chance

He trembles to be laid asleep,
Tho' worn and old and weary grown.
We laugh and weep by Fate alone,
Time moves us not to laugh or weep;

[1] *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 31, p. 477. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. 29, p. 311.

Yet we accuse it innocent,
Which, could it speak, might us accuse,
Our best and worst, at will to choose,
United in a sinful bent.[1]

"'The stars' conjunction comes, divinely sent,
And lo, the veil o'er every creed is rent.
No realm is founded that escapes decay,
The firmest structure soon dissolves away.'[2]
With sadness deep a thoughtful mind must scan
Religion made to serve the pelf of Man.
Fear thine own children: sparks at random flung
Consume the very tinder whence they sprung.
Evil are all men; I distinguish not
That part or this: the race entire I blot.
Trust none, however near akin, tho' he
A perfect sense of honour show to thee,
Thy self is the worst foe to be withstood:
Be on thy guard in hours of solitude.

* * * *

Desire a venerable shaykh to cite
Reason for his doctrine, he is gravelled quite.
What! shall I ripen ere a leaf is seen?
The tree bears only when 'tis clad in green.'[3]

"How have I provoked your enmity?
Christ or Muḥammad, 'tis one to me.
No rays of dawn our path illume,
We are sunk together in ceaseless gloom.
Can blind perceptions lead aright,
Or blear eyes ever have clear sight?
Well may a body racked with pain
Envy mouldering bones in vain;
Yet comes a day when the weary sword
Reposes, to its sheath restored.

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[1] *Z.D.M.G.* vol. 38, p. 522.

[2] According to De Goeje, *Mémoires sur les Carmathes du Bahraïn*, p. 197, n. 1, these lines refer to a prophecy made by the Carmathians that the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, which took place in 1047 A.D. would herald the final triumph of the Fāṭimids over the 'Abbāsids.

[3] *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 38, p. 504.

Ah, who to me a frame will give
As clod or stone insensitive?—
For when spirit is joined to flesh, the pair
Anguish of mortal sickness share.
O Wind, be still, if wind thy name,
O Flame, die out, if thou art flame!" [1]

Pessimist and sceptic as he was, Abu 'l-'Alá denies more than he affirms, but although he rejected the dogmas of positive religion, he did not fall into utter unbelief; for he found within himself a moral law to which he could not refuse obedience.

"Take Reason for thy guide and do what she
Approves, the best of counsellors in sooth.
Accept no law the Pentateuch lays down:
Not there is what thou seekest—the plain truth." [2]

He insists repeatedly that virtue is its own reward.

"Oh, purge the good thou dost from hope of recompense
Or profit, as if thou wert one that sells his wares." [3]

His creed is that of a philosopher and ascetic. Slay no living creature, he says; better spare a flea than give alms. Yet he prefers active piety, active humanity, to fasting and prayer. "The gist of his moral teaching is to inculcate as the highest and holiest duty a conscientious fulfilment of one's obligations with equal warmth and affection towards all living beings." [4]

Abu 'l-'Alá died in 1057 A.D., at the age of eighty-four. About ten years before this time, the Persian poet and traveller, Náṣir-i Khusraw, passed through Ma'arra on his way to Egypt. He describes Abu 'l-'Alá as the chief man in the town, very rich, revered by the inhabitants, and surrounded by more than two hundred students who came from all parts to attend his lectures on literature and

[1] *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 31, p. 474.
[2] *Luzúmiyyát* (Cairo, 1891), i, 394.
[3] *Ibid.*, i, 312.
[4] Von Kremer, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

poetry.[1] We may set this trustworthy notice against the doleful account which Abu 'l-'Alá gives of himself in his letters and other works. If not among the greatest Muḥammadan poets, he is undoubtedly one of the most original and attractive. After Mutanabbí, even after Abu 'l-'Atáhiya, he must appear strangely modern to the European reader. It is astonishing to reflect that a spirit so unconventional, so free from dogmatic prejudice, so rational in spite of his pessimism and deeply religious notwithstanding his attacks on revealed religion, should have ended his life in a Syrian country-town some years before the battle of Senlac. Although he did not meddle with politics and held aloof from every sect, he could truly say of himself, "I am the son of my time" (*ghadawtu 'bna waqtí*).[2] His poems leave no aspect of the age untouched, and present a vivid picture of degeneracy and corruption, in which tyrannous rulers, venal judges, hypocritical and unscrupulous theologians, swindling astrologers, roving swarms of dervishes and godless Carmathians occupy a prominent place.[3]

Although the reader may think that too much space has been already devoted to poetry, I will venture by way of concluding the subject to mention very briefly a few well-known names which cannot be altogether omitted from a work of this kind.

Abú Tammám and Buḥturí.

Abú Tammám (Ḥabíb b. Aws) and Buḥturí, both of whom flourished in the ninth century, were distinguished court poets of the same type as Mutanabbí, but their reputation rests more securely on the anthologies which they compiled under the title of *Ḥamása* (see p. 129 seq.).

[1] *Safar-náma*, ed. by Schefer, p. 10 seq. = pp. 35–36 of the translation.

[2] *Luzúmiyyát*, ii, 280. The phrase does not mean "I am the child of my age," but "I live in the present," forgetful of the past and careless what the future may bring.

[3] See Von Kremer, *op. cit.*, p. 46 sqq.

Abu 'l-'Abbás 'Abdulláh, the son of the Caliph al-Mu'tazz, was a versatile poet and man of letters, who showed his originality by the works which he produced in two novel styles of composition. It has often been remarked that the Arabs have no great epos like the Iliad or the Persian *Sháhnáma*, but only prose narratives which, though sometimes epical in tone, are better described as historical romances. Ibnu 'l-Mu'tazz could not supply the deficiency. He wrote, however, in praise of his cousin, the Caliph Mu'taḍid, a metrical epic in miniature, commencing with a graphic delineation of the wretched state to which the Empire had been reduced by the rapacity and tyranny of the Turkish mercenaries. He composed also, besides an anthology of Bacchanalian pieces, the first important work on Poetics (*Kitábu 'l-Badí'*). A sad destiny was in store for this accomplished prince. On the death of the Caliph Muktafí he was called to the throne, but a few hours after his accession he was overpowered by the partisans of Muqtadir, who strangled him as soon as they discovered his hiding-place. Picturing the scene, one thinks almost inevitably of Nero's dying words, *Qualis artifex pereo!*

Ibnu 'l-Mu'tazz (861–908 A.D.).

The mystical poetry of the Arabs is far inferior, as a whole, to that of the Persians. Fervour and passion it has in the highest degree, but it lacks range and substance, not to speak of imaginative and speculative power. 'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ, though he is undoubtedly the poet of Arabian mysticism, cannot sustain a comparison with his great Persian contemporary, Jalálu'l-Dín Rúmí († 1273 A.D.); he surpasses him only in the intense glow and exquisite beauty of his diction. It will be convenient to reserve a further account of Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ for the next chapter, where we shall discuss the development of Ṣúfiism during this period.

'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ (1181–1235 A.D.).

Finally two writers claim attention who owe their reputa-

tion to single poems—a by no means rare phenomenon in the history of Arabic literature. One of these universally celebrated odes is the *Lámiyyatu 'l-'Ajam* (the ode rhyming in *l* of the non-Arabs) composed in the year 1111 A.D. by Ṭughrá'í; the other is the *Burda* (Mantle Ode) of Búṣírí, which I take the liberty of mentioning in this chapter, although its author died some forty years after the Mongol Invasion.

Ṭughrá'í († *circa* 1120 A.D.).

Ḥasan b. 'Alí al-Ṭughrá'í was of Persian descent and a native of Iṣfahán.[1] He held the offices of *kátib* (secretary) and *munshí* or *ṭughrá'í* (chancellor) under the great Seljúq Sultans, Maliksháh and Muḥammad, and afterwards became Vizier to the Seljúqid prince Ghiyáthu 'l-Dín Mas'úd[2] in Mosul. He derived the title by which he is generally known from the royal signature (*ṭughrá*) which it was his duty to indite on all State papers over the initial *Bismilláh*. The *Lámiyyatu 'l-'Ajam* is so called with reference to Shanfará's renowned poem, the *Lámiyyatu 'l-'Arab* (see p. 79 seq.), which rhymes in the same letter; otherwise the two odes have only this in common,[3] that whereas Shanfará depicts the hardships of an outlaw's life in the desert, Ṭughrá'í, writing in Baghdád, laments the evil times on which he has fallen, and complains that younger rivals, base and servile men, are preferred to him, while he is left friendless and neglected in his old age.

The *Qaṣídatu 'l-Burda* (Mantle Ode) of al-Búṣírí[4] is a

[1] See the article on Ṭughrá'í in Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 462.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 355.

[3] The spirit of fortitude and patience (*ḥamása*) is exhibited by both poets, but in a very different manner. Shanfará describes a man of heroic nature. Ṭughrá'í wraps himself in his virtue and moralises like a Muḥammadan Horace. Ṣafadí, however, says in his commentary on Ṭughrá'í's ode (I translate from an MS. copy in my possession): "It is named *Lámiyyatu 'l-'Ajam* by way of comparing it with the *Lámiyyatu 'l-'Arab*, because it resembles the latter in its wise sentences and maxims."

[4] *I.e.*, the native of Abúṣír (Búṣír), a village in Egypt.

hymn in praise of the Prophet. Its author was born in Egypt in 1212 A.D. We know scarcely anything concerning his life, which, as he himself declares, was passed in writing poetry and in paying court to the great[1]; but his biographers tell us that he supported himself by copying manuscripts, and that he was a disciple of the eminent Ṣúfí, Abu 'l-'Abbás Aḥmad al-Marsí. It is said that he composed the *Burda* while suffering from a stroke which paralysed one half of his body. After praying God to heal him, he began to recite the poem. Presently he fell asleep and dreamed that he saw the Prophet, who touched his palsied side and threw his mantle (*burda*) over him.[2] "Then," said al-Búṣírí, "I awoke and found myself able to rise." However this may be, the Mantle Ode is held in extraordinary veneration by Muḥammadans. Its verses are often learned by heart and inscribed in golden letters on the walls of public buildings; and not only is the whole poem regarded as a charm against evil, but some peculiar magical power is supposed to reside in each verse separately. Although its poetical merit is no more than respectable, the *Burda* may be read with pleasure on account of its smooth and elegant style, and with interest as setting forth in brief compass the mediæval legend of the Prophet—a legend full of prodigies and miracles in which the historical figure of Muḥammad is glorified almost beyond recognition.

Búṣírí († *circa* 1296 A.D.).

Rhymed prose (*saj'*) long retained the religious associations which it possessed in Pre-islamic times and which were consecrated, for all Moslems, by its use in the Koran. About the middle of the ninth century it began to appear

[1] The *Burda*, ed. by C. A. Ralfs (Vienna, 1860), verse 140; *La Bordah traduite et commentée par René Basset* (Paris, 1894), verse 151.

[2] This appears to be a reminiscence of the fact that Muḥammad gave his own mantle as a gift to Ka'b b. Zuhayr, when that poet recited his famous ode, *Bánat Su'ád* (see p. 127 *supra*).

in the public sermons (*khuṭab*, sing. *khuṭba*) of the Caliphs and their viceroys, and it was still further developed by professional preachers, like Ibn Nubáta († 984 A.D.), and by official secretaries, like Ibráhím b. Hilál al-Ṣábí († 994 A.D.). Henceforth rhyme becomes a distinctive and almost indispensable feature of rhetorical prose.

Rhymed prose.

The credit of inventing, or at any rate of making popular, a new and remarkable form of composition in this style belongs to al-Hamadhání († 1007 A.D.), on whom posterity conferred the title *Badí'u 'l-Zamán*, *i.e.*, 'the Wonder or the Age.' Born in Hamadhán (Ecbatana), he left his native town as a young man and travelled through the greater part of Persia, living by his wits and astonishing all whom he met by his talent for improvisation. His *Maqámát* may be called a romance or literary Bohemianism. In the *maqáma* we find some approach to the dramatic style, which has never been cultivated by the Semites.[1] Hamadhání imagined as his hero a witty, unscrupulous vagabond journeying from place to place and supporting himself by the presents which his impromptu displays of rhetoric, poetry, and learning seldom failed to draw from an admiring audience. The second character is the *ráwí* or narrator, "who should be continually meeting with the other, should relate his adventures, and repeat his excellent compositions."[2] The *Maqámát* of Hamadhání

Badí'u 'l-Zamán al-Hamadhání († 1007 A.D.).

[1] *Maqáma* (plural, *maqámát*) is properly 'a place of standing'; hence, an assembly where people stand listening to the speaker, and in particular, an assembly for literary discussion. At an early period reports of such conversations and discussions received the name of *maqámát* (see Brockelmann, *Gesch. der Arab. Litteratur*, vol. i, p. 94). The word in its literary sense is usually translated by 'assembly,' or by the French '*séance*.'

[2] *The Assemblies of al-Ḥaríri*, translated from the Arabic, with an introduction and notes by T. Chenery (1867), vol. i, p. 19. This excellent work contains a fund of information on diverse matters connected with Arabian history and literature. Owing to the author's death it was left unfinished, but a second volume (including *Assemblies* 27–50) by F. Steingass appeared in 1898.

became the model for this kind of writing, and the types which he created survive unaltered in the more elaborate work of his successors. Each *maqáma* forms an independent whole, so that the complete series may be regarded as a novel consisting of detached episodes in the hero's life, a medley of prose and verse in which the story is nothing, the style everything.

Less original than Badí'u 'l-Zamán, but far beyond him in variety of learning and copiousness of language, Abú Muḥammad al-Qásim al-Ḥarírí of Baṣra produced in his *Maqámát* a masterpiece which for eight centuries "has been esteemed as, next to the Koran, the chief treasure of the Arabic tongue." In the Preface to his work he says that the composition of *maqámát* was suggested to him by "one whose suggestion is a command and whom it is a pleasure to obey." This was the distinguished Persian statesman, Anúshirwán b. Khálid,[1] who afterwards served as Vizier under the Caliph Mustarshid Billáh (1118–1135 A.D.) and Sultán Mas'úd, the Seljúq (1133–1152 A.D.); but at the time when he made Ḥarírí's acquaintance he was living in retirement at Baṣra and devoting himself to literary studies. Ḥarírí begged to be excused on the score that his abilities were unequal to the task, "for the lame steed cannot run like the strong courser."[2] Finally, however, he yielded to the request of Anúshirwán, and, to quote his own words—

Ḥarírí (1054–1122 A.D.).

"I composed, in spite of hindrances that I suffered
From dullness of capacity and dimness of intellect,
And dryness of imagination and distressing anxieties,
Fifty *Maqámát*, which contain serious language and lightsome,

[1] A full account of his career will be found in the Preface to Houtsma's *Recueil de textes relatifs à l'histoire des Seldjoucides*, vol. ii, p. 11 sqq. *Cf.* Browne's *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 360.

[2] This is a graceful, but probably insincere, tribute to the superior genius of Hamadhání.

And combine refinement with dignity of style,
And brilliancies with jewels of eloquence,
And beauties of literature with its rarities,
Beside verses of the Koran wherewith I adorned them,
And choice metaphors, and Arab proverbs that I interspersed,
And literary elegancies and grammatical riddles,
And decisions based on the (double) meaning of words,
And original discourses and highly-wrought orations,
And affecting exhortations as well as entertaining jests:
The whole of which I have indited as by the tongue of Abú Zayd of Sarúj,
The part of narrator being assigned to Harith son of Hammám of Baṣra."[1]

Ḥarírí then proceeds to argue that his *Maqámát* are not mere frivolous stories such as strict Moslems are bound to reprobate in accordance with a well-known passage of the Koran referring to Naḍr b. Ḥárith, who mortally offended the Prophet by amusing the Quraysh with the old Persian legends of Rustam and Isfandiyár (Koran, xxxi, 5–6): "*There is one that buyeth idle tales that he may seduce men from the way of God, without knowledge, and make it a laughing-stock: these shall suffer a shameful punishment. And when Our signs are read to him, he turneth his back in disdain as though he heard them not, as though there were in his ears a deafness: give him joy of a grievous punishment!*" Ḥarírí insists that the *Assemblies* have a moral purpose. The ignorant and malicious, he says, will probably condemn his work, but intelligent readers will perceive, if they lay prejudice aside, that it is as useful and instructive as the fables of beasts, &c.,[2] to which no one has ever objected. That his fears of hostile criticism were not altogether groundless is shown by the

[1] The above passage is taken, with some modification, from the version of Ḥarírí published in 1850 by Theodore Preston, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, who was afterwards Lord Almoner's Professor of Arabic (1855–1871).

[2] Moslems had long been familiar with the fables of Bidpai, which were translated from the Pehlevi into Arabic by Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa' († *circa* 760 A.D.).

following remarks of the author of the popular history entitled *al-Fakhrí* († *circa* 1300 A.D.). This writer, after claiming that his own book is more useful than the *Ḥamása* of Abú Tammám, continues:—

"And, again, it is more profitable than the *Maqámát* on which men have set their hearts, and which they eagerly commit to memory; because the reader derives no benefit from *Maqámát* except familiarity with elegant composition and knowledge of the rules of verse and prose. Undoubtedly they contain maxims and ingenious devices and experiences; but all this has a debasing effect on the mind, for it is founded on begging and sponging and disgraceful scheming to acquire a few paltry pence. Therefore, if they do good in one direction, they do harm in another; and this point has been noticed by some critics of the *Maqámát* of Ḥarírí and Badí'u 'l-Zamán."[1]

Maqámát criticised as immoral.

Before pronouncing on the justice of this censure, we must consider for a moment the character of Abú Zayd, the hero of Ḥarírí's work, whose adventures are related by a certain Ḥárith b. Hammám, under which name the author is supposed to signify himself. According to the general tradition, Ḥarírí was one day seated with a number of savants in the mosque of the Banú Ḥarám at Baṣra, when an old man entered, footsore and travel-stained. On being asked who he was and whence he came, he answered that his name of honour was Abú Zayd and that he came from Sarúj.[2] He described in eloquent and moving terms how his native town had been plundered by the Greeks, who made his daughter a captive and drove him forth to exile and poverty. Ḥarírí was so struck with his wonderful powers of improvisation that on the same evening he began to compose the *Maqáma of the Banú Ḥarám*,[3] where Abú Zayd

The character of Abú Zayd.

[1] *Al-Fakhrí*, ed. by Derenbourg, p. 18, l. 4 sqq.

[2] A town in Mesopotamia, not far from Edessa. It was taken by the Crusaders in 1101 A.D. (Abu 'l-Fidá, ed. by Reiske, vol. iii, p. 332).

[3] The 48th *Maqáma* of the series as finally arranged.

is introduced in his invariable character: "a crafty old man, full of genius and learning, unscrupulous of the artifices which he uses to effect his purpose, reckless in spending in forbidden indulgences the money he has obtained by his wit or deceit, but with veins of true feeling in him, and ever yielding to unfeigned emotion when he remembers his devastated home and his captive child."[1] If an immoral tendency has been attributed to the *Assemblies* of Ḥarírí it is because the author does not conceal his admiration for this unprincipled and thoroughly disreputable scamp. Abú Zayd, indeed, is made so fascinating that we can easily pardon his knaveries for the sake of the pearls of wit and wisdom which he scatters in splendid profusion—excellent discourses, edifying sermons, and plaintive lamentations mingled with rollicking ditties and ribald jests. Modern readers are not likely to agree with the historian quoted above, but although they may deem his criticism illiberal, they can hardly deny that it has some justification.

Ḥarírí's rhymed prose might be freely imitated in English, but the difficulty of rendering it in rhyme with tolerable fidelity has caused me to abandon the attempt to produce a version of one of the *Assemblies* in the original form.[2] I will translate instead three poems which are put into the mouth of Abú Zayd. The first is a tender elegiac strain recalling far-off days of youth and happiness in his native land:—

"Ghassán is my noble kindred, Sarúj is my land of birth,
Where I dwelt in a lofty mansion of sunlike glory and worth,
A Paradise for its sweetness and beauty and pleasant mirth!

---

[1] Chenery, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[2] This has been done with extraordinary skill by the German poet, Friedrich Rückert (*Die Verwandlungen des Abu Seid von Serug*, 2nd ed. 1837), whose work, however, is not in any sense a translation.

And oh, the life that I led there abounding in all delight!
I trailed my robe on its meadows, while Time flew a careless flight,
Elate in the flower of manhood, no pleasure veiled from my sight.

Now, if woe could kill, I had died of the troubles that haunt me here,
Or could past joy ever be ransomed, my heart's blood had not been dear,
Since death is better than living a brute's life year after year,

Subdued to scorn as a lion whom base hyenas torment.
But Luck is to blame, else no one had failed of his due ascent:
If she were straight, the conditions of men would never be bent."[1]

The scene of the eleventh *Assembly* is laid in Sáwa, a city lying midway between Hamadhán (Ecbatana) and Rayy (Rhages). "Ḥárith, in a fit of religious zeal, betakes himself to the public burial ground, for the purpose of contemplation. He finds a funeral in progress, and when it is over an old man, with his face muffled in a cloak, takes his stand on a hillock, and pours forth a discourse on the certainty of death and judgment. . . . He then rises into poetry and declaims a piece which is one of the noblest productions of Arabic literature. In lofty morality, in religious fervour, in beauty of language, in power and grace of metre, this magnificent hymn is unsurpassed."[2]

"Pretending sense in vain, how long, O light of brain, wilt thou heap sin and bane, and compass error's span?
Thy conscious guilt avow! The white hairs on thy brow admonish thee, and thou hast ears unstopt, O man!

[1] A literal translation of these verses, which occur in the sixth *Assembly*, is given by Chenery, *op. cit.*, p. 138.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 163.

Death's call dost thou not hear? Rings not his voice full clear? Of parting hast no fear, to make thee sad and wise?

How long sunk in a sea of sloth and vanity wilt thou play heedlessly, as though Death spared his prize?

Till when, far wandering from virtue, wilt thou cling to evil ways that bring together vice in brief?

For thy Lord's anger shame thou hast none, but let maim o'ertake thy cherished aim, then feel'st thou burning grief.

Thou hail'st with eager joy the coin of yellow die, but if a bier pass by, feigned is thy sorry face;

Perverse and callous wight! thou scornest counsel right to follow the false light of treachery and disgrace.

Thy pleasure thou dost crave, to sordid gain a slave, forgetting the dark grave and what remains of dole;

Were thy true weal descried, thy lust would not misguide nor thou be terrified by words that should console.

Not tears, blood shall thine eyes pour at the great Assize, when thou hast no allies, no kinsman thee to save;

Straiter thy tomb shall be than needle's cavity: deep, deep thy plunge I see as diver's 'neath the wave.

There shall thy limbs be laid, a feast for worms arrayed, till utterly decayed are wood and bones withal,

Nor may thy soul repel that ordeal horrible, when o'er the Bridge of Hell she must escape or fall.

Astray shall leaders go, and mighty men be low, and sages shall cry, 'Woe like this was never yet.'

Then haste, my thoughtless friend, what thou hast marred to mend, for life draws near its end, and still thou art in the net.

Trust not in fortune, nay, though she be soft and gay; for she will spit one day her venom, if thou dote;

Abate thy haughty pride! lo, Death is at thy side, fastening, whate'er betide, his fingers on thy throat.

When prosperous, refrain from arrogant disdain, nor give thy tongue the rein: a modest tongue is best.

Comfort the child of bale and listen to his tale: repair thine actions frail, and be for ever blest.

Feather the nest once more of those whose little store has vanished: ne'er deplore the loss nor miser be;

With meanness bravely cope, and teach thine hand to ope, and spurn the misanthrope, and make thy bounty free.

Lay up provision fair and leave what brings thee care: for sea the ship prepare and dread the rising storm.
This, friend, is what I preach expressed in lucid speech. Good luck to all and each who with my creed conform!"

In the next *Maqâma*—that of Damascus—we find Abú Zayd, gaily attired, amidst casks and vats of wine, carousing and listening to the music of lutes and singing—

"I ride and I ride through the waste far and wide, and I fling away pride to be gay as the swallow;
Stem the torrent's fierce speed, tame the mettlesome steed, that wherever I lead Youth and Pleasure may follow.
I bid gravity pack, and I strip bare my back lest liquor I lack when the goblet is lifted:
Did I never incline to the quaffing of wine, I had ne'er been with fine wit and eloquence gifted.
Is it wonderful, pray, that an old man should stay in a well-stored seray by a cask overflowing?
Wine strengthens the knees, physics every disease, and from sorrow it frees, the oblivion-bestowing!
Oh, the purest of joys is to live sans disguise unconstrained by the ties of a grave reputation,
And the sweetest of love that the lover can prove is when fear and hope move him to utter his passion.
Thy love then proclaim, quench the smouldering flame, for 'twill spark out thy shame and betray thee to laughter:
Heal the wounds of thine heart and assuage thou the smart by the cups that impart a delight men seek after;
While to hand thee the bowl damsels wait who cajole and enravish the soul with eyes tenderly glancing,
And singers whose throats pour such high-mounting notes, when the melody floats, iron rocks would be dancing!
Obey not the fool who forbids thee to pull beauty's rose when in full bloom thou'rt free to possess it;
Pursue thine end still, tho' it seem past thy skill: let them say what they will, take thy pleasure and bless it!
Get thee gone from thy sire, if he thwart thy desire; spread thy nets nor enquire what the nets are receiving;
But be true to a friend, shun the miser and spend, ways of charity wend, be unwearied in giving.
He that knocks enters straight at the Merciful's gate, so repent or e'er Fate call thee forth from the living!"

The reader may judge from these extracts whether the *Assemblies* of Ḥarírí are so deficient in matter as some critics have imagined. But, of course, the celebrity of the work is mainly due to its consummate literary form—a point on which the Arabs have always bestowed singular attention. Ḥarírí himself was a subtle grammarian, living in Baṣra, the home of philological science;[1] and though he wrote to please rather than to instruct, he seems to have resolved that his work should illustrate every beauty and nicety of which the Arabic language is capable. We Europeans can see as little merit or taste in the verbal conceits—equivoques, paronomasias, assonances, alliterations, &c.—with which his pages are thickly studded, as in *tours de force* of composition which may be read either forwards or backwards, or which consist entirely of pointed or of unpointed letters; but our impatience of such things should not blind us to the fact that they are intimately connected with the genius and traditions of the Arabic tongue,[2] and therefore stand on a very different footing from those euphuistic extravagances which appear, for example, in English literature of the Elizabethan age. By Ḥarírí's countrymen the *Maqámát* are prized as an almost unique monument of their language, antiquities, and culture. One of the author's contemporaries, the famous Zamakhsharí, has expressed the general verdict in pithy verse—

> "I swear by God and His marvels,
> By the pilgrims' rite and their shrine:
> Ḥarírí's *Assemblies* are worthy
> To be written in gold each line."

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[1] Two grammatical treatises by Ḥarírí have come down to us. In one of these, entitled *Durratu 'l-Ghawwáṣ* ('The Pearl of the Diver') and edited by Thorbecke (Leipzig, 1871), he discusses the solecisms which people of education are wont to commit.

[2] See Chenery, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–97.

Concerning some of the specifically religious sciences, such as Dogmatic Theology and Mysticism, we shall have more to say in the following chapter, while as to the science of Apostolic Tradition (*Ḥadíth*) we must refer the reader to what has been already said. All that can be attempted here is to take a passing notice of the most eminent writers and the most celebrated works of this epoch in the field of religion.

The religious literature of the period.

The place of honour belongs to the Imám Málik b. Anas of Medína, whose *Muwaṭṭa'* is the first great *corpus* of Muḥammadan Law. He was a partisan of the 'Alids, and was flogged by command of the Caliph Manṣúr in consequence of his declaration that he did not consider the oath of allegiance to the 'Abbásid dynasty to have any binding effect.

Málik b. Anas (713–795 A.D.).

The two principal authorities for Apostolic Tradition are Bukhárí († 870 A.D.) and Muslim († 875 A.D.), authors of the collections entitled *Ṣaḥíḥ*. Compilations of a narrower range, embracing only those traditions which bear on the *Sunna* or custom of the Prophet, are the *Sunan* of Abú Dáwúd al-Sijistání († 889 A.D.), the *Jámi'* of Abú 'Ísá Muḥammad al-Tirmidhí († 892 A.D.), the *Sunan* of al-Nasá'í († 915 A.D.), and the *Sunan* of Ibn Mája († 896 A.D.). These, together with the *Ṣaḥíḥs* of Bukhárí and Muslim, form the Six Canonical Books (*al-kutub al-sitta*), which are held in the highest veneration. Amongst the innumerable works of a similar kind produced in this period it will suffice to mention the *Maṣábíḥu 'l-Sunna* by al-Baghawí († *circa* 1120 A.D.). A later adaptation called *Mishkátu 'l-Maṣábíḥ* has been often printed, and is still extremely popular.

Bukhárí and Muslim.

The four *Sunan*.

Omitting the great manuals of Moslem Jurisprudence, which are without literary interest in the larger sense, we may pause for a moment at the name of al-Máwardí, a Sháfi'ite lawyer, who wrote a well-known treatise on politics—

the *Kitábu 'l-Aḥkám al-Sulṭániyya*, or 'Book of the Principles of Government.' His standpoint is purely theoretical. Thus he lays down that the Caliph should be elected by the body of learned, pious, and orthodox divines, and that the people must leave the administration of the State to the Caliph absolutely, as being its representative. Máwardí lived at Baghdád during the period of Buwayhid ascendancy, a period described by Sir W. Muir in the following words: "The pages of our annalists are now almost entirely occupied with the political events of the day, in the guidance of which the Caliphs had seldom any concern, and which therefore need no mention here."[1] Under the 'Abbásid dynasty the mystical doctrines of the Ṣúfís were systematised and expounded. The most important Arabic works of reference on Ṣúfiism are the *Ḳútu 'l-Ḳulúb*, or 'Food of Hearts,' by Abú Ṭálib al-Makkí († 996 A.D.); the *Kitábu 'l-Ta'arruf li-Madhhabi ahli 'l-Taṣawwuf*, or 'Book of Enquiry as to the Religion of the Ṣúfís,' by Muḥammad b. Isḥáq al-Kalábádhí († *circa* 1000 A.D.); the *Ṭabaqátu 'l-Ṣúfiyya*, or 'Classes of the Ṣútís,' by Abú 'Abd al-Raḥmán al-Sulamí († 1021 A.D.); the *Ḥilyatu 'l-Awliyá*, or 'Adornment of the Saints,' by Abú Nu'aym al-Iṣfahání († 1038 A.D.); the *Risálatu 'l-Qushayriyya*, or 'Qushayrite Tract,' by Abu 'l-Qásim al-Qushayrí of Naysábúr († 1074 A.D.); the *Iḥyá'u 'Ulúm al-Dín*, or 'Revivification of the Religious Sciences,' by Ghazálí († 1111 A.D.); and the *'Awárifu 'l-Ma'árif*, or 'Bounties of Knowledge,' by Shihábu 'l-Dín Abú Ḥafṣ 'Umar al-Suhrawardí († 1234 A.D.) —a list which might easily be extended. In Dogmatic Theology there is none to compare with Abú Ḥámid al-Ghazálí, surnamed 'the Proof of Islam' (*Ḥujjatu 'l-Islám*). He is a figure of such towering importance that some detailed account of his life and opinions must be inserted in a book like this,

Máwardí († 1058 A.D.).

Arabic authorities on Ṣúfiism.

Ghazálí († 1111 A.D.).

[1] *The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline, and Fall*, p. 573.

which professes to illustrate the history of Muḥammadan thought. Here, however, we shall only give an outline of his biography in order to pave the way for discussion of his intellectual achievements and his far-reaching influence.

Life of Ghazálí according to the *Shadharátu 'l-Dhahab.*

"In this year (505 A.H. = 1111 A.D.) died the Imám, who was the Ornament of the Faith and the Proof of Islam, Abú Ḥámid Muḥammad . . . of Ṭús, the Sháfi'ite. His death took place on the 14th of the Latter Jumádá at Ṭábarán, a village near Ṭús. He was then fifty-five years of age. Gházzálí is equivalent to Ghazzál, like 'Aṭṭárí (for 'Aṭṭár) and Khabbází (for Khabbáz), in the dialect of the people of Khurásán[1]: so it is stated by the author of the *'Ibar.*[2] Al-Isnawí says in his *Ṭabaqát*[3]:—Ghazzálí is an Imám by whose name breasts are dilated and souls are revived, and in whose literary productions the ink-horn exults and the paper quivers with joy; and at the hearing thereof voices are hushed and heads are bowed. He was born at Ṭús in the year 450 A.H. = 1058–1059 A.D. His father used to spin wool (*yaghzilu 'l-ṣúf*) and sell it in his shop. On his deathbed he committed his two sons, Ghazzálí himself and his brother Aḥmad, to the care of a pious Ṣúfí, who taught them writing and educated them until the money left him by their father was all spent. 'Then,' says Ghazzálí, 'we went to the college to learn divinity (*fiqh*) so that we might gain our livelihood.' After studying there for some time he journeyed to Abú Naṣr al-Ismá'ílí in Jurján, then to the Imámu 'l-Ḥaramayn[4] at Naysábúr, under whom he studied with such assiduity that he became the best scholastic of his contemporaries (*ṣára anẓara ahlı zamánihi*), and he lectured *ex*

[1] Another example is 'Umar al-Khayyámí for 'Umar Khayyám. The spelling Ghazzálí (with a double *z*) was in general use when Ibn Khallikán wrote his Biographical Dictionary in 1256 A.D. (see De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 80), but according to Sam'ání the name is derived from Ghazála, a village near Ṭús; in which case Ghazálí is the correct form of the *nisba.* I have adopted 'Ghazalí' in deference to Sam'ání's authority, but those who write 'Ghazzálí' can at least claim that they err in very good company.

[2] Shamsu 'l-Dín al-Dhahabí († 1348 A.D.).

[3] 'Abdu 'l-Raḥím al-Isnawí († 1370 A.D.), author of a biographical work on the Sháfi'ite doctors. See Brockelmann, *Gesch. der Arab. Litt.*, vol. ii, p. 90.

[4] Abu 'l-Ma'álí al-Juwayní, a famous theologian of Naysábúr († 1085 A.D.), received this title, which means 'Imám of the Two Sanctuaries,' because he taught for several years at Mecca and Medína.

cathedrâ in his master's lifetime, and wrote books. . . . And on the death of his master he set out for the Camp[1] and presented himself to the Niẓámu 'l-Mulk, whose assembly was the alighting-place of the learned and the destination of the leading divines and savants; and there, as was due to his high merit, he enjoyed the society of the principal doctors, and disputed with his opponents and rebutted them in spite of their eminence. So the Niẓámu 'l-Mulk inclined to him and showed him great honour, and his name flew through the world. Then, in the year '84 (1091 A.D.) he was called to a professorship in the Niẓámiyya College at Baghdád, where a splendid reception awaited him. His words reached far and wide, and his influence soon exceeded that of the Emírs and Viziers. But at last his lofty spirit recoiled from worldly vanities. He gave himself up to devotion and dervishhood, and set out, in the year '88 (1095 A.D.), for the Ḥijáz.[2] On his return from the Pilgrimage he journeyed to Damascus and made his abode there for ten years in the minaret of the Congregational Mosque, and composed several works, of which the *Iḥyá* is said to be one. Then, after visiting Jerusalem and Alexandria, he returned to his home at Ṭús, intent on writing and worship and constant recitation of the Koran and dissemination of knowledge and avoidance of intercourse with men. The Vizier Fakhru 'l-Mulk,[3] son of the Niẓámu 'l-Mulk, came to see him, and urged him by every means in his power to accept a professorship in the Niẓámiyya College at Naysábúr.[4] Ghazzálí consented, but after teaching for a time, resigned the appointment and returned to end his days in his native town."

His principal works.

Besides his *magnum opus*, the already-mentioned *Iḥyá*, in which he expounds theology and the ethics of religion from the standpoint of the moderate Ṣúfí school, Ghazálí wrote a great number of important works, such as the *Munqidh mina 'l-Ḍalál*, or 'Deliverer from Error,' a sort of 'Apologia pro Vitâ Suâ'; the *Kímiyá'u 'l-Sa'ádat*, or 'Alchemy of Happiness,' which was

[1] *I.e.*, the camp-court of the Seljúq monarch Malikshâh, son of Alp Arslán.

[2] According to his own account in the *Munqidh*, Ghazálí on leaving Baghdád went first to Damascus, then to Jerusalem, and then to Mecca. The statement that he remained ten years at Damascus is inaccurate.

[3] The MS. has Fakhru 'l-Dín.

[4] Ghazálí's return to public life took place in 1106 A.D.

originally written in Persian; and the *Tahâfutu 'l-Falâsifa*, or 'Collapse of the Philosophers,' a polemical treatise designed to refute and destroy the doctrines of Moslem philosophy. This work called forth a rejoinder from the celebrated Ibn Rushd (Averroes), who died at ~~Morocco~~ Marrakesh in 1198–1199 A.D.

Here we may notice two valuable works on the history of religion, both of which bear the same title, *Kitâbu 'l-Milal wa-'l-Niḥal*, that is to say, 'The Book of Religions and Sects,' by Ibn Ḥazm of Cordova († 1064 A.D.) and Abu 'l-Fatḥ al-Shahrastání († 1153 A.D.). Ibn Ḥazm we shall meet with again in the chapter which deals specially with the history and literature of the Spanish Moslems. Shahrastání, as he is named after his birthplace, belonged to the opposite extremity of the Muḥammadan Empire, being a native of Khurásán, the huge Eastern province bounded by the Oxus. Cureton, who edited the Arabic text of the *Kitâbu 'l-Milal wa-'l-Niḥal* (London, 1842–1846), gives the following outline of its contents:—

Shahrastání's 'Book of Religions and Sects.'

After five introductory chapters, the author proceeds to arrange his book into two great divisions; the one comprising the Religious, the other the Philosophical Sects. The former of these contains an account of the various Sects of the followers of Muḥammad, and likewise of those to whom a true revelation had been made (the *Ahlu 'l-Kitáb*, or 'People of the Scripture'), that is, Jews and Christians; and of those who had a doubtful or pretended revelation (*man lahú shubhatu 'l-Kitáb*), such as the Magi and the Manichæans. The second division comprises an account of the philosophical opinions of the Sabæans (Ṣábians), which are mainly set forth in a very interesting dialogue between a Sabæan and an orthodox Muḥammadan; of the tenets of various Greek Philosophers and some of the Fathers of the Christian Church; and also of the Muḥammadan doctors, more particularly of the system of Ibn Síná or Avicenna, which the author explains at considerable length. The work terminates with an account of the tenets of the Arabs before the commencement of Islamism, and of the religion of the people of India.

The science of grammar took its rise in the cities of Baṣra

and Kúfa, which were founded not long after Muḥammad's death, and which remained the chief centres of Arabian life and thought outside the peninsula until they were eclipsed by the great 'Abbásid capital. In both towns the population consisted of Bedouin Arabs, belonging to different tribes and speaking many different dialects, while there were also thousands of artisans and clients who spoke Persian as their mother-tongue, so that the classical idiom was peculiarly exposed to corrupting influences. If the pride and delight of the Arabs in their noble language led them to regard the maintenance of its purity as a national duty, they were equally bound by their religious convictions to take decisive measures for ensuring the correct pronunciation and interpretation of that "miracle of Divine eloquence," the Arabic Koran. To this latter motive the invention of grammar is traditionally ascribed. The inventor is related to have been Abu 'l-Aswad al-Du'alí, who died at Baṣra during the Umayyad period. "Abu 'l-Aswad, having been asked where he had acquired the science of grammar, answered that he had learned the rudiments of it from 'Alí b. Abí Ṭálib. It is said that he never made known any of the principles which he had received from 'Alí till Ziyád[1] sent to him the order to compose something which might serve as a guide to the public and enable them to understand the Book of God. He at first asked to be excused, but on hearing a man recite the following passage out of the Koran, *anna 'lláha barí'un mina 'l-mushriklna wa-rasúluhu*,[2] which last word the reader pronounced *rasúlihi*, he exclaimed, 'I never thought that things would have come to this.' He then returned to Ziyád and

Grammar and philology.

The invention of Arabic grammar.

[1] See p. 195 *supra*.

[2] Kor. ix, 3. The translation runs ("This is a declaration) *that God is clear of the idolaters, and His Apostle likewise*." With the reading *rasúlihi* it means that God is clear of the idolaters and also of His Apostle.

said, 'I will do what you ordered.'"[1] The Baṣra school of grammarians which Abu 'l-Aswad is said to have founded is older than the rival school of Kúfa and surpassed it in fame. Its most prominent representatives were Abú 'Amr b. al-'Alá († 770 A.D.), a diligent and profound student of the Koran, who on one occasion burned all his collections of old poetry, &c., and abandoned himself to devotion; Khalíl b. Aḥmad, inventor of the Arabic system of metres and author of the first Arabic lexicon (the *Kitábu 'l-'Ayn*), which, however, he did not live to complete; the Persian Síbawayhi, whose Grammar, entitled 'The Book of Síbawayhi,' is universally celebrated; the great Humanists al-Aṣma'í and Abú 'Ubayda who flourished under Hárún al-Rashid; al-Mubarrad, about a century later, whose best-known work, the *Kámil*, has been edited by Professor William Wright; his contemporary al-Sukkarí, a renowned collector and critic of old Arabian poetry; and Ibn Durayd († 934 A.D.), a distinguished philologist, genealogist, and poet, who received a pension from the Caliph Muqtadir in recognition of his services on behalf of science, and whose principal works, in addition to the famous ode known as the *Maqṣúra*, are a voluminous lexicon (*al-Jamhara fi 'l-Lugha*) and a treatise on the genealogies of the Arab tribes (*Kitábu 'l-Ishtiqáq*).

The philologists of Baṣra.

Against these names the school of Kúfa can set al-Kisá'í, a Persian savant who was entrusted by Hárún al-Rashíd with the education of his sons Amín and Ma'mún; al-Farrá († 822 A.D.), a pupil and compatriot of al-Kisá'í; al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbí, a favourite of the Caliph Mahdí, for whom he compiled an excellent anthology of Pre-islamic poems (*al-Mufaḍḍaliyyát*), which has already been noticed[2]; Ibnu 'l-Sikkít, whose outspoken partiality for the House of 'Alí b. Abí Ṭálib caused him to be brutally trampled to death by the Turkish

The philologists of Kúfa.

[1] Ibn Khallikan, De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 663.

[2] See p. 128.

guards of the tyrant Mutawakkil (858 A.D.); and Tha'lab, head of the Kúfa school in his time († 904 A.D.), of whose rivalry with al-Mubarrad many stories are told. A contemporary, Abú Bakr b. Abi 'l-Azhar, said in one of his poems :—

> "Turn to Mubarrad or to Tha'lab, thou
> That seek'st with learning to improve thy mind!
> Be not a fool, like mangy camel shunned:
> All human knowledge thou with them wilt find.
> The science of the whole world, East and West,
> In these two single doctors is combined."[1]

Reference has been made in a former chapter to some of the earliest Humanists, *e.g.*, Ḥammád al-Ráwiya († 776 A.D.) and his slightly younger contemporary, Khalaf al-Aḥmar, to their inestimable labours in rescuing the old poetry from oblivion, and to the unscrupulous methods which they sometimes employed.[2] Among their successors, who flourished in the Golden Age of Islam, under the first 'Abbásids, the place of honour belongs to Abú 'Ubayda († about 825 A.D.) and al-Aṣma'í († about 830 A.D.).

Abú 'Ubayda.

Abú 'Ubayda Ma'mar b. al-Muthanná was of Jewish-Persian race, and maintained in his writings the cause of the Shu'úbites against the Arab national party, for which reason he is erroneously described as a Kharijite.[3] The rare expressions of the Arabic language, the history of the Arabs and their conflicts were his predominant study—"neither in heathen nor Muḥammadan times," he once boasted, "have two horses met in battle but that I possess information about them and their riders"[4]; yet, with all his learning, he was not always able to recite a verse without mangling it; even in reading the Koran, with the book

[1] Ibn Khallikán, No. 608; De Slane's translation, vol. iii, p. 31.
[2] See pp. 131–134, *supra*.
[3] Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, Part I, p. 197.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 195.

before his eyes, he made mistakes.[1] Our knowledge of Arabian antiquity is drawn, to a large extent, from the traditions collected by him which are preserved in the *Kitábu 'l-Aghání* and elsewhere. He left nearly two hundred works, of which a long but incomplete catalogue occurs in the *Fihrist* (pp. 53–54). Abú 'Ubayda was summoned by the Caliph Hárún al-Rashíd to Baghdád, where he became acquainted with Aṣma'í. There was a standing feud between them, due in part to difference of character[2] and in part to personal jealousies. 'Abdu 'l-Malik b. Qurayb al-Aṣma'í was, like his rival, a native of Baṣra. Although he may have been excelled by others of his contemporaries in certain branches of learning, none exhibited in such fine perfection the varied literary culture which at that time was so highly prized and so richly rewarded. Whereas Abú 'Ubayda was dreaded for his sharp tongue and sarcastic humour, Aṣma'í had all the accomplishments and graces of a courtier. Abú Nuwás, the first great poet of the 'Abbásid period, said that Aṣma'í was a nightingale to charm those who heard him with his melodies. In court circles, where the talk often turned on philological matters, he was a favourite guest, and the Caliph would send for him to decide any abstruse question connected with literature which no one present was able to answer. Of his numerous writings on linguistic and antiquarian themes several have come down to us, *e.g.*, 'The Book of Camels' (*Kitábu 'l-Ibil*), 'The Book of Horses' (*Kitábu 'l-Khayl*), and 'The Book of the Making of Man' (*Kitábu Khalqi 'l-Insán*), a treatise which shows that the Arabs of the desert had acquired a considerable knowledge of human anatomy. His work as editor, commentator, and critic of Arabian poetry forms (it has been said) the basis of nearly all that has since been written on the subject.

Aṣma'í.

[1] Ibn Qutayba, *Kitábu 'l-Ma'árif*, p. 269.

[2] While Abú 'Ubayda was notorious for his free-thinking proclivities, Aṣma'í had a strong vein of pietism. See Goldziher, *loc. cit.*, p. 199 and *Abh. zur Arab. Philologie*, Part I, p. 136.

Belles-lettres (*Adab*) and literary history are represented by a whole series of valuable works. Only a few of the most important can be mentioned here, and that in a very summary manner. The Persian Rúzbih, better known as 'Abdulláh Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa', who was put to death by order of the Caliph Manṣúr, made several translations from the Pehleví or Middle-Persian literature into Arabic. We possess a specimen of his powers in the famous *Book of Kalíla and Dimna*, which is ultimately derived from the Sanscrit *Fables of Bidpai*. The Arabic version is one of the oldest prose works in that language, and is justly regarded as a model of elegant style, though it has not the pungent brevity which marks true Arabian eloquence. Ibn Qutayba, whose family came from Merv, held for a time the office of Cadi at Dínawar, and lived at Baghdád in the latter half of the ninth century. We have more than once cited his 'Book of General Knowledge' (*Kitábu 'l-Ma'árif*)[1] and his 'Book of Poetry and Poets,' (*Kitábu 'l-Shi'r wa-'l-Shu'ará*), and may add here the *Adabu 'l-Kátib*, or 'Accomplishments of the Secretary,'[2] a manual of stylistic, dealing with orthography, orthoepy, lexicography, and the like; and the *'Uyúnu 'l-Akhbár*, or 'Choice Histories,'[3] a work in ten chapters, each of which is devoted to a special theme such as Government, War, Nobility, Friendship, Women, &c.

Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa' († *circa* 760 A.D.).

Ibn Qutayba († 889 A.D.).

'Amr b. Baḥr al-Jáḥiẓ of Baṣra was a celebrated freethinker, and gave his name to a sect of the Mu'tazilites (*al-Ǧáḥiẓiyya*).[4] He composed numerous books of an anecdotal and entertaining character. Ibn Khallikán singles out as his finest and most instructive works the *Kitábu 'l-Ḥayawán* ('Book of Animals'), and the

Jáḥiẓ († 869 A.D.).

[1] Professor Browne has given a *résumé* of the contents in his *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, vol. i, p. 387 seq.

[2] Ed. by Max Grünert (Leyden, 1900).

[3] An edition by C. Brockelmann is in course of publication.

[4] The epithet *jáḥiẓ* means 'goggle-eyed.'

Kitábu 'l-Bayán wa-'l-Tabyín ('Book of Eloquence and Exposition'), which is a popular treatise on rhetoric. It so happens—and the fact is not altogether fortuitous—that extremely valuable contributions to the literary history of the Arabs were made by two writers connected with the Umayyad House. Ibn 'Abdi Rabbihi of Cordova, who was descended from an enfranchised slave of the Spanish Umayyad Caliph, Hishám b. 'Abd al-Raḥmán (788–796 A.D.), has left us a miscellaneous anthology entitled *al-'Iqd al-Farid*, or 'The Unique Necklace,' which is divided into twenty-five books, each bearing the name of a different gem, and "contains something on every subject." Though Abu 'l-Faraj 'Alí, the author of the *Kitábu 'l-Aghání*, was born at Iṣfahán, he was an Arab of the Arabs, being a member of the tribe Quraysh and a lineal descendant of Marwán, the last Umayyad Caliph. Coming to Baghdád, he bent all his energies to the study of Arabian antiquity, and towards the end of his life found a generous patron in al-Muhallabí, the Vizier of the Buwayhid sovereign, Mu'izzu 'l-Dawla. His minor works are cast in the shade by his great 'Book of Songs.' This may be described as a history of all the Arabian poetry that had been set to music down to the author's time. It is based on a collection of one hundred melodies which was made for the Caliph Hárún al-Rashíd, but to these Abu 'l-Faraj has added many others chosen by himself. After giving the words and the airs attached to them, he relates the lives of the poets and musicians by whom they were composed, and takes occasion to introduce a vast quantity of historical traditions and anecdotes, including much ancient and modern verse. It is said that the Ṣáḥib Ibn 'Abbád,[1] when travelling, used to take thirty camel-loads of books about with him, but on receiving the *Aghání* he con-

Ibn 'Abdi Rabbihi († 940 A.D.).

Abu 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahání († 967 A.D.).

[1] See p. 267.

tented himself with this one book and dispensed with all the rest.[1] The chief man of letters of the next generation was Abú Manṣúr al-Tha'álibí (the Furrier) of Naysábúr. Notwithstanding that most of his works are unscientific compilations, designed to amuse the public rather than to impart solid instruction, his famous anthology of recent and contemporary poets—the *Yatímatu 'l-Dahr*, or 'Solitaire of the Time'—supplies indubitable proof of his fine scholarship and critical taste. Successive continuations of the *Yatíma* were written by al-Bákharzí († 1075 A.D.) in the *Dumyatu 'l-Qaṣr*, or 'Statue of the Palace'; by Abu 'l-Ma'álí al-Ḥazírí († 1172 A.D.) in the *Zínatu 'l-Dahr*, or 'Ornament of the Time'; and by the favourite of Saladin, 'Imádu 'l-Dín al-Kátib al-Iṣfahání († 1201 A.D.), in the *Kharídatu 'l-Qaṣr*, or 'Virgin Pearl of the Palace.' From the tenth century onward the study of philology proper began to decline, while on the other hand those sciences which formerly grouped themselves round philology now became independent, were cultivated with brilliant success, and in a short time reached their zenith.

Tha'álibí († 1037 A.D.).

The elements of History are found (1) in Pre-islamic traditions and (2) in the *Ḥadíth* of the Prophet, but the idea of historical composition on a grand scale was probably suggested to the Arabs by Persian models such as the Pehleví *Khudáy-náma*, or 'Book of Kings,' which Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa' turned into Arabic in the eighth century of our era under the title of *Siyaru Mulúki 'l-'Ajam*, that is, 'The History of the Kings of Persia.'

History.

Under the first head Hishám Ibnu 'l-Kalbí († 819 A.D.) and his father Muḥammad deserve particular mention as painstaking and trustworthy recorders.

Historical traditions relating to the Prophet were put in

[1] Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. ii, p. 250.

writing at an early date (see p. 247). The first biography of Muḥammad (*Sīratu Rasūli 'lláh*), compiled by Ibn Isḥáq, who died in the reign of Manṣúr (768 A.D.), has come down to us only in the recension made by Ibn Hishám († 834 A.D.). This work as well as those of al-Wáqidí († 823 A.D.) and Ibn Sa'd († 845 A.D.) have been already noticed.

Histories of the Prophet and his Companions.

Other celebrated historians of the 'Abbásid period are the following.

Aḥmad b. Yaḥyá al-Baládhurí († 892 A.D.), a Persian, wrote an account of the early Muḥammadan conquests (*Kitábu Futúḥi 'l-Buldán*), which has been edited by De Goeje, and an immense chronicle based on genealogical principles, 'The Book of the Lineages of the Nobles' (*Kitábu Ansábi 'l-Ashráf*), of which two volumes are extant.[1]

Baládhurí.

Abú Ḥánífa Aḥmad al-Dínawarí († 895 A.D.) was also of Iránian descent. His 'Book of Long Histories' (*Kitábu 'l-Akhbár al-Ṭiwál*) deals largely with the national legend of Persia, and is written throughout from the Persian point of view.

Dínawarí.

Ibn Wádiḥ al-Ya'qúbí, a contemporary of Dínawarí, produced an excellent compendium of universal history, which is specially valuable because its author, being a follower of the House of 'Alí, has preserved the ancient and unfalsified Shí'ite tradition. His work has been edited in two volumes by Professor Houtsma (Leyden, 1883).

Ya'qúbí.

The Annals of Ṭabarí, edited by De Goeje and other European scholars (Leyden, 1879–1898), and the Golden Meadows[2] (*Murúju 'l-Dhahab*) of Mas'údí, which Pavet de

[1] One of these, the eleventh of the complete work, has been edited by Ahlwardt: *Anonyme Arabische Chronik* (Greifswald, 1883). It covers part of the reign of the Umayyad Caliph, 'Abdu 'l-Malik (685–705 A.D.).

[2] The French title is *Les Prairies d'Or*. Brockelmann, in his shorter

Courteille and Barbier de Meynard published with a French translation (Paris, 1861–1877), have been frequently cited in the foregoing pages; and since these two authors are not only the greatest historians of the Muḥammadan East but also (excepting, possibly, Ibn Khaldún) the most eminent of all who devoted themselves to this branch of Arabic literature, we must endeavour to make the reader more closely acquainted with them.

Ṭabarí (838–923 A.D.).

Abú Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarír was born in 838–839 A.D. at Ámul in Ṭabaristán, the mountainous province lying along the south coast of the Caspian Sea; whence the name, Ṭabarí, by which he is usually known.[1] At this time 'Iráq was still the principal focus of Muḥammadan culture, so that a poet could say :—

> "I see a man in whom the secretarial dignity is manifest,
> One who displays the brilliant culture of 'Iráq."[2]

Thither the young Ṭabarí came to complete his education. He travelled by way of Rayy to Baghdád, visited other neighbouring towns, and extended his tour to Syria and Egypt. Although his father sent him a yearly allowance, it did not always arrive punctually, and he himself relates that on one occasion he procured bread by selling the sleeves of his shirt. Fortunately, at Baghdád he was introduced to 'Ubaydulláh b. Yaḥyá, the Vizier of Mutawakkil, who engaged him as tutor for his son. How long he held this post is uncertain, but he was only twenty-three years of age when his patron went out of office. Fifteen years later we find him, penniless once more, in Cairo

Hist. of Arabic Literature (Leipzig, 1901), p. 110, states that the correct translation of *Murúju 'l-Dhahab* is 'Goldwäschen.'

[1] Concerning Ṭabarí and his work the reader should consult De Goeje's Introduction (published in the supplementary volume containing the Glossary) to the Leyden edition, and his excellent article on Ṭabarí and early Arab Historians in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

[2] Abu 'l-Maḥásin, ed. by Juynboll, vol. i, p. 608.

(876–877 A.D.). He soon, however, returned to Baghdád, where he passed the remainder of his life in teaching and writing. Modest, unselfish, and simple in his habits, he diffused his encyclopædic knowledge with an almost superhuman industry. During forty years, it is said, he wrote forty leaves every day. His great works are the *Ta'rikhu 'l-Rusul wa-'l-Mulúk*, or 'Annals of the Apostles and the Kings,' and his *Tafsír*, or 'Commentary on the Koran.' Both, even in their present shape, are books of enormous extent, yet it seems likely that both were originally composed on a far larger scale and were abbreviated by the author for general use. His pupils, we are told, flatly refused to read the first editions with him, whereupon he exclaimed: "Enthusiasm for learning is dead!" The History of Ṭabarí, from the Creation to the year 302 A.H.=915 A.D., is distinguished by "completeness of detail, accuracy, and the truly stupendous learning of its author that is revealed throughout, and that makes the Annals a vast storehouse of valuable information for the historian as well as for the student of Islam."[1] It is arranged chronologically, the events being tabulated under the year (of the Muḥammadan era) in which they occurred. Moreover, it has a very peculiar form. "Each important fact is related, if possible, by an eye-witness or contemporary, whose account came down through a series of narrators to the author. If he has obtained more than one account of a fact, with more or less important modifications, through several series of narrators, he communicates them all to the reader *in extenso*. Thus we are enabled to consider the facts from more than one point of view, and to acquire a vivid and clear notion of them."[2] According to modern ideas, Ṭabarí's compilation is not so much a history as a priceless collection of original documents placed side by side without any attempt to construct a critical

[1] *Selection from the Annals of Tabarí*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje (Leyden, 1902), p. xi.

[2] De Goeje's Introduction to Ṭabarí, p. xxvii.

and continuous narrative. At first sight one can hardly see the wood for the trees, but on closer study the essential features gradually emerge and stand out in bold relief from amidst the multitude of insignificant circumstances which lend freshness and life to the whole. Ṭabarí suffered the common fate of standard historians. His work was abridged and popularised, the *isnáds* or chains of authorities were suppressed, and the various parallel accounts were combined by subsequent writers into a single version.[1] Of the Annals, as it left the author's hands, no entire copy exists anywhere, but many odd volumes are preserved in different parts of the world. The Leyden edition is based on these scattered MSS., which luckily comprise the whole work with the exception of a few not very serious lacunæ.

'Alí b. Ḥusayn, a native of Baghdád, was called Mas'údí after one of the Prophet's Companions, 'Abdulláh b. Mas'úd, to whom he traced his descent. Although we possess only a small remnant of his voluminous writings, no better proof can be desired of the vast and various erudition which he gathered not from books alone, but likewise from long travel in almost every part of Asia. Among other places, he visited Armenia, India, Ceylon, Zanzibar, and Madagascar, and he appears to have sailed in Chinese waters as well as in the Caspian Sea. "My journey," he says, "resembles that of the sun, and to me the poet's verse is applicable :—

Mas'údí † 956 A.D.).

> "'We turn our steps toward each different clime,
> Now to the Farthest East, then West once more ;
> Even as the sun, which stays not his advance
> O'er tracts remote that no man durst explore.'"[2]

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[1] Al-Bal'amí, the Vizier of Manṣúr I, the Sámánid, made in 963 A.D. a Persian epitome of which a French translation by Dubeux and Zotenberg was published in 1867–1874.

[2] *Murúju 'l-Dhahab*, ed. by Barbier de Meynard, vol. i, p. 5 seq.

He spent the latter years of his life chiefly in Syria and Egypt —for he had no settled abode—compiling the great historical works,[1] of which the *Murúju 'l-Dhahab* is an epitome. As regards the motives which urged him to write, Mas'údí declares that he wished to follow the example of scholars and sages and to leave behind him a praiseworthy memorial and imperishable monument. He claims to have taken a wider view than his predecessors. "One who has never quitted his hearth and home, but is content with the knowledge which he can acquire concerning the history of his own part of the world, is not on the same level as one who spends his life in travel and passes his days in restless wanderings, and draws forth all manner of curious and precious information from its hidden mine."[2]

Mas'údí has been named the 'the Herodotus of the Arabs,' and the comparison is not unjust.[3] His work, although it lacks the artistic unity which distinguishes that of the Greek historian, shows the same eager spirit of enquiry, the same open-mindedness and disposition to record without prejudice all the marvellous things that he had heard or seen, the same ripe experience and large outlook on the present as on the past. It is professedly a universal history beginning with the Creation and ending at the Caliphate of Muṭí', in 947 A.D., but no description can cover the immense range of topics which are discussed and the innumerable digressions with which the author delights or irritates his readers, as the case may be.[4] Thus, to pick

The *Murúju 'l-Dhahab.*

[1] The *Akhbáru 'l-Zamán* in thirty volumes (one volume is extant at Vienna) and the *Kitáb al-Awsaṭ.* [2] *Murúju 'l-Dhahab*, p. 9 seq.

[3] It may be noted as a coincidence that Ibn Khaldún calls Mas'údí *imámᵃⁿ lil-mu'arrikhín*, "an Imám for all the historians," which resembles, though it does not exactly correspond to, "the Father of History."

[4] Mas'údí gives a summary of the contents of his historical and religious works in the Preface to the *Tanbih wa-'l-Ishráf*, ed. by De Goeje, p. 2 sqq. A translation of this passage by De Sacy will be found in Barbier de Meynard's edition of the *Murúju 'l-Dhahab*, vol. ix, p. 302 sqq.

a few examples at random, we find a dissertation on tides (vol. i, p. 244); an account of the *tinnín* or sea-serpent (*ibid.*, p. 267); of pearl-fishing in the Persian Gulf (*ibid.*, p. 328); and of the rhinoceros (*ibid.*, p. 385). Mas'údí was a keen student and critic of religious beliefs, on which subject he wrote several books.[1] The *Murúju 'l-Dhahab* supplies many valuable details regarding the Muḥammadan sects, and also regarding the Zoroastrians and Ṣábians. There is a particularly interesting report of a meeting which took place between Aḥmad b. Ṭúlún, the governor of Egypt (868–877 A.D.), and an aged Copt, who, after giving his views as to the source of the Nile and the construction of the Pyramids, defended his faith (Christianity) on the ground of its manifest errors and contradictions, arguing that its acceptance, in spite of these, by so many peoples and kings was decisive evidence of its truth.[2] Mas'údí's account of the Caliphs is chiefly remarkable for the characteristic anecdotes in which it abounds. Instead of putting together a methodical narrative he has thrown off a brilliant but unequal sketch of public affairs and private manners, of social life and literary history. Only considerations of space have prevented me from enriching this volume with not a few pages which are as lively and picturesque as any in Suetonius. His last work, the *Kitábu 'l-Tanbíh wa-'l-Ishráf* ('Book of Admonition and Recension'),[3] was intended to take a general survey of the field which had been more fully traversed in his previous compositions, and also to supplement them when it seemed necessary.

We must pass over the minor historians and biographers of this period—for example, 'Utbí († 1036 A.D.), whose

[1] See *Murúj*, vol. i, p. 201, and vol. iii, p. 268.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 372 sqq.

[3] De Sacy renders the title by 'Le Livre de l'Indication et de l'Admonition ou l'Indicateur et le Moniteur'; but see De Goeje's edition of the text (Leyden, 1894), p. xxvii.

Kitáb al-Yamíní celebrates the glorious reign of Sultan Mahmúd of Ghazna; Khaṭíb of Baghdád († 1071 A.D.), who composed a history of the eminent men of that city; 'Imádu 'l-Dín of Iṣfahán († 1201 A.D.), the biographer of Saladin; Ibnu 'l-Qifṭí († 1248 A.D.), born at Qift (Coptos) in Upper Egypt, whose lives of the philosophers and scientists have only come down to us in a compendium entitled *Ta'ríkhu 'l-Ḥukamá*; Ibnu 'l-Jawzí († 1200 A.D.), a prolific writer in almost every branch of literature, and his grandson, Yúsuf († 1257 A.D.)—generally called Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzí—author of the *Mir'átu 'l-Zamán*, or 'Mirror of the Time'; Ibn Abí Uṣaybia († 1270 A.D.), whose history of physicians, the *'Uyúnu 'l-Anbá*, has been edited by A. Müller (1884); and the Christian, Jirjis (George) al-Makín († 1273 A.D.), compiler of a universal chronicle—named the *Majmú' al-Mubárak*—of which the second part, from Muḥammad to the end of the 'Abbásid dynasty, was rendered into Latin by Erpenius in 1625.

Minor historians.

A special notice, brief though it must be, is due to 'Izzu 'l-Dín Ibnu 'l-Athír († 1234 A.D.). He was brought up at Mosul in Mesopotamia, and after finishing his studies in Baghdád, Jerusalem, and Syria, he returned home and devoted himself to reading and literary composition. Ibn Khallikán, who knew him personally, speaks of him in the highest terms both as a man and as a scholar. "His great work, the *Kámil*,[1] embracing the history of the world from the earliest period to the year 628 of the Hijra (1230–1231 A.D.), merits its reputation as one of the best productions of the kind."[2] Down to the year 302 A.H. the author has merely abridged the Annals of Ṭabarí with occasional additions from other sources. In

Ibnu 'l-Athír († 1234 A.D.).

[1] The full title is *Kitábu 'l-Kámil fi 'l-Ta'ríkh*, or 'The Perfect Book of Chronicles.' It has been edited by Tornberg in fourteen volumes (Leyden, 1851–1876).

[2] Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. ii, p. 289.

the first volume he gives a long account of the Pre-islamic battles (*Ayyámu 'l-'Arab*) which is not found in the present text of Ṭabarí; but De Goeje, as I learn from Professor Bevan, thinks that this section was included in Ṭabarí's original draft and was subsequently struck out. Ibnu 'l-Athír was deeply versed in the science of Tradition, and his *Usdu 'l-Ghába* ('Lions of the Jungle') contains biographies of 7,500 Companions of the Prophet.

An immense quantity of information concerning the various countries and peoples of the 'Abbásid Empire has been preserved for us by the Moslem geographers, who in many cases describe what they actually witnessed and experienced in the course of their travels, although they often help themselves liberally and without acknowledgment from the works of their predecessors. The following list, which does not pretend to be exhaustive, may find a place here.[1]

Geographers.

1. The Persian Ibn Khurdádbih (first half of ninth century) was postmaster in the province of Jibál, the Media of the ancients. His *Kitábu 'l-Masálik wa-'l-Mamálik* ('Book of the Roads and Countries'), an official guide-book, is the oldest geographical work in Arabic that has come down to us.

Ibn Khurdádbih.

2. Abú Isḥáq al-Fárisí, a native of Persepolis (Iṣṭakhr)—on this account he is known as Iṣṭakhrí—wrote a book called *Masáliku 'l-Mamálik* ('Routes of the Provinces'), which was afterwards revised and enlarged by Ibn Ḥawqal. Both works belong to the second half of the tenth century and contain "a careful description

Iṣṭakhrí and Ibn Ḥawqal.

[1] An excellent account of the Arab geographers is given by Guy Le Strange in the Introduction to his *Palestine under the Moslems* (London, 1890). De Goeje has edited the works of Ibn Khurdádbih, Iṣṭakhrí, Ibn Ḥawqal, and Muqaddasí in the *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* (Leyden, 1870, &c.)

of each province in turn of the Muslim Empire, with the chief cities and notable places."

Muqaddasí.

3. Al-Muqaddasí (or al-Maqdisí), *i.e.*, 'the native of the Holy City', was born at Jerusalem in 946 A.D. In his delightful book entitled *Aḥsanu 'l-Taqásím fí ma'rifati 'l-Aqálím* he has gathered up the fruits of twenty years' travelling through the dominions of the Caliphate.

Yáqút.

4. Omitting the Spanish Arabs, Bakrí, Idrísí, and Ibn Jubayr, all of whom flourished in the eleventh century, we come to the greatest of Moslem geographers, Yáqút b. 'Abdalláh (1179–1229 A.D.). A Greek by birth, he was enslaved in his childhood and sold to a merchant of Baghdád. His master gave him a good education and frequently sent him on trading expeditions to the Persian Gulf and elsewhere. After being enfranchised in consequence of a quarrel with his benefactor, he supported himself by copying and selling manuscripts. In 1219–1220 A.D. he encountered the Tartars, who had invaded Khwárizm, and "fled as naked as when he shall be raised from the dust of the grave on the day of the resurrection." Further details of his adventurous life are recorded in the interesting notice by Ibn Khallikán.[1] His great Geographical Dictionary (*Mu'jamu 'l-Buldán*) has been edited in six volumes by Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866), and is described by Mr. Le Strange as "a storehouse of geographical information, the value of which it would be impossible to over-estimate." We possess a useful epitome of it, made about a century later, viz., the *Marásidu 'l-Iṭṭilá'*. Among the few other extant works of Yáqút, attention may be called to the *Mushtarik*—a lexicon of places bearing the same name—and the *Mu'jamu 'l-Udabá*, or 'Dictionary of Littérateurs,' of which the first volume is now being edited by Professor Margoliouth for the Trustees of the Gibb Memorial Fund.

[1] De Slane's translation, vol. iv, p. 9 sqq.

As regards the philosophical and exact sciences the Moslems naturally derived their ideas and material from Greek culture, which had established itself in Egypt, Syria, and Western Asia since the time of Alexander's conquests. When the Syrian school of Edessa was broken up by ecclesiastical dissensions towards the end of the fifth century of our era, the expelled savants took refuge in Persia at the Sásánian court, and Khusraw Anúshirwan, or Núshírwán (531–578 A.D.)—the same monarch who welcomed the Neo-platonist philosophers banished from Athens by Justinian—founded an Academy at Jundé-shápúr in Khúzistán, where Greek medicine and philosophy continued to be taught down to 'Abbásid days. Another centre of Hellenism was the city of Ḥarrán in Mesopotamia. Its inhabitants, Syrian heathens who generally appear in Muḥammadan history under the name of 'Ṣábians,' spoke Arabic with facility and contributed in no small degree to the diffusion of Greek wisdom. The work of translation was done almost entirely by Syrians. In the monasteries of Syria and Mesopotamia the writings of Aristotle, Galen, Ptolemy, and other ancient masters were rendered with slavish fidelity, and these Syriac versions were afterwards retranslated into Arabic. A beginning was made under the Umayyads, who cared little for Islam but were by no means indifferent to the claims of literature, art, and science. An Umayyad prince, Khálid b. Yazíd, procured the translation of Greek and Coptic works on alchemy, and himself wrote three treatises on that subject. The accession of the 'Abbásids gave a great impulse to such studies, which found an enlightened patron in the Caliph Manṣúr. Works on logic and medicine were translated from the Pehleví by Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa' († about 760 A.D.) and others. It is, however, the splendid reign of Ma'mún (813–833 A.D.) that marks the full vigour of this Oriental Renaissance. Ma'mún was no ordinary man. Like a true Persian, he threw himself heart and soul into

The foreign sciences.

Translations from the Greek.

theological speculations and used the authority of the Caliphate to enforce a liberal standard of orthodoxy. His interest in science was no less ardent. According to a story told in the *Fihrist*,[1] he dreamed that he saw the venerable figure of Aristotle seated on a throne, and in consequence of this vision he sent a deputation to the Roman Emperor (Leo the Armenian) to obtain scientific books for translation into Arabic. The Caliph's example was followed by private individuals. Three brothers, Muḥammad, Aḥmad, and Ḥasan, known collectively as the Banú Músá, "drew translators from distant countries by the offer of ample rewards [2] and thus made evident the marvels of science. Geometry, engineering, the movements of the heavenly bodies, music, and astronomy were the principal subjects to which they turned their attention; but these were only a small number of their acquirements."[3] Ma'mún installed them, with Yaḥyá b. Abí Manṣúr and other scientists, in the House of Wisdom (*Baytu 'l-Ḥikma*) at Baghdád, an institution which comprised a well-stocked library and an astronomical observatory. Among the celebrated translators of the ninth century, who were themselves conspicuous workers in the new field, we can only mention the Christians Qusṭá b. Lúqá and Ḥunayn b. Isḥáq, and the Ṣábian Thábit b. Qurra. It does not fall within the scope of this volume to consider in detail the achievements of the Moslems in science and philosophy. That in some departments they made valuable additions to existing knowledge must certainly be granted, but these discoveries count for little in comparison with the debt which we owe to the Arabs as pioneers of learning and bringers of light to mediæval Europe.[4] Meanwhile it is only

Ma'mún's encouragement of the New Learning.

[1] P. 243.

[2] The translators employed by the Banú Músá were paid at the rate of about 500 dínárs a month (*ibid.*, p. 43, l. 18 sqq.).

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 271; Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. iii, p. 315.

[4] A chapter at least would be required in order to set forth adequately the chief material and intellectual benefits which European civilisation

possible to enumerate a few of the most eminent philosophers and scientific men who lived during the 'Abbásid age. The reader will observe that with rare exceptions they were of foreign origin.

The leading spirits in philosophy were :—

Kindí.

1. Ya'qúb b. Isḥáq al-Kindí, a descendant of the princely family of Kinda (see p. 42). He was distinguished by his contemporaries with the title *Faylasúfu 'l-'Arab*, 'The Philosopher of the Arabs.' He flourished in the first half of the ninth century.

Fárábí.

2. Abú Naṣr al-Fárábí († 950 A.D.), of Turkish race, a native of Fáráb in Transoxania. The later years of his life were passed at Aleppo under the patronage of Sayfu 'l-Dawla. He devoted himself to the study of Aristotle, whom Moslems agree with Dante in regarding as "il maestro di color che sanno."

Ibn Síná.

3. Abú 'Alí Ibn Síná (Avicenna), born of Persian parents at Kharmaythan, near Bukhárá, in the year 980 A.D. As a youth he displayed extraordinary talents, so that "in the sixteenth year of his age physicians of the highest eminence came to read medicine with him and to learn those modes of treatment which he had discovered by his practice." [1] He was no quiét student, like Fárábí, but a pleasure-loving, adventurous man of the world who travelled from court to court, now in favour, now in disgrace, and always writing indefatigably. His system of philosophy, in which Aristotelian and Neo-platonic theories are combined with Persian mysticism, was well suited to

has derived from the Arabs. The reader may consult Von Kremer's *Culturgeschichte des Orients*, vol. ii, chapters 7 and 9; Diercks, *Die Araber im Mittelalter* (Leipzig, 1882); Sédillot, *Histoire générale des Arabes;* Schack, *Poesie und Kunst der Araber in Spanien und Sicilien;* Munk, *Mélanges de Philosophie Juive et Arabe;* and Krehl's article, 'Arabische Sprache und Literatur' in Brockhaus' Conv.-Lexicon.

[1] Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 440.

the popular taste, and in the East it still reigns supreme. His chief works are the *Shifá* (Remedy) on physics, metaphysics, &c., and a great medical encyclopædia entitled the *Qánún* (Canon). Avicenna died in 1037 A.D.

4. The Spanish philosophers, Ibn Bájja (Avempace), Ibn Ṭufayl, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), all of whom flourished in the twelfth century after Christ.

Medicine, Astronomy, and Mathematics.

The most illustrious name beside Avicenna in the history of Arabian medicine is Abú Bakr al-Rází (Rhazes), a native of Rayy, near Teheran († 923 or 932 A.D.). Jábir b. Ḥayyán of Tarsus († about 780 A.D.)—the Geber of European writers—won equal renown as an alchemist. Astronomy went hand in hand with astrology. The reader may recognise al-Farghání, Abú Ma'shar of Balkh († 885 A.D.) and al-Battání, a Ṣábian of Ḥarrán († 929 A.D.), under the names of Alfraganus, Albumaser, and Albategnius, by which they became known in the West. Abú 'Abdalláh al-Khwárizmí, who lived in the Caliphate of Ma'mún, was the first of a long line of mathematicians. In this science, as also in Medicine and Astronomy, we see the influence of India upon Muḥammadan civilisation—an influence, however, which, in so far as it depended on literary sources, was more restricted and infinitely less vital than that of Greece. Only a passing reference can be made to Abú Rayḥán al-Bírúní, a native of Khwárizm (Khiva), whose knowledge of the sciences, antiquities, and customs of India was such as no Moslem had ever equalled. His two principal works, the *Áthár al-Báqiya*, or 'Surviving Monuments,' and the *Ta'ríkhu 'l-Hind*, or 'History of India,' have been edited and translated into English by Dr. Sachau.[1]

Bírúní 973–1048 A.D.)

Some conception of the amazing intellectual activity of the

[1] *The Chronology of Ancient Nations* (London, 1879) and *Alberuni's India* (London, 1888).

Moslems during the earlier part of the ʿAbbásid period, and also of the enormous losses which Arabic literature has suffered through the destruction of thousands of books that are known to us by nothing beyond their titles and the names of their authors, may be gained from the *Fihrist*, or 'Index' of Muḥammad b. Isḥáq b. Abí Yaʿqúb al-Nadím al-Warráq al-Baghdádí († 995 A.D.). Regarding the compiler we have no further information than is conveyed in the last two epithets attached to his name: he was a copyist of MSS., and was connected with Baghdád either by birth or residence; add that, according to his own statement (p. 349, l. 14 sqq.), he was at Constantinople (*Dáru 'l-Rúm*) in 988 A.D., the same year in which his work was composed. He may possibly have been related to the famous musician, Isḥáq b. Ibráhím al-Nadím of Mosul († 849–850 A.D.), but this has yet to be proved. At any rate we owe to his industry a unique conspectus of the literary history of the Arabs to the end of the fourth century after the Flight. The *Fihrist* (as the author explains in his brief Preface) is "an Index of the books of all nations, Arabs and foreigners alike, which are extant in the Arabic language and script, on every branch of knowledge; comprising information as to their compilers and the classes of their authors, together with the genealogies of those persons, the dates of their birth, the length of their lives, the times of their death, the places to which they belonged, their merits and their faults, since the beginning of every science that has been invented down to the present epoch: namely, the year 377 of the Hijra." As the contents of the *Fihrist* (which considerably exceed the above description) have been analysed in detail by G. Flügel (*Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 13, p. 559 sqq.) and set forth in tabular form by Professor Browne in the first volume of his *Literary History of Persia*,[1] I need only indicate the general arrangement and scope of the work. It is divided into ten

The *Fihrist*.

[1] P. 384 sqq.

discourses (*maqálát*), which are subdivided into a varying number of sections (*funún*). Ibnu 'l-Nadím discusses, in the first place, the languages, scripts, and sacred books of the Arabs and other peoples, the revelation of the Koran, the order of its chapters, its collectors, redactors, and commentators. Passing next to the sciences which, as we have seen, arose from study of the Koran and primarily served as handmaids to theology, he relates the origin of Grammar, and gives an account of the different schools of grammarians with the treatises which they wrote. The third discourse embraces History, Belles-Lettres, Biography, and Genealogy; the fourth treats of Poetry, ancient and modern. Scholasticism (*Kalám*) forms the subject of the following chapter, which contains a valuable notice of the Ismá'ílís and their founder, 'Abdulláh b. Maymún, as also of the celebrated pantheist, Ḥusayn b. Manṣúr al-Ḥalláj. From these and many other names redolent of heresy the author returns to the orthodox schools of Law—the Málikites, Ḥanafites, Sháfi'ites and Ẓáhirites; then to the jurisconsults of the Shí'a, &c. The seventh discourse deals with Philosophy and 'the Ancient Sciences,' under which head we find some curious speculations concerning their origin and introduction to the lands of Islam; a list of translators and the books which they rendered into Arabic; an account of the Greek philosophers from Thales to Plutarch, with the names of their works that were known to the Moslems; and finally a literary survey of the remaining sciences, such as Mathematics, Music, Astronomy, and Medicine. Here, by an abrupt transition, we enter the enchanted domain of Oriental fable—the *Hazár Afsán*, or Thousand Tales, Kalíla and Dimna, the Book of Sindbád, and the legends of Rustam and Isfandiyár; works on sorcery, magic, conjuring, amulets, talismans, and the like. European savants have long recognised the importance of the ninth discourse,[1] which is

[1] The passages concerning the Ṣábians were edited and translated, with copious annotations, by Chwolsohn in his *Ssabier und Ssabismus* (St.

devoted to the doctrines and writings of the Ṣábians and the Dualistic sects founded by Manes, Bardesanes, Marcion, Mazdak, and other heresiarchs. The author concludes his work with a chapter on the Alchemists (*al-Kímiyá'ún*).

Petersburg, 1856), vol. ii, p. 1–365, while Flügel made similar use of the Manichæan portion in *Mani, seine Lehre und seine Schriften* (Leipzig, 1862).

CHAPTER VIII

ORTHODOXY, FREE-THOUGHT, AND MYSTICISM

The 'Abbásids and Islam.

We have already given some account of the great political revolution which took place under the 'Abbásid dynasty, and we have now to consider the no less vital influence of the new era in the field of religion. It will be remembered that the House of 'Abbás came forward as champions of Islam and of the oppressed and persecuted Faithful. Their victory was a triumph for the Muḥammadan over the National idea. "They wished, as they said, to revive the dead Tradition of the Prophet. They brought the experts in Sacred Law from Medína, which had hitherto been their home, to Baghdád, and always invited their approbation by taking care that even political questions should be treated in legal form and decided in accordance with the Koran and the Sunna. In reality, however, they used Islam only to serve their own interest. They tamed the divines at their court and induced them to sanction the most objectionable measures. They made the pious Opposition harmless by leading it to victory. With the downfall of the Umayyads it had gained its end and could now rest in peace."[1] There is much truth in this view of the matter, but notwithstanding the easy character of their religion, the 'Abbásid Caliphs were sincerely devoted to the cause of Islam and zealous to maintain its principles in public life. They regarded themselves as the

[1] Wellhausen, *Das Arabische Reich*, p. 350 seq.

supreme pontiffs of the Moslem Church; added the Prophet's mantle (*al-burda*) to those emblems of Umayyad royalty, the sceptre and the seal; delighted in the pompous titles which their flatterers conferred on them, *e.g.*, 'Vicegerent of God,' 'Sultan of God upon the Earth,' 'Shadow of God,' &c.; and left no stone unturned to invest themselves with the attributes of theocracy, and to inspire their subjects with veneration.[1] Whereas the Umayyad monarchs ignored or crushed Muḥammadan sentiment, and seldom made any attempt to conciliate the leading representatives of Islam, the 'Abbásids, on the other hand, not only gathered round their throne all the most celebrated theologians of the day, but also showed them every possible honour, listened respectfully to their counsel, and allowed them to exert a commanding influence on the administration of the State.[2] When Málik b. Anas was summoned by the Caliph Hárún al-Rashíd, who wished to hear him recite traditions, Málik replied, "People come to seek knowledge." So Hárún went to Málik's house, and leaned against the wall beside him. Málik said, "O Prince of the Faithful, whoever honours God, honours knowledge." Al-Rashíd arose and seated himself at Málik's feet and spoke to him and heard him relate a number of traditions handed down from the Apostle of God. Then he sent for Sufyán b. 'Uyayna, and Sufyán came to him and sat in his presence and recited traditions to him. Afterwards al-Rashíd said, "O Málik, we humbled ourselves before thy knowledge, and profited thereby, but Sufyán's knowledge humbled itself to us, and we got no good from it."[3] Many instances might be given of the high favour which theologians enjoyed at this time, and of the lively interest with which religious topics were debated by the

Influence of theologians.

[1] See Goldziher, *Muhamm. Studien*, Part II, p. 53 sqq.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 70 seq.

[3] *Fragmenta Historicorum Arabicorum*, ed. by De Goeje and De Jong, p. 298.

Caliph and his courtiers. As the Caliphs gradually lost their temporal sovereignty, the influence of the *'Ulamá*—the doctors of Divinity and Law—continued to increase, so that ere long they formed a privileged class, occupying in Islam a position not unlike that of the priesthood in mediæval Christendom.

It will be convenient to discuss the religious phenomena of the 'Abbásid period under the following heads:—

I. Rationalism and Free-thought.

II. The Orthodox Reaction and the rise of Scholastic Theology.

III. The Ṣúfí Mysticism.

Rationalism and Free-thought.

I. The first century of 'Abbásid rule was marked, as we have seen, by a great intellectual agitation. All sorts of new ideas were in the air. It was an age of discovery and awakening. In a marvellously brief space the diverse studies of Theology, Law, Medicine, Philosophy, Mathematics, Astronomy, and Natural Science attained their maturity, if not their highest development. Even if some pious Moslems looked askance at the foreign learning and its professors, an enlightened spirit generally prevailed. People took their cue from the court, which patronised, or at least tolerated,[1] scientific research as well as theological speculation.

The Mu'tazilites and their opponents.

These circumstances enabled the Mu'tazilites (see p. 222 sqq.) to propagate their liberal views without hindrance, and finally to carry their struggle against the orthodox party to a successful issue. It was the same conflict that divided Nominalists and Realists in the days of Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Occam. As often happens when momentous principles are at stake, the whole

[1] There are, of course, some partial exceptions to this rule, *e.g.*, Mahdí and Hárún al-Rashíd.

controversy between Reason and Revelation turned on a single question—"Is the Koran created or uncreated?" In other terms, is it the work of God or the Word of God? According to orthodox belief, it is uncreated and has existed with God from all eternity, being in its present form merely a transcript of the heavenly archetype.[1] Obviously this conception of the Koran as the direct and literal Word of God left no room for exercise of the understanding, but required of those who adopted it a dumb faith and a blind fatalism. There were many to whom the sacrifice did not seem too great. The Mu'tazilites, on the contrary, asserted their intellectual freedom. It was possible, they said, to know God and distinguish good from evil without any Revelation at all. They admitted that the Koran was God's work, in the sense that it was produced by a divinely inspired Prophet, but they flatly rejected its deification. Some went so far as to criticise the 'inimitable' style, declaring that it could be surpassed in beauty and eloquence by the art of man.[2]

The Mu'tazilite controversy became a burning question in the reign of Ma'mún (813–833 A.D.), a Caliph whose scientific enthusiasm and keen interest in religious matters we have already mentioned. He did not inherit the orthodoxy of his father, Hárún al-Rashíd; and it was believed that he was at heart a *zindíq*. His liberal tendencies would have been wholly admirable if they had not been marred by excessive intolerance towards those who held opposite views to his own. In 833 A.D., the year of his death, he promulgated a decree which bound all Moslems to accept the Mu'tazilite doctrine as to the creation of the Koran on pain of losing their civil rights, and at the same time he established an inquisition (*miḥna*) in order to obtain the assent of

[1] See p. 163, note.

[2] Several freethinkers of this period attempted to rival the Koran with their own compositions. See Goldziher, *Muhamm. Studien*, Part II, p. 401 seq.

the divines, judges, and doctors of law. Those who would not take the test were flogged and threatened with the sword.

Rationalism adopted and put in force by the Caliph Ma'mún.

After Ma'mún's death the persecution still went on, although it was conducted in a more moderate fashion. Popular feeling ran strongly against the Mu'tazilites. The most prominent figure in the orthodox camp was the Imám Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, who firmly resisted the new dogma from the first. "But for him," says the Sunnite historian, Abu 'l-Maḥásin, "the beliefs of a great number would have been corrupted."[1] Neither threats nor entreaties could shake his resolution, and when he was scourged by command of the Caliph Mu'taṣim, the palace was in danger of being wrecked by an angry mob which had assembled outside to hear the result of the trial. The Mu'tazilite dogma remained officially in force until it was abandoned by the Caliph Wáthiq and once more declared heretical by the cruel and bigoted Mutawakkil (847 A.D.). From that time to this the victorious party have sternly suppressed every rationalistic movement in Islam.

Mutawakkil returns to orthodoxy.

According to Steiner, the original Mu'tazilite heresy arose in the bosom of Islam, independently of any foreign influence, but, however that may be, its later development was largely affected by Greek philosophy. We need not attempt to follow the recondite speculations of Abú Hudhayl al-'Alláf († about 840 A.D.) of his contemporaries, al-Naẓẓám, Bishr b. al-Mu'tamir, and others, and of the philosophical schools of Baṣra and Baghdád in which the movement died away. Vainly they sought to replace the Muḥammadan idea of God as will by the Aristotelian conception of God as law. Their efforts to purge the Koran of anthropomorphism made no impression on the faithful, who ardently hoped to see God in Paradise face to face. What they actually achieved was little enough. Their weapons of

The end of the Mu'tazilites.

[1] *Al-Nujúm al-Záhira*, ed. by Juynboll, vol. i, p. 639.

logic and dialectic were turned against them with triumphant success, and scholastic theology was founded on the ruins of Rationalism. Indirectly, however, the Mu'tazilite principles leavened Muḥammadan thought to a considerable extent and cleared the way for other liberal movements, like the Fraternity of the *Ikhwánu 'l-Ṣafá*, which endeavoured to harmonise authority with reason, and to construct a universal system of religious philosophy.

These 'Brethren of Purity,'[1] as they called themselves, compiled a great encyclopædic work in fifty tractates (*Rasá'il*). Of the authors, who flourished at Baṣra towards the end of the tenth century, five are known to us by name: viz., Abú Sulaymán Muḥammad b. Ma'shar al-Bayusti or al-Muqaddasí (Maqdisí), Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alí b. Hárún al-Zanjání, Abú Aḥmad al-Mihrajání, al-'Awfí, and Zayd b. Rifá'a. "They formed a society for the pursuit of holiness, purity, and truth, and established amongst themselves a doctrine whereby they hoped to win the approval of God, maintaining that the Religious Law was defiled by ignorance and adulterated by errors, and that there was no means of cleansing and purifying it except philosophy, which united the wisdom of faith and the profit of research. They held that a perfect result would be reached if Greek philosophy were combined with Arabian religion. Accordingly they composed fifty tracts on every branch of philosophy, theoretical as well as practical, added a separate index, and entitled them the 'Tracts of the Brethren of Purity' (*Rasá'ilu Ikhwán al-Ṣafá*). The authors of this work concealed their names, but circulated it among the booksellers and gave it to the public. They filled their pages with devout phraseology, religious parables, metaphorical expressions, and figurative turns of style."[2]

The Ikhwánu 'l-Ṣafá.

[1] This is the literal translation of *Ikhwánu 'l-Ṣafá*, but according to Arabic idiom 'brother of purity' (*akhu 'l-ṣafá*) simply means 'one who is pure or sincere,' as has been shown by Goldziher, *Muhamm. Studien*, Part I, p. 9, note. The term does not imply any sort of brotherhood.

[2] Ibnu 'l-Qifṭí, *Ta'ríkhu 'l-Ḥukamá* (ed. by Lippert), p. 83, l. 17 sqq.

Nearly all the tracts have been translated into German by Dieterici, who has also drawn up an epitome of the whole encyclopædia in his *Philosophie der Araber im X Jahrhundert*. It would take us too long to describe the system of the *Ikhwán*, but the reader will find an excellent account of it in Stanley Lane-Poole's *Studies in a Mosque*, 2nd ed., p. 176 sqq. The view has recently been put forward that the Brethren of Purity were in some way connected with the Ismá'ílí propaganda, and that their eclectic idealism represents the highest teaching of the Fáṭimids, Carmathians, and Assassins. Strong evidence in support of this theory is supplied by a MS. of the Bibliothèque Nationale (No. 2309 in De Slane's Catalogue), which contains, together with fragments of the *Rasá'il*, a hitherto unknown tract entitled the *Jámi'a* or 'Summary.'[1] The latter purports to be the essence and crown of the fifty *Rasá'il*, it is manifestly Ismá'ílite in character, and, assuming that it is genuine, we may, I think, agree with the conclusions which its discoverer, M. P. Casanova, has stated in the following passage :—

"Surtout je crois être dans le vrai en affirmant que les doctrines philosophiques des Ismaïliens sont contenues tout entières dans les Epîtres des Frères de la Pureté. Et c'est ce qui explique 'la séduction extraordinaire que la doctrine exerçait sur des hommes sérieux.'[2] En y ajoutant la croyance en l' *imám caché* (*al-imám al-mastúr*) qui doit apparaître un jour pour établir le bonheur universel, elle réalisait la fusion de toutes les doctrines idéalistes, du messianisme et du platonisme. Tant que l' imám restait caché, il s'y mêlait encore une saveur de mystère qui attachait les esprits les plus élevés. . . . En tous cas, on peut affirmer que les Carmathes et les Assassins ont été profondément calomniés quand ils ont été accusés par leurs adversaires d'athéisme et de débauche. Le fetwa d' Ibn Taimiyyah, que j'ai cité plus haut, prétend que leur dernier degré dans l' initiation (*al-balágh al-akbar*) est la négation même du Créateur. Mais la *djâmi'at* que nous avons découverte est, comme

The doctrines of the Brethren of Purity identical with the esoteric philosophy of the Ismá'ílis.

[1] *Notice sur un manuscrit de la secte des Assassins*, by P. Casanova in the *Journal Asiatique* for 1898, p. 151 sqq.

[2] De Goeje, *Mémoire sur les Carmathes*, p. 172.

tout l'indique, le dernier degré de la science des Frères de la Pureté et des Ismaïliens ; il n'y a rien de fondé dans une telle accusation. La doctrine apparait très pure, très élevée, très simple même : je repète que c'est une sorte de panthéisme mécaniste et esthétique qui est absolument opposé au scepticisme et au matérialisme, car il repose sur l' harmonie générale de toutes les parties du monde, harmonie voulue par le Créateur parce qu'elle est la beauté même.

"Ma conclusion sera que nous avons là un exemple de plus dans l'histoire d' une doctrine très pure et très élevée en théorie, devenue, entre les mains des fanatiques et des ambitieux, une source d'actes monstrueux et méritant l'infamie qui est attachée a ce nom historique d'Assassins."

Besides the Mu'tazilites, we hear much of another class of heretics who are commonly grouped together under the name of *Zindîqs*.

The *Zindîqs*.

"It is well known," says Goldziher,[1] "that the earliest persecution was directed against those individuals who managed more or less adroitly to conceal under the veil of Islam old Persian religious ideas. Sometimes indeed they did not consider any disguise to be necessary, but openly set up dualism and other Persian or Manichæan doctrines, and the practices associated therewith, against the dogma and usage of Islam. Such persons were called *Zindîqs*, a term which comprises different shades of heresy and hardly admits of simple definition. Firstly, there are the old Persian families incorporated in Islam who, following the same path as the Shu'úbites, have a *national interest* in the revival of Persian religious ideas and traditions, and from this point of view react against the *Arabian* character of the Muḥammadan system. Then, on the other hand, there are freethinkers, who oppose in particular the stubborn dogma of Islam, reject *positive religion*, and acknowledge only the moral law. Amongst the latter there is developed a monkish

[1] *Ṣâliḥ b. 'Abd al-Quddûs und das Zindîḳthum während der Regierung des Chalifen al-Mahdî* in *Transactions of the Ninth Congress of Orientalists*, vol. ii, p. 105 seq.

asceticism extraneous to Islam and ultimately traceable to Buddhistic influences."

The 'Abbásid Government, which sought to enforce an official standard of belief, was far less favourable to religious liberty than the Umayyads had been. Orthodox and heretic alike fell under its ban. While Ma'mún harried pious Sunnites, his immediate predecessors raised a hue and cry against *Zindíqs*. The Caliph Mahdí distinguished himself by an organised persecution of these enemies of the faith. He appointed a Grand Inquisitor (*Ṣáḥibu 'l-Zanádiqa* [1] or *'Arífu 'l-Zanádiqa*) to discover and hunt them down. If they would not recant when called upon, they were put to death and crucified, and their books [2] were cut to pieces with knives.[3] Mahdí's example was followed by Hádí and Hárún al-Rashíd. Some of the 'Abbásids, however, were less severe. Thus Khaṣíb, Manṣúr's physician, was a *Zindíq* who professed Christianity,[4] and in the reign of Ma'mún it became the mode to affect Manichæan opinions as a mark of elegance and refinement.[5]

Persecution of *Zindíqs*.

The two main types of *zandaqa* which have been described above are illustrated in the contemporary poets, Bashshár b. Burd and Ṣáliḥ b. 'Abd al-Quddús. Bashshár was born stone-blind. The descendant of a noble Persian family—though his father, Burd, was a slave—he cherished strong national sentiments and did not attempt to conceal his sympathy with the Persian clients (*Mawálí*), whom he was accused of stirring up against their Arab lords. He may also have had leanings towards Zoroastrianism, but Professor Bevan has observed that there is no real

Bashshár b. Burd.

[1] Ṭabarí, iii, 522, 1.

[2] *I.e.* the sacred books of the Manichæans, which were often splendidly illuminated. See Von Kremer, *Culturgesch. Streifzüge*, p. 39.

[3] *Cf.* Ṭabarí, iii, 499, 8 sqq.

[4] *Ibid.*, iii, 422, 19 sqq.

[5] *Cf.* the saying "*Aẓrafu mina 'l-Zindíq*" (Freytag, *Arabum Proverbia*, vol. i, p. 214).

evidence for this statement,[1] which is improbable in view of the fact that Bashshár was a thorough sceptic and used to dispute with a number of noted freethinkers in Baṣra, *e.g.*, with Wáṣil b. 'Aṭá, who started the Mu'tazilite heresy, and 'Amr b. 'Ubayd. He and Ṣáliḥ b. 'Abd al-Quddús were put to death by the Caliph Mahdí in the same year (783 A.D.).

Ṣáliḥ b. 'Abd al-Quddús.

This Ṣáliḥ belonged by birth or affiliation to the Arab tribe of Azd. Of his life we know little beyond the circumstance that he was for some time a street-preacher at Baṣra, and afterwards at Damascus. It is possible that his public doctrine was thought dangerous, although the preachers as a class were hand in glove with the Church and did not, like the Lollards, denounce religious abuses.[2] His extant poetry contains nothing heretical, but is wholly moral and didactic in character. We have seen, however, in the case of Abu 'l-'Atáhiya, that Muḥammadan orthodoxy was apt to connect 'the philosophic mind' with positive unbelief; and Ṣáliḥ appears to have fallen a victim to this prejudice. He was accused of being a dualist (*thanawí*), *i.e.*, a Manichæan. Mahdí, it is said, conducted his examination in person, and at first let him go free, but the poet's fate was sealed by his confession that he was the author of the following verses:—

"The greybeard will not leave what in the bone is bred
Until the dark tomb covers him with earth o'erspread;
For, tho' deterred awhile, he soon returns again
To his old folly, as the sick man to his pain."[3]

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[1] As Professor Bevan points out, it is based solely on the well-known verse (*Aghání*, iii, 24, l. 11), which has come down to us without the context:—

"*Earth is dark and Fire is bright,*
And Fire has been worshipped ever since Fire existed."

[2] These popular preachers (*quṣṣáṣ*) are admirably described by Goldziher, *Muhamm. Studien*, Part II, p. 161 sqq.

[3] The Arabic text of these verses will be found in Goldziher's monograph, p. 122, ll. 6–7.

Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí on the *Zindíqs*.

Abu 'l-'Alá al-Ma'arrí, himself a bold and derisive critic of Muḥammadan dogmas, devotes an interesting section of his *Risálatu 'l-Ghufrán* to the *Zindíqs*, and says many hard things about them, which were no doubt intended to throw dust in the eyes of a suspicious audience. The wide scope of the term is shown by the fact that he includes under it the pagan chiefs of Quraysh; the Umayyad Caliph Walíd b. Yazíd; the poets Di'bil, Abú Nuwás, Bashshár, and Ṣáliḥ b. 'Abd al-Quddús; Abú Muslim, who set up the 'Abbásid dynasty; the Persian rebels, Bábak and Mázyár; Afshín, who after conquering Bábak was starved to death by the Caliph Mu'taṣim; the Carmathian leader al-Jannábí; Ibnu 'l-Ráwandí, whose work entitled the *Dámigh* was designed to discredit the 'miraculous' style of the Koran; and Ḥusayn b. Manṣúr al-Ḥalláj, the Ṣúfí martyr. Most of these, one may admit, fall within Abu 'l-'Alá's definition of the *Zindíqs*: "they acknowledge neither prophet nor sacred book." The name *Zindíq*, which is applied by Jáḥiẓ († 868 A.D.) to the Buddhists,[1] seems in the first instance to have been used of Manes (*Mání*) and his followers, and is no doubt derived, as Professor Bevan has suggested, from the *zaddíqs*, who formed an elect class in the Manichæan hierarchy.[2]

II. The official recognition of Rationalism as the State religion came to an end on the accession of Mutawakkil in 847 A.D. The new Caliph, who owed his throne to the

[1] See a passage from the *Kitábu 'l-Ḥayawán*, cited by Baron V. Rosen in *Zapiski*, vol. vi, p. 337.

[2] *Zaddíq* is an Aramaic word meaning 'righteous.' Its etymological equivalent in Arabic is *ṣiddíq*, which has a different meaning, namely, 'veracious.' *Zaddíq* passed into Persian in the form *Zandík*, which was used by the Persians before Islam, and *Zindíq* is the Arabicised form of the latter word. For some of these observations I am indebted to Professor Bevan. Further details concerning the derivation and meaning of *Zindíq* are given in Professor Browne's *Literary Hist. of Persia* (vol. i, p. 159 sqq.), where the reader will also find a lucid account of the Manichæan doctrines.

Turkish Prætorians, could not have devised a surer means of making himself popular than by standing forward as the avowed champion of the faith of the masses. He persecuted impartially Jews, Christians, Mu'tazilites, Shí'ites, and Ṣúfís—every one, in short, who diverged from the narrowest Sunnite orthodoxy. The Vizier Ibn Abí Du'ád, who had shown especial zeal in his conduct of the Mu'tazilite Inquisition, was disgraced, and the bulk of his wealth was confiscated. In Baghdád the followers of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal went from house to house terrorising the citizens,[1] and such was their fanatical temper that when Ṭabarí, the famous divine and historian, died in 923 A.D., they would not allow his body to receive the ordinary rites of burial.[2] Finally, in the year 935 A.D., the Caliph Rádí issued an edict denouncing them in these terms: "Ye assert that your ugly, ill-favoured faces are in the likeness of the Lord of Creation, and that your vile exterior resembles His, and ye speak of the hand, the fingers, the feet, the golden shoes, and the curly hair (of God), and of His going up to Heaven and of His coming down to Earth. . . . The Commander of the Faithful swears a binding oath that unless ye refrain from your detestable practices and perverse tenets he will lay the sword to your necks and the fire to your dwellings."[3] Evidently the time was ripe for a system which should reconcile the claims of tradition and reason, avoiding the gross anthropomorphism of the extreme Ḥanbalites on the one side and the pure rationalism of the advanced Mu'tazilites (who were still a power to be reckoned with) on the other. It is a frequent experience that great intellectual or religious movements rising slowly and invisibly, in response, as it were, to some incommunicable want, suddenly find a distinct interpreter with whose name they are henceforth associated for ever. The man, in this case, was Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arí. He belonged to a noble and traditionally orthodox family of

The Orthodox Reaction.

[1] Ibnu 'l-Athír, vol. viii, p. 229 seq. (anno 323 A.H. = 934–935 A.D.).
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 230 seq.

Yemenite origin. One of his ancestors was Abú Músá al-Ash'arí, who, as the reader will recollect, played a somewhat inglorious part in the arbitration between 'Alí and Mu'áwiya after the battle of Ṣiffín.[1] Born in 873–874 A.D. at Baṣra, a city renowned for its scientific and intellectual fertility, the young Abu 'l-Ḥasan deserted the faith of his fathers, attached himself to the freethinking school, and until his fortieth year was the favourite pupil and intimate friend of al-Jubbá'í († 915 A.D.), the head of the Mu'tazilite party at that time. He is said to have broken with his teacher in consequence of a dispute as to whether God always does what is best (*aṣlaḥ*) for His creatures. The story is related as follows by Ibn Khallikán (De Slane's translation, vol. ii, p. 669 seq.) :—

Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arí.

Ash'arí proposed to Jubbá'í the case of three brothers, one of whom was a true believer, virtuous and pious; the second an infidel, a debauchee and a reprobate; and the third an infant: they all died, and Ash'arí wished to know what had become of them. To this Jubbá'í answered: "The virtuous brother holds a high station in Paradise; the infidel is in the depths of Hell, and the child is among those who have obtained salvation." "Suppose now," said Ash'arí, "that the child should wish to ascend to the place occupied by his virtuous brother, would he be allowed to do so?" "No," replied Jubbá'í, "it would be said to him: 'Thy brother arrived at this place through his numerous works of obedience towards God, and thou hast no such works to set forward.'" "Suppose then," said Ash'arí, "that the child say: 'That is not my fault; you did not let me live long enough, neither did you give me the means of proving my obedience.'" "In that case," answered Jubbá'í, "the Almighty would say: 'I knew that if I had allowed thee to live, thou wouldst have been disobedient and incurred the severe punishment (of Hell); I therefore acted for thy advantage.'" "Well," said Ash'arí, "and suppose the infidel brother were to say: 'O God of the universe! since you knew what awaited him, you must have known what

Story of the three brothers.

[1] See p. 192.

[2] *I.e.*, he is saved from Hell but excluded from Paradise.

awaited me; why then did you act for his advantage and not for mine? " Jubbá'í had not a word to offer in reply.

Ash'arí's conversion to orthodoxy.

Soon afterwards Ash'arí made a public recantation. One Friday, while sitting (as his biographer relates) in the chair from which he taught in the great mosque of Baṣra, he cried out at the top of his voice: "They who know me know who I am: as for those who do not know me I will tell them. I am 'Alí b. Ismá'íl al-Ash'arí, and I used to hold that the Koran was created, that the eyes of men shall not see God, and that we ourselves are the authors of our evil deeds. Now I have returned to the truth; I renounce these opinions, and I undertake to refute the Mu'tazilites and expose their infamy and turpitude." [1]

These anecdotes possess little or no historical value, but illustrate the fact that Ash'arí, having learned all that the Mu'tazilites could teach him and having thoroughly mastered their dialectic, turned against them with deadly force the weapons which they had put in his hands. His doctrine on the subject of free-will may serve to exemplify the method of *Kalám* (Disputation) by which he propped up the orthodox creed.[2]

Ash'arí as the founder of Scholastic Theology.

Here, as in other instances, Ash'arí took the central path—*medio tutissimus*—between two extremes. It was the view of the early Moslem Church—a view justified by the Koran and the Apostolic Traditions—that everything was determined in advance and inscribed, from all eternity, on the Guarded Tablet (*al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfuẓ*), so that men had no choice but to commit the actions decreed by destiny. The Mu'tazilites, on the

[1] Ibn Khallikán, ed. by Wüstenfeld, No. 440; De Slane's translation, vol. ii, p. 228.

[2] The clearest statement of Ash'arí's doctrine with which I am acquainted is contained in the Creed published by Spitta, *Zur Geschichte Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arí's* (Leipzig, 1876), p. 133, l. 9 sqq.; German translation, p. 95 sqq. It has been translated into English by D. B. Macdonald in his *Muslim Theology*, p. 293 and foll.

contrary, denied that God could be the author of evil and insisted that men's actions were free. Ash'arí, on his part, declared that all actions are created and predestined by God, but that men have a certain subordinate power which enables them to acquire the actions previously created, although it produces no effect on the actions themselves. Human agency, therefore, was confined to this process of acquisition (*kasb*). With regard to the anthropomorphic passages in the Koran, Ash'arí laid down the rule that such expressions as "*The Merciful has settled himself upon His throne*," "*Both His hands are spread out*," &c., must be taken in their obvious sense without asking 'How?' (*bilá kayfa*). Spitta saw in the system of Ash'arí a successful revolt of the Arabian national spirit against the foreign ideas which were threatening to overwhelm Islam,[1] a theory which does not agree with the fact that most of the leading Ash'arites were Persians.[2] Von Kremer came nearer the mark when he said "Ash'arí's victory was simply a clerical triumph,"[3] but it was also, as Schreiner has observed, "a victory of reflection over unthinking faith."

The victory, however, was not soon or easily won.[4] Many of the orthodox disliked the new Scholasticism hardly less than the old Rationalism. Thus it is not surprising to read in the *Kámil* of Ibnu 'l-Athír under the year 456 A.H. = 1046 A.D., that Alp Arslán's Vizier, 'Amídu 'l-Mulk al-Kunduri, having obtained his master's permission to have curses pronounced against the Ráfidites (Shí'ites) from the pulpits of Khurásán, included the Ash'arites in the same malediction, and that the famous Ash'arite doctors, Abu 'l-Qásim al-Qushayrí and the Imámu 'l-Ḥaramayn Abu 'l-Ma'álí al-Juwayní, left the country in consequence. The great Niẓámu 'l-Mulk

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 7 seq.

[2] Schreiner, *Zur Geschichte des Ash'aritenthums* in the *Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Orientalists* (1889), p. 5 of the *tirage à part.*

[3] *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 31, p. 167.

[4] See Goldziher in *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 41, p. 63 seq., whence the following details are derived.

exerted himself on behalf of the Ash'arites, and the Niẓámiyya College, which he founded in Baghdád in the year 1067 A.D., was designed to propagate their system of theology. But the man who stamped it with the impression of his own powerful genius, fixed its ultimate form, and established it as the universal creed of orthodox Islam, was Abú Ḥámid al-Ghazálí (1058–1111 A.D.). We have already sketched the outward course of his life, and need only recall that he lectured at Baghdád in the Niẓámiyya College for four years (1091–1095 A.D.).[1] At the end of that time he retired from the world as a Ṣúfí, and so brought to a calm and fortunate close the long spiritual travail which he has himself described in the *Munqidh mina 'l-Ḍalál*, or 'Deliverer from Error.'[2] We must now attempt to give the reader some notion of this work, both on account of its singular psychological interest and because Ghazálí's search for religious truth exercised, as will shortly appear, a profound and momentous influence upon the future history of Muḥammadan thought. It begins with these words :—

Ghazálí's autobiography.

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Praise be to God by the praise of whom every written or spoken discourse is opened ! And blessings on Muḥammad, the Elect, the Prophet and Apostle, as well as on his family and his companions who lead us forth from error ! To proceed : You have asked me, O my brother in religion, to explain to you the hidden meanings and the ultimate goal of the sciences, and the secret bane of the different doctrines, and their inmost depths. You wish me to relate all that I have endured in seeking to recover the truth from amidst the confusion of sects with diverse ways and paths, and how I have dared to raise myself from the abyss of blind belief in authority to the height of discernment. You desire to know what benefits I have derived in the first place from Scholastic Theology, and what I have appropriated, in the second

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[1] See p. 339 seq.

[2] I have used the Cairo edition of 1309 A.H. A French translation by Barbier de Meynard was published in the *Journal Asiatique* (January, 1877), pp. 9–93.

place, from the methods of the Ta'límites[1] who think that truth can be attained only by submission to the authority of an Imám; and thirdly, my reasons for spurning the systems of philosophy; and, lastly, why I have accepted the tenets of Ṣúfiism: you are anxious, in short, that I should impart to you the essential truths which I have learned in my repeated examination of the (religious) opinions of mankind."

In a very interesting passage, which has been translated by Professor Browne, Ghazálí tells how from his youth upward he was possessed with an intense thirst for knowledge, which impelled him to study every form of religion and philosophy, and to question all whom he met concerning the nature and meaning of their belief.[2] But when he tried to distinguish the true from the false, he found no sure test. He could not trust the evidence of his senses. The eye sees a shadow and declares it to be without movement; or a star, and deems it no larger than a piece of gold. If the senses thus deceive, may not the mind do likewise? Perhaps our life is a dream full of phantom thoughts which we mistake for realities—until the awakening comes, either in moments of ecstasy or at death. "For two months," says Ghazálí, "I was actually, though not avowedly, a sceptic." Then God gave him light, so that he regained his mental balance and was able to think soundly. He resolved that this faculty must guide him to the truth, since blind faith once lost never returns. Accordingly, he set himself to examine the foundations of belief in four classes of men who were devoted to the search for truth, namely, Scholastic Theologians, Esoterics (*Báṭiniyya*), Philosophers, and Ṣúfís. For a long while he had to be content with wholly negative results. Scholasticism was, he admitted, an excellent purge against heresy, but it could not cure the disease from which he was suffering. As for the philosophers, all of them—Materialists (*Dahriyyún*), Naturalists (*Ṭabi'iyyún*),

[1] These are the Ismá'ílís or Báṭinís (including the Carmathians and Assassins). See p. 271 sqq.

[2] *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 295 seq.

and Theists (*Iláhiyyún*)—"are branded with infidelity and impiety." Here, as often in his discussion of the philosophical schools, Ghazálí's religious instinct breaks out. We cannot imagine him worshipping at the shrine of pure reason any more than we can imagine Herbert Spencer at Lourdes. He next turned to the Ta'límites (Doctrinists) or Báṭinites (Esoterics), who claimed that they knew the truth, and that its unique source was the infallible Imám. But when he came to close quarters with these sectaries, he discovered that they could teach him nothing, and their mysterious Imám vanished into space. Ṣúfiism, therefore, was his last hope. He carefully studied the writings of the mystics, and as he read it became clear to him that now he was on the right path. He saw that the higher stages of Ṣúfiism could not be learned by study, but must be realised by actual experience, that is, by rapture, ecstasy, and moral transformation. After a painful struggle with himself he resolved to cast aside all his worldly ambition and to live for God alone. In the month of Dhu 'l-Qa'da, 488 A.H. (November, 1095 A.D.), he left Baghdád and wandered forth to Syria, where he found in the Ṣúfí discipline of prayer, praise, and meditation the peace which his soul desired.

Mr. Duncan B. Macdonald, to whom we owe the best and fullest life of Ghazálí that has yet been written, sums up his work and influence in Islam under four heads [1]:—

First, he led men back from scholastic labours upon theological dogmas to living contact with, study and exegesis of, the Word and the Traditions.

Second, in his preaching and moral exhortations be re-introduced the element of fear.

Third, it was by his influence that Ṣúfiism attained a firm and assured position within the Church of Islam.

[1] *The Life of al-Ghazzālī* in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. xx (1899), p. 122 sqq.

Fourth, he brought philosophy and philosophical theology within the range of the ordinary mind.

Ghazálí's work and influence.

"Of these four phases of al-Ghazzālī's work," says Macdonald, "the first and third are undoubtedly the most important. He made his mark by leading Islam back to its fundamental and historical facts, and by giving a place in its system to the emotional religious life. But it will have been noticed that in none of the four phases was he a pioneer. He was not a scholar who struck out a new path, but a man of intense personality who entered on a path already trodden and made it the common highway. We have here his character. Other men may have been keener logicians, more learned theologians, more gifted saints; but he, through his personal experiences, had attained so overpowering a sense of the divine realities that the force of his character—once combative and restless, now narrowed and intense—swept all before it, and the Church of Islam entered on a new era of its existence."

Súfiism in the 'Abbásid period.

III. We have traced the history of Mysticism in Islam from the ascetic movement of the first century, in which it originated, to a point where it begins to pass beyond the sphere of Muḥammadan influence and to enter on a strange track, of which the Prophet assuredly never dreamed, although the Ṣúfís constantly pretend that they alone are his true followers. I do not think it can be maintained that Ṣúfiism of the theosophical and pantheistic type, which we have now to consider, is merely a development of the older asceticism and quietism which have been described in a former chapter. The difference between them is essential and must be attributed, as Von Kremer saw,[1] to the intrusion of some extraneous, non-Islamic, element. As to the nature of this new element there are several conflicting theories, which have been so clearly and fully stated by Professor Browne in his *Literary History of Persia* (vol. i, p. 418 sqq.) that I need not dwell upon them here. Briefly it is claimed—

[1] *Herrschende Ideen*, p. 67.

(*a*) That Ṣúfiism owes its inspiration to Indian philosophy, and especially to the Vedanta.

(*b*) That the most characteristic ideas in Ṣúfiism are of Persian origin.

(*c*) That these ideas are derived from Neo-platonism.

Instead of arguing for or against any of the above theories, all of which, in my opinion, contain a measure of truth, I propose in the following pages to sketch the historical evolution of the Súfí doctrine as far as the materials at my disposal will permit. This, it seems to me, is the only possible method by which we may hope to arrive at a definite conclusion as to its origin. Since mysticism in all ages and countries is fundamentally the same, however it may be modified by its peculiar environment, and by the positive religion to which it clings for support, we find remote and unrelated systems showing an extraordinarily close likeness and even coinciding in many features of verbal expression. Such resemblances can prove little or nothing unless they are corroborated by evidence based on historical grounds. Most writers on Súfiism have disregarded this principle; hence the confusion which exists at present. The first step in the right direction was made by Adalbert Merx,[1] who derived valuable results from a chronological examination of the sayings of the early Ṣúfís. He did not, however, carry his researches beyond Abú Sulaymán al-Dárání († 830 A.D.), and confined his attention almost entirely to the doctrine, which, according to my view, should be studied in connection with the lives, character, and nationality of the men who taught it.[2] No doubt the origin and growth of mysticism in Islam, as in all other religions, *ultimately* depended on general causes and conditions, not on external

[1] *Idee und Grundlinien einer allgemeiner Geschichte der Mystik*, an academic oration delivered on November 22, 1892, and published at Heidelberg in 1893.

[2] The following sketch is founded on my paper, *A Historical Enquiry concerning the Origin and Development of Ṣúfiism* (*J.R.A.S.*, April, 1906, p. 303 sqq).

circumstances. For example, the political anarchy of the Umayyad period, the sceptical tendencies of the early 'Abbásid age, and particularly the dry formalism of Moslem theology could not fail to provoke counter-movements towards quietism, spiritual authority, and emotional faith. But although Ṣúfiism was not called into being by any impulse from without (this is too obvious to require argument), the influences or which I am about to speak have largely contributed to make it what it is, and have coloured it so deeply that no student of the history of Ṣúfiism can afford to neglect them.

Towards the end of the eighth century of our era the influence of new ideas is discernible in the sayings of Ma'rúf al-Karkhí († 815 A.D.), a contemporary of Fuḍayl b. 'Iyáḍ and Shaqíq of Balkh. He was born in the neighbourhood of Wásiṭ, one of the great cities of Mesopotamia, and the name of his father, Fírúz, or Fírúzán, shows that he had Persian blood in his veins. Ma'rúf was a client (*mawlá*) of the Shí'ite Imám, 'Alí b. Músá al-Riḍá, in whose presence he made profession of Islam; for he had been brought up as a Christian (such is the usual account), or, possibly, as a Mandæan. He lived during the reign of Hárún al-Rashíd in the Karkh quarter of Baghdád, where he gained a high reputation for saintliness, so that his tomb in that city is still an object of veneration. He is described as a God-intoxicated man, but in this respect he is not to be compared with many who came after him. Nevertheless, he deserves to stand at the head of the theosophical as opposed to the ascetic school of Ṣúfís. He defined Ṣúfiism as "the apprehension of Divine realities and renunciation of human possessions."[1] Here are a few of his sayings:—

Ma'rúf al-Karkhí († 815 A.D.).

"Love is not to be learned from men; it is one of God's gifts and comes of His grace.

[1] This, so far as I know, is the oldest extant definition of Ṣúfiism.

"The Saints of God are known by three signs: their thought is of God, their dwelling is with God, and their business is in God.

"If the gnostic (*'árif*) has no bliss, yet he himself is in every bliss.

"When you desire anything of God, swear to Him by me."

From these last words, which Ma'rúf addressed to his pupil Sarí al-Saqaṭí, it is manifest that he regarded himself as being in the most intimate communion with God.

Abú Sulaymán († 830 A.D.), the next great name in the Ṣúfí biographies, was also a native of Wásiṭ, but afterwards emigrated to Syria and settled at Dárayá (near Damascus), whence he is called 'al-Dárání.' He developed the doctrine of gnosis (*ma'rifat*). Those who are familiar with the language of European mystics—*illuminatio*, *oculus cordis*, &c.—will easily interpret such sayings as these:—

Abú Sulaymán al-Dárání († 830 A.D.).

"None refrains from the lusts of this world save him in whose heart there is light that keeps him always busied with the next world.

"When the gnostic's spiritual eye is opened, his bodily eye is shut: they see nothing but Him.

"If Gnosis were to take visible form, all that looked thereon would die at the sight of its beauty and loveliness and goodness and grace, and every brightness would become dark beside the splendour thereof.[1]

"Gnosis is nearer to silence than to speech."

We now come to Dhu 'l-Nún al-Miṣrí († 860 A.D.), whom the Ṣúfís themselves consider to be the primary author of their doctrine.[2] That he at all events contributed more than any one else to give it permanent shape is a fact which is amply attested by the collection of his sayings preserved in 'Aṭṭár's *Memoirs of the*

Dhu 'l-Nún al-Miṣrí († 860 A.D.).

[1] It is impossible not to recognise the influence of Greek philosophy in this conception of Truth as Beauty.

[2] Jámí says (*Nafaḥátu 'l-Uns*, ed. by Nassau Lees, p. 36): "He is the head of this sect: they all descend from, and are related to, him."

Saints and in other works of the same kind.[1] It is clear that the theory of gnosis, with which he deals at great length, was the central point in his system; and he seems to have introduced the doctrine that true knowledge of God is attained only by means of ecstasy (*wajd*). "The man that knows God best," he said, "is the one most lost in Him." Like Dionysius, he refused to make any positive statements about the Deity. "Whatever you imagine, God is the contrary of that." Divine love he regarded as an ineffable mystery which must not be revealed to the profane. All this is the very essence of the later Ṣúfiism. It is therefore supremely important to ascertain the real character of Dhu 'l-Nún and the influences to which he was subjected. The following account gives a brief summary of what I have been able to discover; fuller details will be found in the article mentioned above.

His name was Abu 'l-Fayḍ Thawbán b. Ibráhím, Dhu 'l-Nún (He of the Fish) being a sobriquet referring to one of his miracles, and his father was a native of Nubia, or of Ikhmím in Upper Egypt. Ibn Khallikán describes Dhu 'l-Nún as 'the nonpareil or his age' for learning, devotion, communion with the Divinity (*ḥál*), and acquaintance with literature (*adab*); adding that he was a philosopher (*ḥakím*) and spoke Arabic with elegance. The people of Egypt, among whom he lived, looked upon him as a *zindíq* (free-thinker), and he was brought to Baghdád to answer this charge, but after his death he was canonised. In the *Fihrist* he appears among "the philosophers who discoursed on alchemy," and Ibnu 'l-Qifṭí brackets him with the famous occultist Jábir b. Ḥayyán. He used to wander (as we learn from Mas'údí)[2] amidst the ruined Egyptian monuments, studying the inscriptions and endeavouring to decipher the mysterious figures which were thought to hold the key to the

[1] See 'Aṭṭár's *Tadhkiratu 'l-Awliyá*, ed. by Nicholson, Part I, p. 114; Jámí's *Nafaḥát*, p. 35; Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 291.

[2] *Murúju 'l-Dhahab*, vol. ii, p. 401 seq.

lost sciences of antiquity. He also dabbled in medicine, which, like Paracelsus, he combined with alchemy and magic.

Let us see what light these facts throw upon the origin of the Ṣúfí theosophy. Did it come to Egypt from India, Persia, or Greece?

The origin of theosophical Ṣúfism.

Considering the time, place, and circumstances in which it arose, and having regard to the character of the man who bore the chief part in its development, we cannot hesitate, I think, to assert that it is mainly a product of Greek speculation. Ma'rúf al-Karkhí, Abú Sulaymán al-Dárání, and Dhu 'l-Nún al-Miṣrí all three lived and died in the period (786–861 A.D.) which begins with the accession of Hárún al-Rashíd and is terminated by the death of Mutawakkil. During these seventy-five years the stream of Hellenic culture flowed unceasingly into the Moslem world. Innumerable works of Greek philosophers, physicians, and scientists were translated and eagerly studied. Thus the Greeks became the teachers of the Arabs, and the wisdom of ancient Greece formed, as has been shown in a preceding chapter, the basis of Muḥammadan science and philosophy. The results are visible in the Mu'tazilite rationalism as well as in the system of the *Ikhwánu 'l-Ṣafá*. But it was not through literature alone that the Moslems were imbued with Hellenism. In Syria and Egypt they found themselves on its native soil, which yielded, we may be sure, a plentiful harvest of ideas—Neo-platonistic, Gnostical, Christian, mystical, pantheistic, and what not? In Mesopotamia, the heart of the 'Abbásid Empire, dwelt a strange people, who were really Syrian heathens, but who towards the beginning of the ninth century assumed the name of Ṣábians in order to protect themselves from the persecution with which they were threatened by the Caliph Ma'mún. At this time, indeed, many of them accepted Islam or Christianity, but the majority clung to their old pagan beliefs, while the educated class continued to profess a religious philosophy which, as it is described by Shahrastání and

other Muḥammadan writers, is simply the Neo-platonism of Proclus and Iamblichus. To return to Dhu 'l-Nún, it is incredible that a mystic and natural philosopher living in the first half of the ninth century in Egypt should have derived his doctrine directly from India. There may be Indian elements in Neo-platonism and Gnosticism, but this possibility does not affect my contention that the immediate source of the Ṣúfí theosophy is to be sought in Greek and Syrian speculation. To define its origin more narrowly is not, I think, practicable in the present state of our knowledge. Merx, however, would trace it to Dionysius, the Pseudo-Areopagite, or rather to his master, a certain "Hierotheus," whom Frothingham has identified with the Syrian mystic, Stephen bar Sudaili (*circa* 500 A.D.). Dionysius was of course a Christian Neo-platonist. His works certainly laid the foundations of mediæval mysticism in Europe, and they were also popular in the East at the time when Ṣúfiism arose.

When speaking of the various current theories as to the origin of Ṣúfiism, I said that in my opinion they all contained a measure of truth. No single cause will account for a phenomenon so widely spread and so diverse in its manifestations. Ṣúfiism has always been thoroughly eclectic, absorbing and transmuting whatever 'broken lights' fell across its path, and consequently it gained adherents amongst men of the most opposite views—theists and pantheists, Mu'tazilites and Scholastics, philosophers and divines. We have seen what it owed to Greece, but the Perso-Indian elements are hardly less important. Although the theory "that it must be regarded as the reaction of the Aryan mind against a Semitic religion imposed on it by force" is inadmissible—Dhu 'l-Nún, for example, was a Copt or Nubian—the fact remains that there was at the time a powerful anti-Semitic reaction, which expressed itself, more or less consciously, in Ṣúfís of Persian race. Again, the literary influence of India upon Muḥammadan thought before 1000 A.D.

Ṣúfiism composed of many different elements.

was greatly inferior to that of Greece, as any one can see by turning over the pages of the *Fihrist*; but Indian religious ideas must have penetrated into Khurásán and Eastern Persia at a much earlier period.

These considerations show that the question as to the origin of Ṣúfiism cannot be answered in a definite and exclusive way. None of the rival theories is completely true, nor is any of them without a partial justification. The following words of Dr. Goldziher should be borne in mind by all who are interested in this subject:—

Goldziher on the character of Ṣúfiism.

"Ṣúfiism cannot be looked upon as a regularly organised sect within Islam. Its dogmas cannot be compiled into a regular system. It manifests itself in different shapes in different countries. We find divergent tendencies, according to the spirit of the teaching of distinguished theosophists who were founders of different schools, the followers of which may be compared to Christian monastic orders. The influence of different environments naturally affected the development of Ṣúfiism. Here we find mysticism, there asceticism the prevailing thought."[1]

The four principal sources of Ṣúfiism are undoubtedly Christianity, Neo-platonism, Gnosticism, and Buddhism. I shall not attempt in this place to estimate their comparative importance, but it should be clearly understood that the speculative and theosophical side of Ṣúfiism, which, as we have seen, was first elaborated in Egypt and Syria, bears unmistakable signs of Hellenistic influence.

There is a strong pantheistic tendency in the sayings of Dhu 'l-Nún and his two predecessors who have been mentioned, yet none of them can fairly be called a pantheist in the true sense. The step from theosophy to pantheism was

[1] *The Influence of Buddhism upon Islam*, by I. Goldziher (Budapest, 1903). As this essay is written in Hungarian, I have not been able to consult it at first hand, but have used the excellent translation by Mr. T. Duka, which appeared in the *J.R.A.S.* for January, 1904, pp. 125–141.

first openly made by a Persian, the celebrated Abú Yazíd, or Báyazíd († 874–875 A.D.), of Bisṭám, a town in the province of Qúmis situated near the south-eastern corner of the Caspian Sea. His grandfather, Surúshán, or Sharwasán, was a Zoroastrian, and his master in Ṣúfiism a Kurd. The genuineness of all the sayings ascribed to him is not above suspicion, but they probably represent his character accurately enough. Báyazíd introduced the doctrine of self-annihilation (*fanâ*)—perhaps a reflection of the Buddhistic Nirvana—and his language is tinged with the peculiar poetic imagery which was afterwards developed by the great Ṣúfí of Khurásán, Abú Sa'íd b. Abi 'l-Khayr († 1049 A.D.). I can only give a few specimens of his sayings. They show that, if the theosophical basis of Ṣúfiism is distinctively Greek, its pantheistic extravagances are no less distinctively Oriental.

Báyazíd and Ṣúfí pantheism.

"Creatures are subject to 'states' (*aḥwál*), but the gnostic has no 'state,' because his vestiges are effaced and his essence is annihilated by the essence of another, and his traces are lost in another's traces.

"I went from God to God until they cried from me in me, 'O Thou I!'

"Nothing is better for Man than to be without aught, having no asceticism, no theory, no practice. When he is without all, he is with all.

"Verily I am God, there is no God except me, so worship me!

"Glory to me! how great is my majesty!

"I came forth from Báyazíd-ness as a snake from its skin. Then I looked. I saw that lover, beloved, and love are one, for in the world of unification all can be one.

"I am the wine-drinker and the wine and the cup-bearer."

Thus, in the course of a century, Ṣúfiism, which at first was little more than asceticism, became in succession mystical and theosophical, and finally advanced to extreme pantheism. Henceforward the term *Taṣawwuf* unites all these varying shades. With the exception of Báyazíd, however, the great Ṣúfís of the third century A.H. (815–912 A.D.) keep the

doctrine of *fanâ* in the background. Most of them agreed with Junayd of Baghdâd († 909 A.D.), the leading theosophist of his time, in preferring "the path of sobriety," and in seeking to reconcile the Law (*sharî'at*) with the Truth (*ḥaqîqat*). "Our principles," said Sahl b. 'Abdulláh al-Tustarî († 896 A.D.), "are six: to hold fast by the Book of God, to model ourselves upon the Apostle (Muḥammad), to eat only what is lawful, to refrain from hurting people even though they hurt us, to avoid forbidden things, and to fulfil obligations without delay." To these articles the strictest Moslem might cheerfully subscribe. Ṣúfiism in its ascetic, moral, and devotional aspects was a spiritualised Islam, though it was a very different thing essentially. While doing lip-service to the established religion, it modified the dogmas of Islam in such a way as to deprive them of all significance. Thus Allah, the God of mercy and wrath, was depersonalised and worshipped as an abstract idea under the title of 'The Truth' (*Al-Ḥaqq*). Here the Ṣúfís betray their kinship with the Mu'tazilites, but the two sects have little in common except the Greek philosophy.[1] It must never be forgotten that Ṣúfiism was the expression of a profound religious feeling—"hatred of the world and love of the Lord."[2] "*Taṣawwuf*," said Junayd, "is this: that God should make thee die from thyself and should make thee live in Him."

The further development of Ṣúfiism may be indicated in a few words.

What was at first a form of religion adopted by individuals and communicated to a small circle of companions gradually became a monastic system, a school for saints, with rules of discipline and devotion which the novice (*murîd*) learned from his spiritual director (*pîr* or *ustâdh*), to whose guidance he

[1] It was recognised by the Ṣúfís themselves that in some points their doctrine was apparently based on Mu'tazilite principles. See Sha'ránî, *Lawáqiḥu 'l-Anwár* (Cairo, 1299 A.H.), p. 14, l. 21 sqq.

[2] This definition is by Abu l-Ḥusayn al-Núrî († 907–908 A.D.).

submitted himself absolutely. Already in the third century after Muḥammad it is increasingly evident that the typical Ṣúfí adept of the future will no longer be a solitary ascetic shunning the sight of men, but a great Shaykh and hierophant, who appears on ceremonial occasions attended by a numerous train of admiring disciples. Soon the doctrine began to be collected and embodied in books. Some of the most notable Arabic works of reference on Ṣúfiism have been mentioned already. The oldest is the *Qútu 'l-Qulúb*, by Abú Ṭálib al-Makkí, who died in 996 A.D. The twelfth century saw the rise of the Dervish Orders. 'Adí al-Hakkárí († 1163 A.D.) and 'Abdu 'l-Qádir al-Jílí († 1166 A.D.) founded the fraternities which are called 'Adawís and Qádirís, after their respective heads. These were followed in rapid succession by the Rifá'ís, the Shádhilís, and the Mevlevís, of whom the last named owe their origin to the Persian poet and mystic, Jalálu 'l-Dín Rúmí († 1273 A.D.). By this time, mainly through the influence of Ghazálí, Ṣúfiism had won for itself a secure and recognised position in the Muḥammadan Church. Orthodoxy was forced to accept the popular Saint-worship and to admit the miracles of the *Awliyá*, although many Moslem puritans raised their voices against the superstitious veneration which was paid to the tombs of holy men, and against the prayers, sacrifices, and oblations offered by the pilgrims who assembled. Ghazálí also gave the Ṣúfí doctrine a metaphysical basis. For this purpose he availed himself of the terminology, which Fárábí (also a Ṣúfí) and Avicenna had already borrowed from the Neo-platonists. From his time forward we find in Ṣúfí writings constant allusions to the Plotinian theories of emanation and ecstasy.

The development of Ṣúfiism.

Ṣúfiism was more congenial to the Persians than to the Arabs, and its influence on Arabic literature is not to be compared with the extraordinary spell which it has cast over the Persian mind since the eleventh century of the

Christian era to the present day. With few exceptions, the great poets of Persia (and, we may add, of Turkey) speak the allegorical language and use the fantastic imagery of which the quatrains of the Ṣúfí pantheist, Abú Sa'íd b. Abi 'l-Khayr,[1] afford almost the first literary example. The Arabs have only one mystical poet worthy to stand beside the Persian masters.

'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ.

This is Sharafu 'l-Dín 'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ, who was born in Cairo (1181 A.D.) and died there in 1235. His *Díwán* was edited by his grandson 'Alí, and the following particulars regarding the poet's life are extracted from the biographical notice prefixed to this edition[2]:—

"The Shaykh 'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ was of middle stature; his face was fair and comely, with a mingling of visible redness; and when he was under the influence of music (*samá'*) and rapture (*wajd*), and overcome by ecstasy, it grew in beauty and brilliancy, and sweat dropped from his body until it ran on the ground under his feet. I never saw (so his son relates) among Arabs or foreigners a figure equal in beauty to his, and I am the likest of all men to him in form. . . . And when he walked in the city, the people used to press round him asking his blessing and trying to kiss his hand, but he would not allow any one to do so, but put his hand in theirs. . . . 'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ said: 'In the beginning of my detachment (*tajrid*) from the world I used to beg permission of my father and go up to the Wádi 'l-Mustaḍ'afín on the second mountain of al-Muqaṭṭam. Thither I would resort and continue in this hermit life (*siyáḥa*) night and day; then I would return to my father, as bound in duty to cherish his affection. My father was at that time Lieutenant of the High Court (*khalífatu 'l-ḥukmi 'l-'aziz*) in Qáhira and Miṣr,[3] the two guarded cities, and was one of the men most eminent for learning and affairs. He was wont to be glad when I returned, and he frequently let me sit with him in the chambers of the court and in the colleges of law. Then I would long for "detachment," and beg leave to return to the life of

[1] See Professor Browne's *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 261 sqq.

[2] The *Díwán of 'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ*, ed. by Rushayd al-Daḥdáḥ (Marseilles, 1853).

[3] *I.e.*, New and Old Cairo.

a wandering devotee, and thus I was doing repeatedly, until my father was asked to fill the office of Chief Justice (*Qáḍi 'l-Quḍát*), but refused, and laid down the post which he held, and retired from society, and gave himself entirely to God in the preaching-hall (*qá'atu 'l-khiṭába*) of the Mosque al-Azhar. After his death I resumed my former detachment, and solitary devotion, and travel in the way of Truth, but no revelation was vouchsafed to me. One day I came to Cairo and entered the Sayfiyya College. At the gate I found an old grocer performing an ablution which was not prescribed. First he washed his hands, then his feet; then he wiped his head and washed his face. "O Shaykh," I said to him, "do you, after all these years, stand beside the gate of the college among the Moslem divines and perform an irregular ablution?" He looked at me and said, "O 'Umar, nothing will be vouchsafed to thee in Egypt, but only in the Ḥijáz, at Mecca (may God exalt it!); set out thither, for the time of thy illumination hath come." Then I knew that the man was one of God's saints and that he was disguising himself by his manner of livelihood and by pretending to be ignorant of the irregularity of the ablution. I seated myself before him and said to him, "O my master, how far am I from Mecca! and I cannot find convoy or companions save in the months of Pilgrimage." He looked at me and pointed with his hand and said, "Here is Mecca in front of thee"; and as I looked with him, I saw Mecca (may God exalt it!); and bidding him farewell, I set off to seek it, and it was always in front of me until I entered it. At that moment illumination came to me and continued without any interruption. . . . I abode in a valley which was distant from Mecca ten days' journey for a hard rider, and every day and night I would come forth to pray the five prayers in the exalted Sanctuary, and with me was a wild beast of huge size which accompanied me in my going and returning, and knelt to me as a camel kneels, and said, "Mount, O my master," but I never did so.'"

When fifteen years had elapsed, 'Umar Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ returned to Cairo. The people venerated him as a saint, and the reigning monarch, Malik al-Kámil, wished to visit him in person, but 'Umar declined to see him, and rejected his bounty. "At most times," says the poet's son, "the Shaykh was in a state of bewilderment, and his eyes stared fixedly. He neither heard nor saw any one speaking to him. Now he would stand, now sit, now repose on his side, now lie on his

back wrapped up like a dead man ; and thus would he pass ten consecutive days, more or less, neither eating nor drinking nor speaking nor stirring." In 1231 A.D. he made the pilgrimage to Mecca, on which occasion he met his famous contemporary, Shihábu' l-Dín Abú Ḥafṣ 'Umar al-Suhrawardí. He died four years later, and was buried in the Qaráfa cemetery at the foot of Mount Muqaṭṭam.

His *Díwán* of mystical odes, which were first collected and published by his grandson, is small in extent compared with similar works in the Persian language, but of no unusual brevity when regarded as the production of an Arabian poet.[1] Concerning its general character something has been said above (p. 325). The commentator, Ḥasan al-Búríní († 1615 A.D.), praises the easy flow (*insijám*) of the versification, and declares that Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ "is accustomed to play with ideas in ever-changing forms, and to clothe them with splendid garments."[2] His style, full of verbal subtleties, betrays the influence of Mutanabbí.[3] The longest piece in the *Díwán* is a Hymn of Divine Love, entitled *Naẓmu 'l-Sulúk* ('Poem on the Mystic's Progress'), and often called *al-Tá'iyyatu 'l-Kubrá* ('The Greater Ode rhyming in *t*'), which has been edited with a German verse-translation by Hammer-Purgstall (Vienna, 1854). On account of this poem the author was accused of favouring the doctrine of *ḥulúl*, *i.e.*, the incarnation of God in human beings. Another celebrated ode is the *Khamriyya*, or Hymn of Wine.[4]

The poetry of Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ.

[1] The *Díwán*, excluding the *Tá'iyyatu 'l-Kubrá*, has been edited by Rushayd al-Daḥdáḥ (Marseilles, 1853).

[2] *Díwán*, p. 219, l. 14 and p. 213, l. 18.

[3] Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ, like Mutanabbí, shows a marked fondness for diminutives. As he observes (*Díwán*, p. 552) :—

má qultu ḥubayyibí mina 'l-taḥqíri
bal ya'dhubu 'smu 'l-shakhṣi bi-'l-tasghíri.

"*Not in contempt I say 'my darling.' No!*
By 'diminution' names do sweeter grow."

[4] *Díwán*, p. 472 sqq. A French rendering will be found at p. 41 of Grangeret de Lagrange's *Anthologie Arabe* (Paris, 1828).

The following versions will perhaps convey to English readers some faint impression of the fervid rapture and almost ethereal exaltation which give the poetry of Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ a unique place in Arabic literature :—

" Let passion's swelling tide my senses drown !
Pity love's fuel, this long-smouldering heart,
Nor answer with a frown,
When I would fain behold Thee as Thou art,
' *Thou shalt not see Me.*' [1] O my soul, keep fast
The pledge thou gav'st : endure unfaltering to the last !
For Love is life, and death in love the Heaven
Where all sins are forgiven.
To those before and after and of this day,
That witnesseth my tribulation, say,
' By me be taught, me follow, me obey,
And tell my passion's story thro' wide East and West.'
With my Beloved I alone have been
When communings more sweet than evening airs
Passed, and the Vision blest
Was granted to my prayers,
That crowned me, else obscure, with endless fame,
The while amazed between
His beauty and His majesty
I stood in silent ecstasy,
Revealing that which o'er my spirit went and came.
Lo ! in His face commingled
Is every charm and grace ;
The whole of Beauty singled
Into a perfect face
Beholding Him would cry,
' There is no God but He, and He is the most High ! ' " [2]

Here are the opening verses of the *Tá'iyyatu 'l-Ṣughrá*, or 'The Lesser Ode rhyming in *t*,' which is so called in order to distinguish it from the *Tá'iyyatu 'l-Kubrá* :—

" Yea, in me the Zephyr kindled longing, O my loves, for you ;
Sweetly breathed the balmy Zephyr, scattering odours when it blew ;

[1] The words of God to Moses (Kor. vii, 139). [2] *Díwán*, p. 257 sqq.

Whispering to my heart at morning secret tales of those who dwell
(How my fainting heart it gladdened!) nigh the water and the well;
Murmuring in the grassy meadows, garmented with gentleness,
Languid love-sick airs diffusing, healing me of my distress.
When the green slopes wave before thee, Zephyr, in my loved Ḥijáz,
Thou, not wine that mads the others, art my rapture's only cause.
Thou the covenant eternal[1] callest back into my mind,
For but newly thou hast parted from my dear ones, happy Wind!
Driver of the dun-red camels that amidst acacias bide,
Soft and sofa-like thy saddle from the long and weary ride!
Blessings on thee, if descrying far-off Túḍiḥ at noon-day,
Thou wilt cross the desert hollows where the fawns of Wajra play,
And if from 'Urayḍ's sand-hillocks bordering on stony ground
Thou wilt turn aside to Ḥuzwá, driver for Suwayqa bound,
And Ṭuwayli''s willows leaving, if to Sal' thou thence wilt ride—
Ask, I pray thee, of a people dwelling on the mountain-side!
Halt among the clan I cherish (so may health attend thee still!)
And deliver there my greeting to the Arabs of the hill.
For the tents are basking yonder, and in one of them is She
That bestows the meeting sparely, but the parting lavishly.
Spears and arrows make the rampart of her maiden puissance,
Yet my glances stray towards her when on me she deigns to glance.
Girt about with double raiment—soul and heart of mine, no less—
She is guarded from beholders, veiled by her unveiledness.
Death to me, in giving loose to my desire, she destineth;
Ah, how goodly seems the bargain, and how cheap is Love for Death![2]

Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ came of pure Arab stock, and his poetry is thoroughly Arabian both in form and spirit. This is not

[1] This refers to Kor. vii, 171. God drew forth from the loins of Adam all future generations of men and addressed them, saying, "*Am not I your Lord?*" They answered, "*Yes*," and thus, according to the Ṣúfí interpretation, pledged themselves to love God for evermore.

[2] *Díwán*, p. 142 sqq.

the place to speak of the great Persian Ṣúfís, but Ḥusayn b. Manṣúr al-Ḥalláj, a wild antinomian pantheist who was executed in the Caliphate of Muqtadir (922 A.D.), could not have been altogether omitted but for the fact that Professor Browne has already given a most admirable account of him, to which I am unable to add anything of importance.[1] The Arabs, however, have contributed to the history of Ṣúfiism another memorable name—Muḥiyyu 'l-Dín Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, whose life falls within the final century of the 'Abbásid period, and will therefore fitly conclude the present chapter.[2]

Ibnu 'l-'Arabí.

Muḥiyyu 'l-Dín Muḥammad b. 'Alí Ibnu 'l-'Arabí (or Ibn 'Arabí) [3] was born at Mursiya (Murcia) in Spain on the 17th of Ramaḍán, 560 A.H. = July 29, 1165 A.D. From 1173 to 1202 he resided in Seville. He then set out for the East, travelling by way of Egypt to the Ḥijáz, where he stayed a long time, and after visiting Baghdád, Mosul, and Asia Minor, finally settled at Damascus, in which city he died (638 A.H. = 1240 A.D.). His tomb below Mount Qásiyún was thought to be "a piece of the gardens of Paradise," and was called the Philosophers' Stone.[4] It is now enclosed in a mosque which bears the name of Muḥiyyu 'l-Dín, and a cupola rises over it.[5] We know hardly anything concerning the events of his life, which seems to have been passed in quiet meditation and in the composition

[1] See *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, p. 428 sqq.

[2] The best known biography of Ibnu 'l-'Arabí occurs in Maqqarí's *Nafḥu 'l-Ṭíb*, ed. by Dozy and others, vol. i, pp. 567–583. Much additional information is contained in a lengthy article, which I have extracted from a valuable MS. in my collection, the *Shadharátu 'l-Dhahab*, and published in the *J.R.A.S.* for 1906, pp. 806–824. *Cf.* also Von Kremer's *Herrschende Ideen*, pp. 102–109.

[3] Muḥiyyu 'l-Dín means 'Reviver of Religion.' In the West he was called Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, but the Moslems of the East left out the definite article (*al*) in order to distinguish him from the Cadi Abú Bakr Ibnu 'l-'Arabí of Seville († 1151 A.D.).

[4] *Al-Kibrít al-aḥmar* (literally, 'the red sulphur').

[5] See Von Kremer, *op. cit.*, p. 108 seq.

of his voluminous writings, more than two hundred and fifty in number according to his own computation. Two of these works are especially celebrated, and have caused Ibnu 'l-'Arabí to be regarded as the greatest of all Muḥammadan mystics—the *Futúḥát al-Makkiyya*, or 'Meccan Revelations,' and the *Fuṣúṣu 'l-Ḥikam*, or 'Bezels of Philosophy.' The *Futúḥát* is a huge treatise in five hundred and sixty chapters, containing a complete system of mystical science. The author relates that he saw Muḥammad in the World of Real Ideas, seated on a throne amidst angels, prophets, and saints, and received his command to discourse on the Divine mysteries. At another time, while circumambulating the Ka'ba, he met a celestial spirit wearing the form of a youth engaged in the same holy rite, who showed him the living esoteric Temple which is concealed under the lifeless exterior, even as the eternal substance of the Divine Ideas is hidden by the veils of popular religion—veils through which the lofty mind must penetrate, until, having reached the splendour within, it partakes of the Divine character and beholds what no mortal eye can endure to look upon. Ibnu 'l-'Arabí immediately fell into a swoon. When he came to himself he was instructed to contemplate the visionary form and to write down the mysteries which it would reveal to his gaze. Then the youth entered the Ka'ba with Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, and resuming his spiritual aspect, appeared to him on a three-legged steed, breathed into his breast the knowledge of all things, and once more bade him describe the heavenly form in which all mysteries are enshrined.[1] Such is the reputed origin of the 'Meccan Revelations,' of which the greater portion was written in the town where inspiration descended on Muḥammad six hundred years before. The author believed, or pretended to believe, that every word of them was dictated to him by supernatural means. The

[1] The above particulars are derived from an abstract of the *Futúḥát* made by 'Abdu 'l-Wahháb al-Sha'ráni († 1565 A.D.), of which Fleischer has given a full description in the *Catalogue of Manuscripts in the Leipzig Univ. Library* (1838), pp. 490–495.

Fuṣúṣ, a short work in twenty-seven chapters, each of which is named after one of the prophets, is no less highly esteemed, and has been the subject of numerous commentaries in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

We cannot here attempt to summarise the abstruse, fantastic, and interminable speculations which Ibnu 'l-'Arabí presents to his readers in the guise of Heavenly Truth, nor would it be easy to sketch even the outlines of his theosophical system until the copious materials at our disposal have been more thoroughly studied by some European scholar interested in Ṣúfiism. The following sayings and verses may be taken as samples :—

"Prayer (*du'á*) is the marrow of devotion. As the marrow gives strength to the limbs, so the devotion of devotees is strengthened by prayer.

"The Ṣúfí is he that drops the three *i*'s, saying neither 'to me' (*lí*) nor 'beside me' (*'indí*) nor 'my property' (*matá'i*), that is, he does not attribute anything to himself.

"It is no fault in the gnostic to say to his disciple, 'Receive this knowledge which you will not find in any one except me,' and to use like terms of self-glorification, because his intention is to encourage the pupil to learn.

"When a man is truly grounded in Unification (*tawḥíd*), every false pretence, such as hypocrisy and conceit, departs from him, for he feels that all praiseworthy qualities belong to God, not to himself.

"Do not let doubt enter into the mysteries of theosophy : its place is only in the speculative sciences.

"The whole sect (of Ṣúfís) are agreed that knowledge of God is utter ignorance of Him.

"I know the greatest name of God and I know the Philosophers' Stone (*al-Kímiyá*)."

"O Pearl Divine, white Pearl that in a shell
Of dark mortality art made to dwell!
Alas, while common gems we prize and hoard,
Thy worth inestimable is still ignored!" [1]

[1] Maqqarí, vol. i, p. 570, l. 7.

"My heart is capable of every form:
A cloister for the monk, a fane for idols,
A pasture for gazelles, the votary's Ka'ba,
The tables of the Torah, the Koran.
Love is the creed I hold: wherever turn
His camels, Love is still my creed and faith."[1]

Curiously enough, Ibnu 'l-'Arabí combined the most extravagant mysticism with the straitest orthodoxy. "He was a Ẓáhirite (literalist) in his devotions and a Báṭinite (spiritualist) in his beliefs."[2] He rejected all authority (*taqlíd*). "I am not one of those who say, 'Ibn Ḥazm said so-and-so, Aḥmad[3] said so-and-so, al-Nu'mán[4] said so-and-so,'" he declares in one of his poems. But although he insisted on punctilious observance of the sacred law, we may suspect that his refusal to follow any human authority, analogy, or opinion was simply the overweening presumption of the seer who regards himself as divinely illuminated and infallible. Many theologians were scandalised by the apparently blasphemous expressions which occur in his writings, and taxed him with holding heretical doctrines, *e.g.*, the incarnation of God in man (*ḥulúl*) and the identification of man with God (*ittiḥád*). Centuries passed, but controversy continued to rage over him. He found numerous and enthusiastic partisans, who urged that the utterances of the saints must not be interpreted literally nor criticised at all. It was recognised, however, that such high mysteries were unsuitable for the weaker brethren, so that many even of those who firmly believed in his sanctity discouraged the reading of his books. They were read nevertheless, publicly and privately, from one end of the Muḥammadan world to the other; people copied them for the sake of obtaining the author's blessing, and the manuscripts were eagerly bought. Among the distinguished men who

[1] These lines are quoted by 'Abdu 'l-Ghaní al-Nábulusí in his Commentary on the *Tá'iyyatu 'l-Kubrá* of Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ (MS. in the British Museum, 7564 Rich.).

[2] Maqqarí, i, 569, 11. [3] Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. [4] Abú Ḥanífa.

wrote in his defence we can mention here only Majdu 'l-Dín al-Fírúzábádí († 1414 A.D.), the author of the great Arabic lexicon entitled *al-Qámús*; Jalálu 'l-Dín al-Suyúṭí († 1445 A.D.); and 'Abdu 'l-Wahháb al-Sha'rání († 1565 A.D.). From the last-named we learn that Ibnu 'l-'Arabí's opponents accused him of having asserted [1]—

(*a*) That the Muḥammadan confession of faith, "There is no god except God" (*lá iláha illa 'lláhu*), is mischievous.

(*b*) That nothing exists except God.

(*c*) That Pharaoh was a true believer.

(*d*) That the saint is superior to the apostle.

Ṣadru 'l-Dín of Qonya († 1273 A.D.), a famous pupil of Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, is reported to have said: "Our Shaykh, Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, had the power of uniting himself with the spirit of any of the Prophets or Saints of old, in three ways: if God willed, he drew down the spirituality of the holy personage into this world and possessed him corporeally in an ideal form, resembling the sensible and temporal form which he had in life; or if God willed, he summoned him to His presence during sleep; or if God willed, he became disembodied and united himself with Him." [2]

Ibnu 'l-'Arabí appears to have set his face against the extreme pantheistic tendencies which characterise Persian Ṣúfiism. With all his marvellous visions and revelations, his prophetic enthusiasm, and a luxuriant fancy which delighted in Pythagorean theories of numbers and letters, he did not allow himself to forget that the human and Divine natures are essentially different: even Muḥammad, as he points out, remained at two bow-lengths' distance from God.[3] The true union is

[1] *Yawáqít* (Cairo, 1277 A.H.), p. 15 seq.

[2] *J.R.A.S.* for 1906, p. 816.

[3] On the occasion of the Prophet's Night-Journey to Heaven (which is called by Moslems his *Mi'ráj*, or 'Ascension') "*he approached and drew nigh until he was at the distance of two bow-lengths or nearer*" (Kor. liii, 8–9). These words in their original context do not refer to Muḥammad, although they are frequently applied to him by Ṣúfí writers.

one of will, not of essence. He illustrates this by the following apologue :—

"A diver essayed to bring to shore the red jacinth of Deity hidden in its resplendent shell, but he emerged from that ocean empty-handed, with broken arms, blind, dumb, and dazed. When he regained his breath and when his senses were no longer obscured, he was asked, "What hath disturbed thee, and what is this thing that hath befallen thee?" He answered, "Far is that which ye seek! Remote is that which ye desire! None ever attained unto God, and neither spirit nor body conceived the knowledge of Him. He is the Glorious One who is never reached, the Being who possesses but is not possessed. Inasmuch as before His attributes the mind is distraught and the reason totters, how can they attain to His very essence?" [1]

As I have said, however, it would be rash to make positive statements regarding Ibnu 'l-'Arabí's theosophy without more evidence than is yet available. His true character is equally in suspense. Perhaps he was a charlatan to some extent, but the genuineness of his enthusiasm cannot, I think, be questioned. The title of 'The Grand Master' (*al-Shaykh al-Akbar*), by which he is commonly designated, bears witness to his acknowledged supremacy in the world of Arabian mysticism. In Persia and Turkey his influence has been enormous, and through his pupil, Ṣadru 'l-Dín of Qonya, he is linked with the greatest of all Ṣúfí poets, Jalálu 'l-Dín Rúmí, the author of the *Mathnawí*, who died some thirty years after him.

[1] See Fleischer, *op. cit.*, p. 493.

CHAPTER IX

THE ARABS IN EUROPE

It will be remembered that before the end of the first century of the Hijra, in the reign of the Umayyad Caliph, Walíd b. ʿAbd al-Malik (705–715 A.D.), the Moslems under Ṭáriq and Músá b. Nuṣayr, crossed the Mediterranean, and having defeated Roderic the Goth in a great battle near Cadiz, rapidly brought the whole of Spain into subjection. The fate of the new province was long doubtful. The Berber insurrection which raged in Africa (734–742 A.D.) spread to Spain and threatened to exterminate the handful of Arab colonists; and no sooner was this danger past than the victors began to rekindle the old feuds and jealousies which they had inherited from their ancestors of Qays and Kalb. Once more the rival factions of Syria and Yemen flew to arms, and the land was plunged in anarchy.

ʿAbdu 'l-Raḥmán, the Umayyad.

Meanwhile ʿAbdu 'l-Raḥmán b. Muʿáwiya, a grandson of the Caliph Hishám, had escaped from the general massacre with which the ʿAbbásids celebrated their triumph over the House of Umayya, and after five years of wandering adventure, accompanied only by his faithful freedman, Badr, had reached the neighbourhood of Ceuta, where he found a precarious shelter with the Berber tribes. Young, ambitious, and full of confidence in his destiny, ʿAbdu 'l-Raḥmán conceived the bold plan of

throwing himself into Spain and of winning a kingdom with the help of the Arabs, amongst whom, as he well knew, there were many clients of his own family. Accordingly in 755 A.D. he sent Badr across the sea on a secret mission. The envoy accomplished even more than was expected of him. To gain over the clients was easy, for 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán was their natural chief, and in the event of his success they would share with him the prize. Their number, however, was comparatively small. The pretender could not hope to achieve anything unless he were supported by one of the great parties, Syrians or Yemenites. At this time the former, led by the feeble governor, Yúsuf b. 'Abd al-Raḥmán al-Fihrí, and his cruel but capable lieutenant, Ṣumayl b. Ḥátim, held the reins of power and were pursuing their adversaries with ruthless ferocity. The Yemenites, therefore, hastened to range themselves on the side of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán, not that they loved his cause, but inspired solely by the prospect of taking a bloody vengeance upon the Syrians. These Spanish Moslems belonged to the true Bedouin stock!

A few months later 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán landed in Spain, occupied Seville, and, routing Yúsuf and Ṣumayl under the walls of Cordova, made himself master of the capital. On the same evening he presided, as Governor of Spain, over the citizens assembled for public worship in the great Mosque (May, 756 A.D.).

During his long reign of thirty-two years 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán was busily employed in defending and consolidating the empire which more than once seemed to be on the point of slipping from his grasp. The task before him was arduous in the extreme. On the one hand, he was confronted by the unruly Arab aristocracy, jealous of their independence and regarding the monarch as their common foe. Between him and them no permanent compromise was possible, and since they could only be kept in check by an armed force stronger

than themselves, he was compelled to rely on mercenaries, for the most part Berbers imported from Africa. Thus, by a fatal necessity the Moslem Empire in the West gradually assumed that despotic and Prætorian character which we have learned to associate with the 'Abbásid Government in the period of its decline, and the results were in the end hardly less disastrous. The monarchy had also to reckon with the fanaticism of its Christian subjects and with a formidable Spanish national party eager to throw off the foreign yoke. Extraordinary energy and tact were needed to maintain authority over these explosive elements, and if the dynasty founded by 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán not only survived for two centuries and a half but gave to Spain a more splendid era of prosperity and culture than she had ever enjoyed, the credit is mainly due to the bold adventurer from whom even his enemies could not withhold a tribute of admiration. One day, it is said, the Caliph Manṣúr asked his courtiers, "Who is the Falcon of Quraysh?" They replied, "O Prince of the Faithful, that title belongs to you who have vanquished mighty kings and have put an end to civil war." "No," said the Caliph, "it is not I." "Mu'áwiya, then, or 'Abdu 'l-Malik?" "No," said Manṣúr, "the Falcon of Quraysh is 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán b. Mu'áwiya, he who traversed alone the deserts of Asia and Africa, and without an army to aid him sought his fortune in an unknown country beyond the sea. With no weapons except judgment and resolution he subdued his enemies, crushed the rebels, secured his frontiers, and founded a great empire. Such a feat was never achieved by any one before."[1]

Of the Moslems in Spain the Arabs formed only a small minority, and they, moreover, showed all the indifference towards religion and contempt for the laws of Islam

[1] Abridged from Ibnu 'l-'Idhárí, *al-Bayán al-Mughrib*, ed. by Dozy, vol. ii, p. 61 seq.

which might be expected from men imbued with Bedouin traditions whose forbears had been devotedly attached to the world-loving Umayyads of Damascus. It was otherwise with the Spanish converts, the so-called 'Renegades' or *Muwalladún* (Affiliati) living as clients under protection of the Arab nobility, and with the Berbers. These races took their adopted religion very seriously, in accordance with the fervid and sombre temperament which has always distinguished them. Hence among the mass of Spanish Moslems a rigorous orthodoxy prevailed. The Berber, Yaḥyá b. Yaḥyá († 849 A.D.), is a typical figure.

Islam in Spain.

Yaḥya b. Yaḥyá.

At the age of twenty-eight years he travelled to the East and studied under Málik. b Anas, who dictated to him his celebrated work known as the *Muwaṭṭa'*. Yaḥyá was one day at Málik's lecture with a number of fellow-students, when some one said, "Here comes the elephant!" All of them ran out to see the animal, but Yaḥyá did not stir. "Why," said Málik, "do you not go out and look at it? Such animals are not to be seen in Spain." To this Yaḥyá replied, "I left my country for the purpose of seeing you and obtaining knowledge under your guidance. I did not come here to see the elephant." Málik was so pleased with this answer that he called him the most intelligent (*'áqil*) of the people of Spain. On his return to Spain Yaḥyá exerted himself to spread the doctrines of his master, and though he obstinately refused, on religious grounds, to accept any public office, his influence and reputation were such that, as Ibn Ḥazm says, no Cadi was ever appointed till Yaḥyá had given his opinion and designated the person whom he preferred.[1] Thus the Málikite system, based on close adherence to tradition, became the law of the land. "The Spaniards," it is observed by a learned writer of the tenth century, "recognise only the Koran and the

[1] Ibn Khallikán, ed. by Wüstenfeld, No. 802; De Slane's translation, vol. iv, p. 29 sqq.

Muwaṭṭa'; if they find a follower of Abú Ḥanífa or Sháfi'í, they banish him from Spain, and if they meet with a Mu'tazilite or a Shí'ite or any one of that sort, they often put him to death."[1] Arrogant, intensely bigoted, and ambitious of power, the Muḥammadan clergy were not disposed to play a subordinate rôle in the State. In Hishám (788–796 A.D.), the successor of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán, they had a prince after their own heart, whose piety and devotion to their interests left nothing to be desired. Ḥakam (796–822 A.D.) was less complaisant. He honoured and respected the clergy, but at the same time he let them see that he would not permit them to interfere in political affairs. The malcontents, headed by the fiery Yaḥyá b. Yaḥyá, replied with menaces and insults, and called on the populace of Cordova—especially the 'Renegades' in the southern quarter (*rabaḍ*) of the city—to rise against the tyrant and his insolent soldiery. One day in Ramaḍán, 198 A.H. (May, 814 A.D.), Ḥakam suddenly found himself cut off from the garrison and besieged in his palace by an infuriated mob, but he did not lose courage, and, thanks to his coolness and skilful strategy, he came safely out of the peril in which he stood. The revolutionary suburb was burned to the ground and those of its inhabitants who escaped massacre, some 60,000 souls, were driven into exile. The real culprits went unpunished. Ḥakam could not afford further to exasperate the divines, who on their part began to perceive that they might obtain from the prince by favour what they had failed to wring from him by force. Being mostly Arabs or Berbers, they had a strong claim to his consideration. Their power was soon restored, and in the reign of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán II (822–852 A.D.) Yaḥyá himself, the ringleader of the mutiny, directed ecclesiastical policy and dispensed judicial patronage as he pleased.

The Revolt of the Suburb.

[1] Muqaddasí (ed. by De Goeje), p. 236, cited by Goldziher, *Die Zâhiriten* p. 114.

The Revolt of the Suburb was only an episode in the long and sanguinary struggle between the Spaniards, Moslem or Christian, on the one hand, and the monarchy of Cordova on the other—a struggle complicated by the rival Arab tribes, which sometimes patched up their own feuds in order to defend themselves against the Spanish patriots, but never in any circumstances gave their support to the detested Umayyad Government. The hero of this war of independence was 'Umar b. Ḥafṣún. He belonged to a noble family of West-Gothic origin which had gone over to Islam and settled in the mountainous district north-east of Malaga. Hot-blooded, quarrelsome, and ready to stab on the slightest provocation, the young man soon fell into trouble. At first he took shelter in the wild fastnesses of Ronda, where he lived as a brigand until he was captured by the police. He then crossed the sea to Africa, but in a short time returned to his old haunts and put himself at the head of a band of robbers. Here he held out for two years, when, having been obliged to surrender, he accepted the proposal of the Sultan of Cordova that he and his companions should enlist in the Imperial army. But 'Umar was destined for greater glory than the Sultan could confer upon him. A few contemptuous words from a superior officer touched his pride to the quick, so one fine day he galloped off with all his men in the direction of Ronda. They found an almost impregnable retreat in the castle of Bobastro, which had once been a Roman fortress. From this moment, says Dozy, 'Umar b. Ḥafṣún was no longer a brigand-chief, but leader of the whole Spanish race in the south. The lawless and petulant free-lance was transformed into a high-minded patriot, celebrated for the stern justice with which he punished the least act of violence, adored by his soldiers, and regarded by his countrymen as the champion of the national cause. During the rest of his life (884–917 A.D.) he conducted the guerilla with untiring energy and made himself a terror to the

'Umar b. Ḥafṣún.

Arabs, but fortune deserted him at the last, and he died—*felix opportunitate mortis*—only a few years before complete ruin overtook his party. The Moslem Spaniards, whose enthusiasm had been sensibly weakened by their leader's conversion to Christianity, were the more anxious to make their peace with the Government, since they saw plainly the hopelessness of continuing the struggle.

In 912 A.D. 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III, the Defender of the Faith (*al-Náṣir li-díni 'lláh*), succeeded his grandfather, the Amír 'Abdulláh, on the throne of Cordova. The character, genius, and enterprise of this great monarch are strikingly depicted in the following passage from the pen of an eloquent historian whose work, although it was published some fifty years ago, will always be authoritative[1] :—

'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III (912–961 A.D.).

"Amongst the Umayyad sovereigns who have ruled Spain the first place belongs incontestably to 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III. What he accomplished was almost miraculous. He had found the empire abandoned to anarchy and civil war, rent by factions, parcelled amongst a multitude of heterogeneous princes, exposed to incessant attacks from the Christians of the north, and on the eve of being swallowed up either by the Léonnese or the Africans. In spite of innumerable obstacles he had saved Spain both from herself and from the foreign domination. He had endowed her with new life and made her greater and stronger than she had ever been. He had given her order and prosperity at home, consideration and respect abroad. The public treasury, which he had found in a deplorable condition, was now overflowing. Of the Imperial revenues, which amounted annually to 6,245,000 pieces of gold, a third sufficed for ordinary expenses; a third was held in reserve, and 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán devoted the remainder to his buildings. It was calculated that in the year 951 he had in his coffers the enormous sum of 20,000,000 pieces of gold, so that a traveller not without judgment in matters of finance assures us that 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán and the Ḥamdánid (Náṣiru 'l-Dawla), who was then reigning over Mesopotamia, were the wealthiest princes of that epoch. The state of the country was in

[1] Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne* (Leyden, 1861), vol. iii, p. 90 sqq.

keeping with the prosperous condition of the treasury. Agriculture, industry, commerce, the arts and the sciences, all flourished. . . . Cordova, with its half-million inhabitants, its three thousand mosques, its superb palaces, its hundred and thirteen thousand houses, its three hundred bagnios, and its twenty-eight suburbs, was inferior in extent and splendour only to Baghdád, with which city the Cordovans loved to compare it. . . . The power of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán was formidable. A magnificent fleet enabled him to dispute with the Fáṭimids the empire of the Mediterranean, and secured him in the possession of Ceuta, the key of Mauritania. A numerous and well-disciplined army, perhaps the finest in the world, gave him superiority over the Christians of the north. The proudest sovereigns solicited his alliance. The emperor of Constantinople, the kings of Germany, Italy, and France sent ambassadors to him.

"Assuredly, these were brilliant results; but what excites our astonishment and admiration when we study this glorious reign is not so much the work as the workman: it is the might of that comprehensive intelligence which nothing escaped, and which showed itself no less admirable in the minutest details than in the loftiest conceptions. This subtle and sagacious man, who centralises, who founds the unity of the nation and of the monarchy, who by means of his alliances establishes a sort of political equilibrium, who in his large tolerance calls the professors of another religion into his councils, is a modern king rather than a mediæval Caliph."[1]

In short, 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III made the Spanish Moslems one people, and formed out of Arabs and Spaniards a united Andalusian nation, which, as we shall presently see, advanced with incredible swiftness to a height of culture that was the envy of Europe and was not exceeded by any contemporary State in the Muḥammadan East. With his death, however, the decline of the Umayyad dynasty began. His son, Ḥakam II († 976 A.D.), left as heir-apparent a boy eleven years old, Hishám II, who received the title of Caliph while the government was carried on by his mother Aurora and the ambitious minister Muḥammad b. Abí 'Ámir. The latter was virtually monarch of Spain, and whatever may be thought of the means by which he rose to eminence, or of his treatment of the unfortunate Caliph whose

Regency of Manṣúr Ibn Abí 'Ámir (976–1002 A.D.).

[1] 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III was the first of his line to assume this title.

mental faculties he deliberately stunted and whom he condemned to a life of monkish seclusion, it is impossible to deny that he ruled well and nobly. He was a great statesman and a great soldier. No one could accuse him of making an idle boast when he named himself 'Al-Manṣúr' ('The Victorious'). Twice every year he was accustomed to lead his army against the Christians, and such was the panic which he inspired that in the course of more than fifty campaigns he scarcely ever lost a battle. He died in 1002 A.D. A Christian monk, recording the event in his chronicle, adds, "he was buried in Hell," but Moslem hands engraved the following lines upon the tomb of their champion :—

> "His story in his relics you may trace,
> As tho' he stood before you face to face.
> Never will Time bring forth his peer again,
> Nor one to guard, like him, the gaps of Spain."[1]

His demise left the Prætorians masters of the situation. Berbers and Slaves[2] divided the kingdom between them, and

[1] Maqqarí, vol. i, p. 259. As Maqqarí's work is our principal authority for the literary history of Moslem Spain, I may conveniently give some account of it in this place. The author, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Tilimsáni al-Maqqarí († 1632 A.D.) wrote a biography of Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb, the famous Vizier of Granada, to which he prefixed a long and discursive introduction in eight chapters : (1) Description of Spain ; (2) Conquest of Spain by the Arabs ; (3) History of the Spanish dynasties ; (4) Cordova ; (5) Spanish-Arabian scholars who travelled in the East ; (6) Orientals who visited Spain ; (7) Miscellaneous extracts, anecdotes, poetical citations, &c., bearing on the literary history of Spain ; (8) Reconquest of Spain by the Christians and expulsion of the Arabs. The whole work is entitled *Nafḥu 'l-Ṭíb min ghuṣni 'l-Andalusi 'l-raṭíb wa-dhikri wazíriha Lisáni 'l-Dín Ibni 'l-Khaṭíb.* The introduction, which contains a fund of curious and valuable information—"a library in little"—has been edited by Dozy and other European Arabists under the title of *Analectes sur l'Histoire et la Littérature des Arabes d'Espagne* (Leyden, 1855–1861).

[2] The name of Slaves (*Ṣaqáliba*) was originally applied to prisoners of war, belonging to various northern races, who were sold to the Arabs of Spain, but the term was soon widened so as to include all foreign slaves serving in the harem or the army, without regard to their nationality. Like the Mamelukes and Janissaries, they formed a privileged corps under the

amidst revolution and civil war the Umayyad dynasty passed away (1031 A.D.).

It has been said with truth that the history of Spain in the eleventh century bears a close resemblance to that of Italy in the fifteenth. The splendid empire of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III was broken up, and from its ruins there emerged a fortuitous conglomeration of petty states governed by successful condottieri. Of these Party Kings (*Mulúku 'l-Ṭawá'if*), as they are called by Muḥammadan writers, the most powerful were the 'Abbádids of Seville. Although it was an age of political decay, the material prosperity of Spain had as yet suffered little diminution, whilst in point of culture the society of this time reached a level hitherto unequalled. Here, then, we may pause for a moment to review the progress of literature and science during the most fruitful period of the Moslem occupation of European soil.

The Party Kings (*Mulúku 'l-Ṭawá'if*).

Whilst in Asia, as we have seen, the Arab conquerors yielded to the spell of an ancient culture infinitely superior to their own, they no sooner crossed the Straits of Gibraltar than the rôles were reversed. As the invaders extended their conquests to every part of the peninsula, thousands of Christians fell into their hands, who generally continued to live under Moslem protection. They were well treated by the Government, enjoyed religious liberty, and often rose to high offices in the army or at court. Many of them became rapidly imbued with Moslem civilisation, so that as early as the middle of the ninth century we find Alvaro, Bishop of Cordova, complaining that his co-religionists read the poems and romances of the Arabs, and studied the writings of Muḥammadan theologians and philosophers, not in

Influence of Arabic culture on the Spaniards.

patronage of the palace, and since the reign of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III their number and influence had steadily increased. *Cf.* Dozy, *Hist. des Mus. d'Espagne*, vol. iii, p. 58 sqq.

order to refute them but to learn how to express themselves in Arabic with correctness and elegance. "Where," he asks, "can any one meet nowadays with a layman who reads the Latin commentaries on the Holy Scriptures? Who studies the Gospels, the Prophets, the Apostles? Alas, all young Christians of conspicuous talents are acquainted only with the language and writings of the Arabs; they read and study Arabic books with the utmost zeal, spend immense sums of money in collecting them for their libraries, and proclaim everywhere that this literature is admirable. On the other hand, if you talk with them of Christian books, they reply contemptuously that these books are not worth their notice. Alas, the Christians have forgotten their own language, and amongst thousands of us scarce one is to be found who can write a tolerable Latin letter to a friend; whereas very many are capable of expressing themselves exquisitely in Arabic and of composing poems in that tongue with even greater skill than the Arabs themselves." [1]

However the good bishop may have exaggerated, it is evident that Muḥammadan culture had a strong attraction for the Spanish Christians, and equally, let us add, for the Jews, who made numerous contributions to poetry, philosophy, and science in their native speech as well as in the kindred Arabic idiom. The 'Renegades,' or Spanish converts to Islam, became completely Arabicised in the course of a few generations; and from this class sprang some of the chief ornaments of Spanish-Arabian literature.

The poetry of the Spanish Arabs.

Considered as a whole, the poetry of the Moslems in Europe shows the same characteristics which have already been noted in the work of their Eastern contemporaries. The paralysing conventions from which the laureates of Baghdád and Aleppo could not emancipate themselves remained in full force at Cordova and

[1] Dozy, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 103 seq.

Seville. Yet, just as Arabic poetry in the East was modified by the influences of Persian culture, in Spain also the gradual amalgamation of Aryans with Semites introduced new elements which have left their mark on the literature of both races. Perhaps the most interesting features of Spanish-Arabian poetry are the tenderly romantic feeling which not infrequently appears in the love-songs, a feeling that sometimes anticipates the attitude of mediæval chivalry; and in the second place an almost modern sensibility to the beauties of nature. On account of these characteristics the poems in question appeal to many European readers who do not easily enter into the spirit of the *Mu'allaqát* or the odes of Mutanabbí, and if space allowed it would be a pleasant task to translate some of the charming lyric and descriptive pieces which have been collected by anthologists. The omission, however, is less grave inasmuch as Von Schack has given us a series of excellent versions in his *Poesie und Kunst der Araber in Spanien and Sicilien* (2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1877).

"One of its marvels," says Qazwíní, referring to the town of Shilb (Silves) in Portugal, "is the fact, which innumerable persons have mentioned, that the people living there, with few exceptions, are makers of verse and devoted to belles-lettres; and if you passed by a labourer standing behind his plough and asked him to recite some verses, he would at once improvise on any subject that you might demand."[1] Of such folk-songs the *zajal* and *muwashshaḥ* were favourite types.[2] Both forms were invented in Spain, and their structure is very similar, consisting of several stanzas in which the rhymes are so arranged that the master-rhyme ending each stanza and running through the whole poem like a refrain is continually interrupted by a various succession of subordinate rhymes, as is shown in the following scheme :—

Folk-songs.

[1] Qazwíní, *Áthár 'l-Bilád*, ed. by Wüstenfeld, p. 364, l. 5 sqq.

[2] See Schack, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 46 sqq.

aa
bbba
ccca
ddda.

Many of these songs and ballads were composed in the vulgar dialect and without regard to the rules of classical prosody. The troubadour Ibn Quzmán († 1160 A.D.) first raised the *zajal* to literary rank. Here is an example of the *muwashshaḥ* :—

"Come, hand the precious cup to me,
And brim it high with a golden sea!
Let the old wine circle from guest to guest,
While the bubbles gleam like pearls on its breast,
So that night is of darkness dispossessed.
How it foams and twinkles in fiery glee!
'Tis drawn from the Pleiads' cluster, perdie.

Pass it, to music's melting sound,
Here on this flowery carpet round,
Where gentle dews refresh the ground
And bathe my limbs deliciously
In their cool and balmy fragrancy.

Alone with me in the garden green
A singing-girl enchants the scene:
Her smile diffuses a radiant sheen.
I cast off shame, for no spy can see,
And 'Hola,' I cry, 'let us merry be!'"[1]

True to the traditions of their family, the Spanish Umayyads loved poetry, music, and polite literature a great deal better than the Koran. Even the Falcon of Quraysh, 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán I, if the famous verses on the Palm-tree are really by him, concealed something of the softer graces under his grim exterior. It is

Verses by 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán I.

[1] The Arabic original occurs in the 11th chapter of the *Ḥalbatu 'l-Kumayt*, a collection of poems on wine and drinking by Muḥammad b. Ḥasan al-Nawáji († 1455 A.D.), and is also printed in the *Anthologie Arabe* of Grangeret de Lagrange, p. 202.

said that in his gardens at Cordova there was a solitary date-palm, which had been transplanted from Syria, and that one day 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán, as he gazed upon it, remembered his native land and felt the bitterness of exile and exclaimed :—

"O Palm, thou art a stranger in the West,
Far from thy Orient home, like me unblest.
Weep ! But thou canst not. Dumb, dejected tree,
Thou art not made to sympathise with me.
Ah, thou wouldst weep, if thou hadst tears to pour,
For thy companions on Euphrates' shore ;
But yonder tall groves thou rememberest not,
As I, in hating foes, have my old friends forgot." [1]

Ziryáb the musician.

At the court of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán II (822–852 A.D.) a Persian musician was prime favourite. This was Ziryáb, a client of the Caliph Mahdí and a pupil of the celebrated singer, Isḥáq al-Mawṣilí.[2] Isḥáq, seeing in the young man a dangerous rival to himself, persuaded him to quit Baghdád and seek his fortune in Spain. 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán received him with open arms, gave him a magnificent house and princely salary, and bestowed upon him every mark of honour imaginable. The versatile and accomplished artist wielded a vast influence. He set the fashion in all things appertaining to taste and manners; he fixed the toilette, sanctioned the cuisine, and prescribed what dress should be worn in the different seasons of the year. The kings of Spain took him as a model, and his authority was constantly invoked and universally recognised in that country down to the last days of Moslem rule.[3] Ziryáb was only one

[1] *Al-Ḥullat al-Siyará* of Ibnu 'l-Abbár, ed. by Dozy, p. 34. In the last line instead of "foes" the original has "the sons of 'Abbás." Other verses addressed by 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán to this palm-tree are cited by Maqqarí, vol. ii, p. 37.

[2] Full details concerning Ziryáb will be found in Maqqarí, vol. ii, p. 83 sqq. *Cf.* Dozy, *Hist. des Mus. d'Espagne*, vol. ii, p. 89 sqq.

[3] Maqqari, *loc. cit.*, p. 87, l. 10 sqq.

of many talented and learned men who came to Spain from the East, while the list of Spanish savants who journeyed "in quest of knowledge" (*fí ṭalabi 'l-'ilm*) to Africa and Egypt, to the Holy Cities of Arabia, to the great capitals of Syria and 'Iráq, to Khurásán, Transoxania, and in some cases even to China, includes, as may be seen from the perusal of Maqqarí's fifth chapter, nearly all the eminent scholars and men of letters whom Moslem Spain has produced. Thus a lively exchange of ideas was continually in movement, and so little provincialism existed that famous Andalusian poets, like Ibn Hání and Ibn Zaydún, are described by admiring Eastern critics as the Buḥturís and Mutanabbís of the West.

The tenth century of the Christian era is a fortunate and illustrious period in Spanish history. Under 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III and his successor, Ḥakam II, the nation, hitherto torn asunder by civil war, bent its united energies to the advancement of material and intellectual culture. Ḥakam was an enthusiastic bibliophile. He sent his agents in every direction to purchase manuscripts, and collected 400,000 volumes in his palace, which was thronged with librarians, copyists, and bookbinders. All these books, we are told, he had himself read, and he annotated most of them with his own hand. His munificence to scholars knew no bounds. He made a present of 1,000 dínárs to Abu 'l-Faraj of Iṣfahán, in order to secure the first copy that was published of the great 'Book of Songs' (*Kitábu 'l-Aghání*), on which the author was then engaged. Besides honouring and encouraging the learned, Ḥakam took measures to spread the benefits of education amongst the poorest of his subjects. With this view he founded twenty-seven free schools in the capital and paid the teachers out of his private purse. Whilst in Christian Europe the rudiments of learning were confined to the clergy, in Spain almost every one could read and write.

The Library of Ḥakam II.

"The University of Cordova was at that time one of the most celebrated in the world. In the principal Mosque, where the lectures were held, Abú Bakr b. Mu'áwiya, the Qurayshite, discussed the Traditions relating to Muḥammad. Abú 'Alí al-Qálí of Baghdád dictated a large and excellent miscellany which contained an immense quantity of curious information concerning the ancient Arabs, their proverbs, their language, and their poetry. This collection he afterwards published under the title of *Amálí*, or 'Dictations.' Grammar was taught by Ibnu 'l-Qúṭiyya, who, in the opinion of Abú 'Alí al-Qálí, was the leading grammarian of Spain. Other sciences had representatives no less renowned. Accordingly the students attending the classes were reckoned by thousands. The majority were students of what was called *fiqh*, that is to say, theology and law, for that science then opened the way to the most lucrative posts." [1]

The University of Cordova.

Among the notable savants of this epoch we may mention Ibn 'Abdi Rabbihi († 940 A.D.), laureate of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III and author of a well-known anthology entitled *al-'Iqd al-Farid*; the poet Ibn Hání of Seville († 973 A.D.), an Ismá'ílí convert who addressed blasphemous panegyrics to the Fáṭimid Caliph Mu'izz; [2] the historians of Spain, Abú Bakr al-Rází († 937 A.D.), whose family belonged to Rayy in Persia, and Ibnu 'l-Qúṭiyya († 977 A.D.), who, as his name indicates, was the descendant of a Gothic princess; the astronomer and mathematician Maslama b. Aḥmad of Madrid († 1007 A.D.); and the great surgeon Abu 'l-Qásim al-Zahráwí of Cordova, who died about the same time, and who became known to Europe by the name of Albucasis.

The fall of the Spanish Umayyads, which took place in the first half of the eleventh century, left Cordova a republic and a merely provincial town; and though she might still claim to be regarded as the literary metropolis of Spain, her ancient glories were overshadowed by the independent dynasties which

[1] Dozy *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne*, vol. iii, p. 107 sqq.
[2] See the verses cited by Ibnu 'l-Athír, vol. viii, p. 457.

now begin to flourish in Seville, Almeria, Badajoz, Granada, Toledo, Malaga, Valencia, and other cities. Of these rival princedoms the most formidable in arms and the most brilliant in its cultivation of the arts was, beyond question, the family of the 'Abbádids, who reigned in Seville. The foundations of their power were laid by the Cadi Abu 'l-Qásim Muḥammad. "He acted towards the people with such justice and moderation as drew on him the attention of every eye and the love of every heart," so that the office of chief magistrate was willingly conceded to him. In order to obtain the monarchy which he coveted, the Cadi employed an audacious ruse. The last Umayyad Caliph, Hishám II, had vanished mysteriously: it was generally supposed that, after escaping from Cordova when that city was stormed by the Berbers (1013 A.D.), he fled to Asia and died unknown; but many believed that he was still alive. Twenty years after his disappearance there suddenly arose a pretender, named Khalaf, who gave out that he was the Caliph Hishám. The likeness between them was strong enough to make the imposture plausible. At any rate, the Cadi had his own reasons for abetting it. He called on the people, who were deeply attached to the Umayyad dynasty, to rally round their legitimate sovereign. Cordova and several other States recognised the authority of this pseudo-Caliph, whom Abu 'l-Qásim used as a catspaw. His son 'Abbád, a treacherous and bloodthirsty tyrant, but an amateur of belles-lettres, threw off the mask and reigned under the title of al-Mu'taḍid (1042–1069 A.D.). He in turn was succeeded by his son, al-Mu'tamid, whose strange and romantic history reminds one of a sentence frequently occurring in the *Arabian Nights*: "Were it graven with needle-gravers upon the eye-corners, it were a warner to whoso would be warned." He is described as "the most liberal, the most hospitable, the most munificent, and the most powerful of all the princes who ruled in Spain. His court was the halting-place of travellers, the rendezvous

The 'Abbádids (1023–1091 A.D.).

of poets, the point to which all hopes were directed, and the haunt of men of talent."[1] Mu'tamid himself was a poet of rare distinction. "He left," says Ibn Bassám, "some pieces of verse beautiful as the bud when it opens to disclose the flower; and had the like been composed by persons who made of poetry a profession and a merchandise, they would still have been considered charming, admirable, and singularly original."[2] Numberless anecdotes are told of Mu'tamid's luxurious life at Seville: his evening rambles along the banks of the Guadalquivir; his parties of pleasure; his adventures when he sallied forth in disguise, accompanied by his Vizier, the poet Ibn 'Ammár, into the streets of the sleeping city; and his passion for the slave-girl I'timád, commonly known as Rumaykiyya, whom he loved all his life with constant devotion.

Mu'tamid of Seville (1069–1091 A.D.).

Meanwhile, however, a terrible catastrophe was approaching. The causes which led up to it are related by Ibn Khallikán as follows[3]:—

"At that time Alphonso VI, the son of Ferdinand, the sovereign of Castile and king of the Spanish Franks, had become so powerful that the petty Moslem princes were obliged to make peace with him and pay him tribute. Mu'tamid Ibn 'Abbád surpassed all the rest in greatness of power and extent of empire, yet he also paid tribute to Alphonso. After capturing Toledo (May 29, 1085 A.D.) the Christian monarch sent him a threatening message with the demand that he should surrender his fortresses; on which condition he might retain the open country as his own. These words provoked Mu'tamid to such a degree that he struck the ambassador and put to death all those who accompanied him.[4] Alphonso, who was marching on Cordova,

The Almoravides in Spain.

[1] Ibn Khallikán, No. 697; De Slane's translation, vol. iii, p. 186.

[2] Ibn Khallikán, *loc. cit.*

[3] *Loc. cit.*, p. 189. For the sake of clearness I have slightly abridged and otherwise remodelled De Slane's translation of this passage.

[4] A somewhat different version of these events is given by Dozy, *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne*, vol. iv, p. 189 sqq.

no sooner received intelligence of this event than he returned to Toledo in order to provide machines for the siege of Seville. When the Shaykhs and doctors of Islam were informed of this project they assembled and said: 'Behold how the Moslem cities fall into the hands of the Franks whilst our sovereigns are engaged in warfare against each other! If things continue in this state the Franks will subdue the entire country.' They then went to the Cadi (of Cordova), 'Abdulláh b. Muḥammad b. Adham, and conferred with him on the disasters which had befallen the Moslems and on the means by which they might be remedied. Every person had something to say, but it was finally resolved that they should write to Abú Ya'qúb Yúsuf b. Táshifín, the king of the *Mulaththamún*[1] and sovereign of Morocco, imploring his assistance. The Cadi then waited on Mu'tamid, and informed him of what had passed. Mu'tamid concurred with them on the expediency of such an application, and told the Cadi to bear the message himself to Yúsuf b. Táshifín. A conference took place at Ceuta. Yúsuf recalled from the city of Morocco the troops which he had left there, and when all were mustered he sent them across to Spain, and followed with a body of 10,000 men. Mu'tamid, who had also assembled an army, went to meet him; and the Moslems, on hearing the news, hastened from every province for the purpose of combating the infidels. Alphonso, who was then at Toledo, took the field with 40,000 horse, exclusive of other troops which came to join him. He wrote a long and threatening letter to Yúsuf b. Táshifín, who inscribed on the back of it these words: '*What will happen thou shalt see!*' and returned it. On reading the answer Alphonso was filled with apprehension, and observed that this was a man of resolution. The two armies met at Zalláqa, near Badajoz. The Moslems gained the victory, and Alphonso fled with a few others, after witnessing the complete destruction of his army. This year was adopted in Spain as the commencement of a new era, and was called the year of Zalláqa."

Battle of Zalláqa (October 23, 1086 A.D.).

Mu'tamid soon perceived that he had "dug his own grave" —to quote the words used by himself a few years afterwards— when he sought aid from the perfidious Almoravide. Yúsuf

[1] The term *Mulaththamún*, which means literally 'wearers of the *liṯhám*' (a veil covering the lower part of the face), is applied to the Berber tribes of the Sahara, the so-called Almoravides (*al-Murábiṭún*), who at this time ruled over Northern Africa.

could not but contrast the beauty, riches, and magnificent resources of Spain with the barren deserts and rude civilisation of Africa. He was not content to admire at a distance the enchanting view which had been dangled before him. In the following year he returned to Spain and took possession of Granada. He next proceeded to pick a quarrel with Mu'tamid. The Berber army laid siege to Seville, and although Mu'tamid displayed the utmost bravery, he was unable to prevent the fall of his capital (September, 1091 A.D.). The unfortunate prince was thrown into chains and transported to Morocco. Yúsuf spared his life, but kept him a prisoner at Aghmát, where he died in 1095 A.D. During his captivity he bewailed in touching poems the misery of his state, the sufferings which he and his family had to endure, and the tragic doom which suddenly deprived him of friends, fortune, and power. "Every one loves Mu'tamid," wrote an historian of the thirteenth century, "every one pities him, and even now he is lamented."[1] He deserved no less, for, as Dozy remarks, he was "the last Spanish-born king (*le dernier roi indigène*), who represented worthily, nay, brilliantly, a nationality and culture which succumbed, or barely survived, under the dominion of barbarian invaders."[2]

Captivity and death of Mu'tamid.

The Age of the Tyrants, to borrow from Greek history a designation which well describes the character of this period, yields to no other in literary and scientific renown. Poetry was cultivated at every Andalusian court. If Seville could point with just pride to Mu'tamid and his Vizier, Ibn 'Ammár, Cordova claimed a second pair almost equally illustrious—Ibn Zaydún (1003–1071 A.D.) and Walláda, a daughter of the Umayyad Caliph al-Mustakfí. Ibn Zaydún entered upon a political career and became the confidential agent of Ibn Jahwar, the chief

Ibn Zaydún.

[1] Ibnu 'l-Abbár (Dozy, *Loci de Abbadidis*, vol. ii, p. 63).
[2] *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne*, vol. iv, p. 287.

magistrate of Cordova, but he fell into disgrace, probably on account of his love for the beautiful and talented princess, who inspired those tender melodies which have caused the poet's European biographers to link his name with Tibullus and Petrarch. In the hope of seeing her, although he durst not show himself openly, he lingered in al-Zahrá, the royal suburb of Cordova built by 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán III. At last, after many wanderings, he found a home at Seville, where he was cordially received by Mu'taḍid, who treated him as an intimate friend and bestowed on him the title of *Dhu 'l-Wizáratayn*.[1] The following verses, which he addressed to Walláda, depict the lovely scenery of al-Zahrá and may serve to illustrate the deep feeling for nature which, as has been said, is characteristic of Spanish-Arabian poetry in general.[2]

"To-day my longing thoughts recall thee here;
The landscape glitters, and the sky is clear.
So feebly breathes the gentle zephyr's gale,
In pity of my grief it seems to fail.
The silvery fountains laugh, as from a girl's
Fair throat a broken necklace sheds its pearls.
Oh, 'tis a day like those of our sweet prime,
When, stealing pleasures from indulgent Time,
We played midst flowers of eye-bewitching hue,
That bent their heads beneath the drops of dew.
Alas, they see me now bereaved of sleep;
They share my passion and with me they weep.
Here in her sunny haunt the rose blooms bright,
Adding new lustre to Aurora's light;
And waked by morning beams, yet languid still,
The rival lotus doth his perfume spill.

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[1] *I.e.*, 'holder of the two vizierships'—that of the sword and that of the pen. See De Slane's translation of Ibn Khallikán, vol. iii, p. 130, n. 1.

[2] The Arabic text of this poem, which occurs in the *Qalá'idu 'l-'Iqyán* of Ibn Kháqán, will be found on pp. 24–25 of Weyers's *Specimen criticum exhibens locos Ibn Khacanis de Ibn Zeidouno* (Leyden, 1831).

All stirs in me the memory of that fire
Which in my tortured breast will ne'er expire.
Had death come ere we parted, it had been
The best of all days in the world, I ween;
And this poor heart, where thou art every thing,
Would not be fluttering now on passion's wing.
Ah, might the zephyr waft me tenderly,
Worn out with anguish as I am, to thee!
O treasure mine, if lover e'er possessed
A treasure! O thou dearest, queenliest!
Once, once, we paid the debt of love complete
And ran an equal race with eager feet.
How true, how blameless was the love I bore,
Thou hast forgotten; but I still adore!"

Ibn Ḥazm (994–1064 A.D.).

The greatest scholar and the most original genius of Moslem Spain is Abú Muḥammad 'Alí Ibn Ḥazm, who was born at Cordova in 994 A.D. He came of a 'Renegade' family, but he was so far from honouring his Christian ancestors that he pretended to trace his descent to a Persian freedman of Yazíd b. Abí Sufyán, a brother of the first Umayyad Caliph, Mu'áwiya; and his contempt for Christianity was in proportion to his fanatical zeal on behalf of Islam. His father, Aḥmad, had filled the office of Vizier under Manṣúr Ibn Abí 'Ámir, and Ibn Ḥazm himself plunged ardently into politics as a client—through his false pedigree—of the Umayyad House, to which he was devotedly attached. Before the age of thirty he became prime minister of 'Abdu 'l-Raḥmán V (1023–1024 A.D.), but on the fall of the Umayyad Government he retired from public life and gave himself wholly to literature. Ibn Bashkuwál, author of a well-known biographical dictionary of Spanish celebrities entitled *al-Ṣila fí akhbári a'immati 'l-Andalus*, speaks of him in these terms: "Of all the natives of Spain Ibn Ḥazm was the most eminent by the universality and the depth of his learning in the sciences cultivated by the Moslems; add to this his profound acquaintance with the Arabic tongue, and his vast abilities

as an elegant writer, a poet, a biographer, and an historian; his son possessed about 400 volumes, containing nearly 80,000 leaves, which Ibn Ḥazm had composed and written out."[1] It is recorded that he said, "My only desire in seeking knowledge was to attain a high scientific rank in this world and the next."[2] He got little encouragement from his contemporaries. The mere fact that he belonged to the Ẓáhirite school of theology would not have mattered, but the caustic style in which he attacked the most venerable religious authorities of Islam aroused such bitter hostility that he was virtually excommunicated by the orthodox divines. People were warned against having anything to do with him, and at Seville his writings were solemnly committed to the flames. On this occasion he is said to have remarked—

> "The paper ye may burn, but what the paper holds
> Ye cannot burn: 'tis safe within my breast: where I
> Remove, it goes with me, alights when I alight,
> And in my tomb will lie."[3]

After being expelled from several provinces of Spain, Ibn Ḥazm withdrew to a village, of which he was the owner, and remained there until his death. Of his numerous writings only a few have escaped destruction, but fortunately we possess the most valuable of them all, the 'Book of Religions and Sects' (*Kitábu 'l-Milal wa-'l-Niḥal*), which was recently printed in Cairo for the first time. This work treats in controversial fashion (1) of the non-Muḥammadan religious systems, especially Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism, and (2) of Islam and its dogmas, which are of course regarded from the Ẓáhirite

'The Book of Religions and Sects.'

[1] Cited by Ibn Khallikán in his article on Ibn Ḥazm (De Slane's translation, vol. ii, p. 268).

[2] Maqqarí, vol. i, p. 511, l. 21.

[3] Maqqarí, *loc. cit.*, p. 515, l. 5 seq.

standpoint, and of the four principal Muḥammadan sects, viz., the Mu'tazilites, the Murjites, the Shí'ites, and the Khárijites. The author maintains that these sects owed their rise to the Persians, who sought thus to revenge themselves upon victorious Islam.[1]

Literature in Spain in the eleventh century.

The following are some of the most distinguished Spanish writers of this epoch: the historian, Abú Marwán Ibn Ḥayyán of Cordova († 1075 A.D.), whose chief works are a colossal history of Spain in sixty volumes entitled *al-Matín* and a smaller chronicle (*al-Muqtabis*), both of which appear to have been almost entirely lost;[2] the jurisconsult and poet, Abu 'l-Walíd al-Bájí († 1081 A.D.); the traditionist Yúsuf Ibn 'Abd al-Barr († 1071 A.D.); and the geographer al-Bakrí, a native of Cordova, where he died in 1094 A.D. Finally, mention should be made of the famous Jews, Solomon Ibn Gabirol (Avicebron) and Samuel Ha-Levi. The former, who was born at Malaga about 1020 A.D., wrote two philosophical works in Arabic, and his *Fons Vitae* played an important part in the development of mediæval scholasticism. Samuel Ha-Levi was Vizier to Bádís, the sovereign of Granada (1038–1073 A.D.). In their admiration of his extraordinary accomplishments the Arabs all but forgot that he was a Jew and a prince (*Naghíd*) in Israel.[3] Samuel, on his part, when he wrote letters of State, did not scruple to employ the usual Muḥammadan formulas, "Praise to Allah!" "May Allah bless our Prophet Muḥammad!"

Samuel Ha-Levi.

[1] The contents of the *Kitábu 'l-Milal wa-'l-Niḥal* are fully summarised by Dozy in the Leyden Catalogue, vol. iv, pp. 230–237. *Cf.* also *Zur Komposition von Ibn Ḥazm's Milal wa'n-Niḥal*, by Israel Friedlaender in the *Nöldeke-Festschrift* (Giessen, 1906), vol. i, p. 267 sqq.

[2] So far as I am aware, the report that copies are preserved in the great mosque at Tunis has not been confirmed.

[3] His Arabic name is Ismá'íl b. Naghdála. See the Introduction to Dozy's ed. of Ibnu 'l-'Idhárí, p. 84, n. 1.

and to glorify Islam quite in the manner of a good Moslem. He had a perfect mastery of Hebrew and Arabic; he knew five other languages, and was profoundly versed in the sciences of the ancients, particularly in astronomy. With all his learning he was a supple diplomat and a man of the world. Yet he always preserved a dignified and unassuming demeanour, although in his days (according to Ibnu 'l-'Idhárí) "the Jews made themselves powerful and behaved arrogantly towards the Moslems." [1]

During the whole of the twelfth, and well into the first half of the thirteenth, century Spain was ruled by two African dynasties, the Almoravides and the Almohades, which originated, as their names denote, in the religious fanaticism of the Berber tribes of the Sahara. The rise of the Almoravides is related by Ibnu 'l-Athír as follows :—[2]

Rise of the Almoravides.

"In this year (448 A.H. = 1056 A.D.) was the beginning of the power of the *Mulaththamún*.[3] These were a number of tribes descended from Ḥimyar, of which the most considerable were Lamtúna, Jadála, and Lamṭa. . . . Now in the above-mentioned year a man of Jadála, named Jawhar, set out for Africa[4] on his way to the Pilgrimage, for he loved religion and the people thereof. At Qayrawán he fell in with a certain divine—Abú 'Imrán al-Fásí, as is generally supposed—and a company of persons who were studying theology under him. Jawhar was much pleased with what he saw of their piety, and on his return from Mecca he begged Abú 'Imrán to send back with him to the desert a teacher who should instruct the ignorant Berbers in the laws of Islam. So Abú 'Imrán sent

[1] An interesting notice of Samuel Ha-Levi is given by Dozy in his *Hist. des Mus. d'Espagne*, vol. iv, p. 27 sqq.

[2] *Kámil* of Ibnu 'l-Athír, ed. by Tornberg, vol. ix, p. 425 sqq. The following narrative (which has been condensed as far as possible) differs in some essential particulars from the accounts given by Ibn Khaldún (*History of the Berbers*, De Slane's translation, vol. ii, p. 64 sqq.) and by Ibn Abí Zar' (Tornberg, *Annales Regum Mauritaniæ*, p. 100 sqq. of the Latin version). *Cf.* A. Müller, *Der Islam*, vol. ii, p. 611 sqq.

[3] See note on p. 423.

[4] The province of Tunis.

with him a man called 'Abdulláh b. Yásín al-Kuzúlí, who was an excellent divine, and they journeyed together until they came to the tribe of Lamtúna. Then Jawhar dismounted from his camel and took hold of the bridle of 'Abdulláh b. Yásín's camel, in reverence for the law of Islam; and the men of Lamtúna approached Jawhar and greeted him and questioned him concerning his companion. 'This man,' he replied, 'is the bearer of the Sunna of the Apostle of God: he has come to teach you what is necessary in the religion of Islam.' So they bade them both welcome, and said to 'Abdulláh, 'Tell us the law of Islam,' and he explained it to them. They answered, 'As to what you have told us of prayer and alms-giving, that is easy; but when you say, "He that kills shall be killed, and he that steals shall have his hand cut off, and he that commits adultery shall be flogged or stoned," that is an ordinance which we will not lay upon ourselves. Begone elsewhere!' . . . And they came to Jadála, Jawhar's own tribe, and 'Abdulláh called on them and the neighbouring tribes to fulfil the law, and some consented while others refused. Then, after a time, 'Abdulláh said to his followers, 'Ye must fight the enemies of the Truth, so appoint a commander over you.' Jawhar answered, 'Thou art our commander,' but 'Abdulláh declared that he was only a missionary, and on his advice the command was offered to Abú Bakr b. 'Umar, the chief of Lamtúna, a man of great authority and influence. Having prevailed upon him to act as leader, 'Abdulláh began to preach a holy war, and gave his adherents the name of Almoravides (*al-Murábiṭún*)."[1]

The Almoravide Empire (1056–1147 A.D.).

The little community rapidly increased in numbers and power. Yúsuf b. Táshifín, who succeeded to the command in 1069 A.D., founded the city of Morocco, and from this centre made new conquests in every direction, so that ere long the Almoravides ruled over the whole of North-West Africa from Senegal to Algeria. We have already seen how Yúsuf was invited by

[1] *Murábiṭ* is literally 'one who lives in a *ribáṭ*,' *i.e.*, a guardhouse or military post on the frontier. Such buildings were often occupied, in addition to the garrison proper, by individuals who, from pious motives, wished to take part in the holy war (*jihád*) against the unbelievers. The word *murábiṭ*, therefore, gradually got an exclusively religious signification, 'devotee' or 'saint,' which appears in its modern form, *marabout*. As applied to the original Almoravides, it still retains a distinctly military flavour.

the 'Abbádids to lead an army into Spain, how he defeated Alphonso VI at Zalláqa and, returning a few years later, this time not as an ally but as a conqueror, took possession of Granada and Seville. The rest of Moslem Spain was subdued without much trouble: laity and clergy alike hailed in the Berber monarch a zealous reformer of the Faith and a mighty bulwark against its Christian enemies. The hopeful prospect was not realised. Spanish civilisation enervated the Berbers, but did not refine them. Under the narrow bigotry of Yúsuf and his successors free thought became impossible, culture and science faded away. Meanwhile the country was afflicted by famine, brigandage, and all the disorders of a feeble and corrupt administration.

The empire of the Almoravides passed into the hands of another African dynasty, the Almohades.[1] Their founder, Muḥammad Ibn Túmart, was a native of the mountainous district of Sús which lies to the south-west of Morocco. When a youth he made the Pilgrimage to Mecca (about 1108 A.D.), and also visited Baghdád, where he studied in the Niẓámiyya College and is said to have met the celebrated Ghazálí. He returned home with his head full of theology and ambitious schemes. We need not dwell upon his career from this point until he finally proclaimed himself as the Mahdí (1121 A.D.), nor describe the familiar methods—some of them disreputable enough—by which he induced the Berbers to believe in him. His doctrines, however, may be briefly stated. "In most questions," says one of his biographers,[2] "he followed the system of Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Ash'arí, but he agreed with the Mu'tazilites in their denial of the Divine Attributes and in a few matters besides; and he

Ibn Túmart.

[1] See Goldziher's article *Materialien zur Kenntniss der Almohadenbewegung in Nordafrika* (*Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 41, p. 30 sqq.).

[2] 'Abdu 'l-Wáḥid, *History of the Almohades*, ed. by Dozy, p. 135, l. 1 sqq.

was at heart somewhat inclined to Shí'ism, although he gave it no countenance in public."[1] The gist of his teaching is indicated by the name *Muwaḥḥid* (Unitarian), which he bestowed on himself, and which his successors adopted as their dynastic title.[2] Ibn Túmart emphasised the Unity of God; in other words, he denounced the anthropomorphic ideas which prevailed in Western Islam and strove to replace them by a purely spiritual conception of the Deity. To this main doctrine he added a second, that of the Infallible Imám (*al-Imám al-Ma'ṣúm*), and he naturally asserted that the Imám was Muḥammad Ibn Túmart, a descendant of 'Alí b. Abí Ṭálib.

The Almohades (1130–1269 A.D.).

On the death of the Mahdí (1130 A.D.) the supreme command devolved upon his trusted lieutenant, 'Abdu 'l-Mu'min, who carried on the holy war against the Almoravides with growing success, until in 1158 A.D. he "united the whole coast from the frontier of Egypt to the Atlantic, together with Moorish Spain, under his sceptre."[3] The new dynasty was far more enlightened and favourable to culture than the Almoravides had been. Yúsuf, the son of 'Abdu 'l-Mu'min, is described as an excellent scholar, whose mind was stored with the battles and traditions and history of the Arabs before and after Islam. But he found his highest pleasure in the study and patronage of philosophy. The great Aristotelian, Ibn Ṭufayl, was his Vizier and court physician; and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) received flattering honours both from him and from his successor, Ya'qúb al-Manṣúr, who loved to converse with the philosopher on scientific topics, although in a fit of orthodoxy he banished him for a time.[4] This curious mixture

[1] The Berbers at this time were Sunnite and anti-Fáṭimid.
[2] Almohade is the Spanish form of *al-Muwaḥḥid*.
[3] Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Mohammadan Dynasties*, p. 46.
[4] Renan, *Averroès et l'Averroïsme*, p. 12 sqq.

of liberality and intolerance is characteristic of the Almohades. However they might encourage speculation in its proper place, their law and theology were cut according to the plain Ẓáhirite pattern. "The Koran and the Traditions of the Prophet—or else the sword!" is a saying of the last-mentioned sovereign, who also revived the autos-da-fé, which had been prohibited by his grandfather, of Málikite and other obnoxious books.[1] The spirit of the Almohades is admirably reflected in Ibn Ṭufayl's famous philosophical romance, named after its hero, *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓán*, *i.e.*, 'Alive, son of Awake,'[2] of which the following summary is given by Mr. Duncan B. Macdonald in his excellent *Muslim Theology* (p. 253):—

"In it he conceives two islands, the one inhabited and the other not. On the inhabited island we have conventional people living conventional lives, and restrained by a conventional religion of rewards and punishments. Two men there, Salámán and Asál,[3] have raised themselves to a higher level of self-rule. Salámán adapts himself externally to the popular religion and rules the people; Asál, seeking to perfect himself still further in solitude, goes to the other island. But there he finds a man, Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓán, who has lived alone from infancy and has gradually, by the innate and uncorrupted powers of the mind, developed himself to the highest philosophic level and reached the Vision of the Divine. He has passed through all the stages of knowledge until the universe lies clear before him, and now he finds that his philosophy thus reached, without prophet or revelation, and the purified religion of Asál are one and the same. The story told by Asál of the people of the other island sitting in darkness stirs his soul, and he goes forth to them as a missionary. But he soon learns that the method of Muḥammad was the true one

The story of Ḥayy b. Yaqẓán.

[1] See a passage from 'Abdu 'l-Wáḥid's *History of the Almohades* (p. 201, l. 19 sqq.), which is translated in Goldziher's *Ẓáhiriten*, p. 174.

[2] The Arabic text, with a Latin version by E. Pocock, was published in 1671, and again in 1700, under the title *Philosophus Autodidactus*. An English translation by Simon Ockley appeared in 1708, and has been several times reprinted.

[3] The true form of this name is Absál, as in Jámí's celebrated poem. *Cf.* De Boer, *The History of Philosophy in Islam*, translated by E. R. Jones, p. 144.

for the great masses, and that only by sensuous allegory and concrete things could they be reached and held. He retires to his island again to live the solitary life."

Literature under the Almoravides and Almohades (1100–1250 A.D.).

Of the writers who flourished under the Berber dynasties few are sufficiently important to deserve mention in a work of this kind. The philosophers, however, stand in a class by themselves. Ibn Bájja (Avempace), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Ibn Ṭufayl, and Músá b. Maymún (Maimonides) made their influence felt far beyond the borders of Spain : they belong, in a sense, to Europe. We have noticed elsewhere the great mystic, Muḥiyyu 'l-Dín Ibnu 'l-'Arabí († 1240 A.D.) ; his fellow-townsman, Ibn Sab'ín († 1269 A.D.), a thinker of the same type, wrote letters on philosophical subjects to Frederick II of Hohenstaufen. Valuable works on the literary history of Spain were composed by Ibn Kháqán († 1134 A.D.), Ibn Bassám († 1147 A.D.), and Ibn Bashkuwál († 1183 A.D.). The geographer Idrísí († 1154 A.D.) was born at Ceuta, studied at Cordova, and found a patron in the Sicilian monarch, Roger II ; Ibn Jubayr published an interesting account of his pilgrimage from Granada to Mecca and of his journey back to Granada during the years 1183–1185 A.D. ; Ibn Zuhr (Avenzoar), who became a Vizier under the Almoravides, was the first of a whole family of eminent physicians ; and Ibnu 'l-Bayṭár of Malaga († 1248 A.D.), after visiting Egypt, Greece, and Asia Minor in order to extend his knowledge of botany, compiled a Materia Medica, which he dedicated to the Sultan of Egypt, Malik al-Kámil.

Reconquest of Spain by Ferdinand III.

We have now taken a rapid survey of the Moslem empire in Spain from its rise in the eighth century of our era down to the last days of the Almohades, which saw the Christian arms everywhere triumphant. By 1230 A.D. the Almohades had been driven out of the peninsula, although they continued to rule Africa for about

forty years after this date. Amidst the general wreck one spot remained where the Moors could find shelter. This was Granada. Here, in 1232 A.D., Muḥammad Ibnu 'l-Aḥmar assumed the proud title of 'Conqueror by Grace of God' (*Ghálib billáh*) and founded the Naṣrid dynasty, which held the Christians at bay during two centuries and a half. That the little Moslem kingdom survived so long was not due to its own strength, but rather to its almost impregnable situation and to the dissensions of the victors. The latest bloom of Arabic culture in Europe renewed, if it did not equal, the glorious memories of Cordova and Seville. In this period arose the world-renowned Alhambra, *i.e.*, 'the Red Palace' (al-Ḥamrá) of the Naṣrid kings, and many other superb monuments of which the ruins are still visible. We must not, however, be led away into a digression even upon such a fascinating subject as Moorish architecture. Our information concerning literary matters is scantier than it might have been, on account of the vandalism practised by the Christians when they took Granada. It is no dubious legend (like the reputed burning of the Alexandrian Library by order of the Caliph 'Umar),[1] but a well-ascertained fact that the ruthless Archbishop Ximenez made a bonfire of all the Arabic manuscripts on which he could lay his hands. He wished to annihilate the record of seven centuries of Muḥammadan culture in a single day.

The Naṣrids of Granada (1232–1492 A.D.).

The names of Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb and Ibn Khaldún represent the highest literary accomplishment and historical comprehension of which this age was capable. The latter, indeed, has no parallel among Oriental historians.

Lisánu 'l-Dín Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb[2] played a great figure in the

[1] Jurjí Zaydán, however, is disposed to regard the story as being not without foundation. See his interesting discussion of the evidence in his *Ta'rikhu 'l-Tamaddun al-Islámí* ('History of Islamic Civilisation'), Part III, pp. 40–46.

[2] The life of Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb has been written by his friend and contemporary, Ibn Khaldún (*Hist. of the Berbers*, translated by De Slane, vol. iv.

politics of his time, and his career affords a conspicuous example of the intimate way in which Moslem poetry and literature are connected with public life. "The Arabs did not share the opinion widely spread nowadays, that poetical talent flourishes best in seclusion from the tumult of the world, or that it dims the clearness of vision which is required for the conduct of public affairs. On the contrary, their princes entrusted the chief offices of State to poets, and poetry often served as a means to obtain more brilliant results than diplomatic notes could have procured."[1] A young man like Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb, who had mastered the entire field of belles-lettres, who improvised odes and rhyming epistles with incomparable elegance and facility, was marked out to be the favourite of kings. He became Vizier at the Naṣrid court, a position which he held, with one brief interval of disgrace, until 1371 A.D., when the intrigues of his enemies forced him to flee from Granada. He sought refuge at Fez, and was honourably received by the reigning Sultan, 'Abdu 'l-'Azíz; but on the accession of Abu 'l-'Abbás in 1374 A.D. the exiled minister was incarcerated and brought to trial on the charge of heresy (*zandaqa*). While the inquisition was proceeding a fanatical mob broke into the gaol and murdered him. Maqqarí relates that Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb suffered from insomnia, and that most of his works were composed during the night, for which reason he got the nickname of *Dhu 'l-'Umrayn*, or 'The man of two lives.'[2] He was a prolific writer in various branches of literature, but, like so many of his countrymen, he excelled in History. His monographs on the sovereigns and savants of Granada (one of which includes an autobiography) supply interesting details concerning this obscure period.

Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb (1313–1374 A.D.).

p. 390 sqq.), and forms the main subject of Maqqarí's *Nafḥu 'l-Ṭíb* (vols. iii and iv of the Buláq edition).

[1] Schack, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 312 seq.

[2] Cited in the *Shadharátu 'l-Dhahab*, a MS. in my collection. See *J.R.A.S.* for 1899, p. 911 seq., and for 1906, p. 797.

Some apology may be thought necessary for placing Ibn Khaldún, the greatest historical thinker of Islam, in the present chapter, as though he were a Spaniard either by birth or residence. He descended, it is true, from a family, the Banú Khaldún, which had long been settled in Spain, first at Carmona and afterwards at Seville; but they migrated to Africa about the middle of the thirteenth century, and Ibn Khaldún was born at Tunis. Nearly the whole of his life, moreover, was passed in Africa—a circumstance due rather to accident than to predilection; for in 1362 A.D. he entered the service of the Sultan of Granada, Abú 'Abdalláh Ibnu 'l-Aḥmar, and would probably have made that city his home had not the jealousy of his former friend, the Vizier Ibnu 'l-Khaṭíb, decided him to leave Spain behind. We cannot give any account of the agitated and eventful career which he ended, as Cadi of Cairo, in 1406 A.D. Ibn Khaldún lived with statesmen and kings: he was an ambassador to the court of Pedro of Castile, and an honoured guest of the mighty Tamerlane. The results of his ripe experience are marvellously displayed in the Prolegomena (*Muqaddima*), which forms the first volume of a huge general history entitled the *Kitábu 'l-'Ibar* ('Book of Examples').[1] He himself has stated his idea of the historian's function in the following words:—

Ibn Khaldún (1332–1406 A.D.).

"Know that the true purpose of history is to make us acquainted with human society, *i.e.*, with the civilisation of the world, and with its natural phenomena, such as savage life, the softening of manners, attachment to the family and the tribe, the various kinds of superiority which one people gains over another, the kingdoms and diverse dynasties which arise in this way, the different trades and laborious occupations to

Ibn Khaldún as a philosophical historian.

[1] The Arabic text of the Prolegomena has been published by Quatremère in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Impériale*, vols. 16–18, and at Beyrout (1879, 1886, and 1900). A French translation by De Slane appeared in *Not. et Extraits*, vols. 19–21.

which men devote themselves in order to earn their livelihood, the sciences and arts; in fine, all the manifold conditions which naturally occur in the development of civilisation."[1]

Ibn Khaldún argues that History, thus conceived, is subject to universal laws, and in these laws he finds the only sure criterion of historical truth.

His canons of historical criticism.

"The rule for distinguishing what is true from what is false in history is based on its possibility or impossibility: that is to say, we must examine human society (civilisation) and discriminate between the characteristics which are essential and inherent in its nature and those which are accidental and need not be taken into account, recognising further those which cannot possibly belong to it. If we do this we have a rule for separating historical truth from error by means of a domonstrative method that admits of no doubt. . . . It is a genuine touchstone whereby historians may verify whatever they relate."[2]

Here, indeed, the writer claims too much, and it must be allowed that he occasionally applied his principles in a pedantic fashion, and was led by purely *a priori* considerations to conclusions which are not always so warrantable as he believed. This is a very trifling matter in comparison with the value and originality of the principles themselves. Ibn Khaldún asserts, with justice, that he has discovered a new method of writing history. No Moslem had ever taken a view at once so comprehensive and so philosophical; none had attempted to trace the deeply hidden causes of events, to expose the moral and spiritual forces at work beneath the surface, or to divine the immutable laws of national progress and decay. Ibn Khaldún owed little to his predecessors, although he mentions some of them with respect. He stood far above his age, and his own countrymen have admired rather than followed him. His intellectual descendants are the great

[1] *Muqaddima* (Beyrout ed. of 1900), p. 35, l. 5 sqq. = Prolegomena translated by De Slane, vol. i, p. 71.

[2] *Muqaddima*, p. 37, l. 4 fr. foot = De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 77.

mediæval and modern historians of Europe—Machiavelli and Vico and Gibbon.

Ibn Khaldún's theory of historical evolution.

It is worth while to sketch briefly the peculiar theory of historical development which Ibn Khaldún puts forward in his Prolegomena—a theory founded on the study of actual conditions and events either past or passing before his eyes.[1] He was struck, in the first place, with the physical fact that in almost every part of the Muḥammadan Empire great wastes of sand or stony plateaux, arid and incapable of tillage, wedge themselves between fertile domains of cultivated land. The former were inhabited from time immemorial by nomad tribes, the latter by an agricultural or industrial population ; and we have seen, in the case of Arabia, that cities like Mecca and Ḥíra carried on a lively intercourse with the Bedouins and exerted a civilising influence upon them. In Africa the same contrast was strongly marked. It is no wonder, therefore, that Ibn Khaldún divided the whole of mankind into two classes—Nomads and Citizens. The nomadic life naturally precedes and produces the other. Its characteristics are simplicity and purity of manners, warlike spirit, and, above all, a loyal devotion to the interests of the family and the tribe. As the nomads become more civilised they settle down, form states, and make conquests. They have now reached their highest development. Corrupted by luxury, and losing the virtues which raised them to power, they are soon swept away by a ruder people. Such, in bare outline, is the course of history as Ibn Khaldún regards it ; but we must try to give our readers some further account of the philosophical ideas

[1] Von Kremer has discussed Ibn Khaldún's ideas more fully than is possible here in an admirably sympathetic article, *Ibn Chaldun und seine Culturgeschichte der islamischen Reiche*, contributed to the *Sitz. der Kais. Akad. der Wissenschaften*, vol. 93 (Vienna, 1879). I have profited by many of his observations, and desire to make the warmest acknowledgment of my debt to him in this as in countless other instances.

underlying his conception. He discerns, in the life of tribes and nations alike, two dominant forces which mould their destiny. The primitive and cardinal force he calls *'aṣabiyya*, the *binding* element in society, the feeling which unites members of the same family, tribe, nation, or empire, and which in its widest acceptation is equivalent to the modern term, Patriotism. It springs up and especially flourishes among nomad peoples, where the instinct of self-preservation awakens a keen sense of kinship and drives men to make common cause with each other. This *'aṣabiyya* is the vital energy of States: by it they rise and grow; as it weakens they decline; and its decay is the signal for their fall. The second of the forces referred to is Religion. Ibn Khaldún hardly ascribes to religion so much influence as we might have expected from a Moslem. He recognises, however, that it may be the only means of producing that solidarity without which no State can exist. Thus in the twenty-seventh chapter of his *Muqaddima* he lays down the proposition that "the Arabs are incapable of founding an empire unless they are imbued with religious enthusiasm by a prophet or a saint."

In History he sees an endless cycle of progress and retrogression, analogous to the phenomena of human life. Kingdoms are born, attain maturity, and die within a definite period which rarely exceeds three generations, *i.e.*, 120 years.[1] During this time they pass through five stages of development and decay.[2] It is noteworthy that Ibn Khaldún admits the moral superiority of the Nomads. For him civilisation necessarily involves corruption and degeneracy. If he did not believe in the gradual advance of mankind towards some higher goal, his pessimism was justified by the lessons of experience and by the mournful plight of the Muḥammadan world, to which his view was restricted.[3]

[1] *Muqaddima*, Beyrout ed., p. 170 = De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 347 sqq.

[2] *Muqaddima*, p. 175 = De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 356 sqq.

[3] An excellent appreciation of Ibn Khaldún as a scientific historian will

In 1492 A.D. the last stronghold of the European Arabs opened its gates to Ferdinand and Isabella, and "the Cross supplanted the Crescent on the towers of Granada." The victors showed a barbarous fanaticism that was the more abominable as it violated their solemn pledges to respect the religion and property of the Moslems, and as it utterly reversed the tolerant and liberal treatment which the Christians of Spain had enjoyed under Muḥammadan rule. Compelled to choose between apostasy and exile, many preferred the latter alternative. Those who remained were subjected to a terrible persecution, until in 1609 A.D., by order of Philip III, the Moors were banished *en masse* from Spanish soil.

The fall of Granada (1492 A.D.).

Spain was not the sole point whence Moslem culture spread itself over the Christian lands. Sicily was conquered by the Aghlabids of Tunis early in the ninth century, and although the island fell into the hands of the Normans in 1071 A.D., the court of Palermo retained a semi-Oriental character. Here in the reign of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (1194–1250 A.D.) might be seen "astrologers from Baghdád with long beards and waving robes, Jews who received princely salaries as translators of Arabic works, Saracen dancers and dancing-girls, and Moors who blew silver trumpets on festal occasions."[1] Both Frederick himself and his son Manfred were enthusiastic Arabophiles, and scandalised Christendom by their assumption of 'heathen' manners as well as by the attention which they devoted to Moslem philosophy and science. Under their auspices Arabic learning was communicated to the neighbouring towns of Lower Italy.

The Arabs in Sicily.

be found in Robert Flint's *History of the Philosophy of History*, vol. i, pp. 157–171.

[1] Schack, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 151.

CHAPTER X

FROM THE MONGOL INVASION TO THE PRESENT DAY

BEFORE proceeding to speak of the terrible catastrophe which filled the whole of Western Asia with ruin and desolation, I may offer a few preliminary remarks concerning the general character of the period which we shall briefly survey in this final chapter. It forms, one must admit, a melancholy conclusion to a glorious history. The Caliphate, which symbolised the supremacy of the Prophet's people, is swept away. Mongols, Turks, Persians, all in turn build up great Muḥammadan empires, but the Arabs have lost even the shadow of a leading part and appear only as subordinate actors on a provincial stage. The chief centres of Arabian life, such as it is, are henceforth Syria and Egypt, which were held by the Turkish Mamelukes until 1517 A.D., when they passed under Ottoman rule. In North Africa the petty Berber dynasties (Ḥafṣids, Ziyánids, and Marínids) gave place in the sixteenth century to the Ottoman Turks. Only in Spain, where the Naṣrids of Granada survived until 1492 A.D., in Morocco, where the Sharífs (descendants of 'Alí b. Abí Ṭálib) assumed the sovereignty in 1544 A.D., and to some extent in Arabia itself, did the Arabs preserve their political independence. In such circumstances it would be vain to look for any large developments of literature and culture worthy to rank with those of the past. This is an age of imitation and

General characteristics of the period.

compilation. Learned men abound, whose erudition embraces every subject under the sun. The mass of writing shows no visible diminution, and much of it is valuable and meritorious work. But with one or two conspicuous exceptions—*e.g.* the historian Ibn Khaldún and the mystic Sha'ráni—we cannot point to any new departure, any fruitful ideas, any trace of original and illuminating thought. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries "witnessed the rise and triumph of that wonderful movement known as the Renaissance, . . . but no ripple of this great upheaval, which changed the whole current of intellectual and moral life in the West, reached the shores of Islam."[1] Until comparatively recent times, when Egypt and Syria first became open to European civilisation, the Arab retained his mediæval outlook and habit of mind, and was in no respect more enlightened than his forefathers who lived under the 'Abbásid Caliphate. And since the Mongol Invasion I am afraid we must say that instead of advancing farther along the old path he was being forced back by the inevitable pressure of events. East of the Euphrates the Mongols did their work of destruction so thoroughly that no seeds were left from which a flourishing civilisation could arise; and, moreover, the Arabic language was rapidly extinguished by the Persian. In Spain, as we have seen, the power of the Arabs had already begun to decline; Africa was dominated by the Berbers, a rude, unlettered race, Egypt and Syria by the blighting military despotism of the Turks. Nowhere in the history of this period can we discern either of the two elements which are most productive of literary greatness: the quickening influence of a higher culture or the inspiration of a free and vigorous national life.[2]

Between the middle of the eleventh century and the end

[1] E. J. W. Gibb, *A History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. ii, p. 5.

[2] The nineteenth century should have been excepted, so far as the influence of modern civilisation has reacted on Arabic literature.

of the fourteenth the nomad tribes dwelling beyond the Oxus burst over Western Asia in three successive waves. First came the Seljúq Turks, then the Mongols under Chingíz Khan and Húlágú, then the hordes, mainly Turkish, of Tímúr. Regarding the Seljúqs all that is necessary for our purpose has been said in a former chapter. The conquests of Tímúr are a frightful episode which I may be pardoned for omitting from this history, inasmuch as their permanent results (apart from the enormous damage which they inflicted) were inconsiderable; and although the Indian empire of the Great Moguls, which Bábar, a descendant of Tímúr, established in the first half of the sixteenth century, ran a prosperous and brilliant course, its culture was borrowed almost exclusively from Persian models and does not come within the scope of the present work. We shall, therefore, confine our view to the second wave of the vast Asiatic migration, which bore the Mongols, led by Chingíz Khan and Húlágú, from the steppes of China and Tartary to the Mediterranean.

The Mongol Invasion.

In 1219 A.D. Chingíz Khan, having consolidated his power in the Far East, turned his face westward and suddenly advanced into Transoxania, which at that time formed a province of the wide dominions of the Sháhs of Khwárizm (Khiva). The reigning monarch, 'Alá'u 'l-Dín Muḥammad, was unable to make an effective resistance; and notwithstanding that his son, the gallant Jalálu 'l-Dín, carried on a desperate guerilla for twelve years, the invaders swarmed over Khurásán and Persia, massacring the panic-stricken inhabitants wholesale and leaving a wilderness behind them. Hitherto Baghdád had not been seriously threatened, but on the first day of January, 1256 A.D.—an epoch-marking date—Húlágú, the grandson of Chingíz Khan, crossed the Oxus, with the intention of occupying the 'Abbásid capital. I translate the following

Chingíz Khan and Húlágú.

narrative from a manuscript in my possession of the *Ta'rikh al-Khamis* by Diyárbakrí († 1574 A.D.) :—

In the year 654 (A.H. = 1256 A.D.) the stubborn tyrant, Húlágú, the destroyer of the nations (*Mubídu 'l-Umam*), set forth and took the castle of Alamút from the Ismá'ílís[1] and slew them and laid waste the lands of Rayy. . . . And in the year 655 there broke out at Baghdád a fearful riot between the Sunnís and the Shí'ites, which led to great plunder and destruction of property. A number of Shí'ites were killed, and this so incensed and infuriated the Vizier Ibnu 'l-'Alqamí that he encouraged the Tartars to invade 'Iráq, by which means he hoped to take ample vengeance on the Sunnís.[2] And in the beginning of the year 656 the tyrant Húlágú b. Túlí b. Chingíz Khán, the Moghul, arrived at Baghdád with his army, including the Georgians (*al-Kurj*) and the troops of Mosul. The Dawídár[3] marched out of the city and met Húlágú's vanguard, which was commanded by Bájú.[4] The Moslems, being few, suffered defeat; whereupon Bájú advanced and pitched his camp to the west of Baghdád, while Húlágú took up a position on the eastern side. Then the Vizier Ibnu 'l-'Alqamí said to the Caliph Musta'ṣim Billáh: "I will go to the Supreme Khán to arrange peace." So the hound[5] went and obtained security for himself, and on his return said to the Caliph: "The Khán desires to marry his daughter to your son and to render homage to you, like the Seljúq kings, and then to depart." Musta'ṣim set out, attended by the nobles of

Húlágú before Baghdád (1258 A.D.).

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[1] These Ismá'ílís are the so-called Assassins, the terrible sect organised by Ḥasan b. Ṣabbáḥ (see Professor Browne's *Literary History of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 201 sqq.), and finally exterminated by Húlágú. They had many fortresses, of which Alamút was the most famous, in the Jibál province, near Qazwín.

[2] The reader must be warned that this and the following account of the treacherous dealings of Ibnu 'l-'Alqamí are entirely contradicted by Shí'ite historians. For example, the author of *al-Fakhrí* (ed. by Derenbourg, p. 452) represents the Vizier as a far-seeing patriot who vainly strove to awaken his feeble-minded master to the gravity of the situation.

[3] Concerning the various functions of the Dawídár (literally Inkstand-holder) or Dawádár, as the word is more correctly written, see Quatremère, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks*, vol. i, p. 118, n. 2.

[4] The MS. writes Yájúnas.

[5] *Al-kalb*, the Arabic equivalent of the Persian *sag* (dog), an animal which Moslems regard as unclean.

his court and the grandees of his time, in order to witness the contract of marriage. The whole party were beheaded except the Caliph, who was trampled to death. The Tartars entered Baghdád and distributed themselves in bands throughout the city. For thirty-four days the sword was never sheathed. Few escaped. The slain amounted to 1,800,000 and more. Then quarter was called. . . . Thus it is related in the *Duwalu 'l-Islám*.[1] . . . And on this wise did the Caliphate pass from Baghdád. As the poet sings:—

Sack of Baghdád.

> "*Khalati 'l-manábiru wa-'l-asirratu minhumú*
> *wa-'alayhimú ḥatta 'l-mamáti salámú.*"

> "*The pulpits and the thrones are empty of them;*
> *I bid them, till the hour of death, farewell!*"

It seemed as if all Muḥammadan Asia lay at the feet of the pagan conqueror. Resuming his advance, Húlágú occupied Mesopotamia and sacked Aleppo. He then returned to the East, leaving his lieutenant, Ketboghá, to complete the reduction of Syria. Meanwhile, however, an Egyptian army under the Mameluke Sultan Muẓaffar Quṭuz was hastening to oppose the invaders. On Friday, the 25th of Ramaḍán, 658 A.H., a decisive battle was fought at 'Ayn Jálút (Goliath's Spring), west of the Jordan. The Tartars were routed with immense slaughter, and their subsequent attempts to wrest Syria from the Mamelukes met with no success. The submission of Asia Minor was hardly more than nominal, but in Persia the descendants of Húlágú, the Íl-Kháns, reigned over a great empire, which the conversion of one of their number, Gházán (1295–1304 A.D.), restored to Moslem rule. We are not concerned here with the further history of the Mongols in Persia nor with that of the Persians themselves. Since the days of Húlágú the lands east and west of the Tigris are separated by an ever-widening gulf. The two races—Persians and Arabs—to whose co-operation the mediæval

Battle of 'Ayn Jálút (September, 1260 A.D.).

[1] By Shamsu 'l-Dín al-Dhahabí († 1348 A.D.).

world, from Samarcand to Seville, for a long time owed its highest literary and scientific culture, have now finally dissolved their partnership. It is true that the cleavage began many centuries earlier, and before the fall of Baghdád the Persian genius had already expressed itself in a splendid national literature. But from this date onward the use of Arabic by Persians is practically limited to theological and philosophical writings. The Persian language has driven its rival out of the field. Accordingly Egypt and Syria will now demand the principal share of our attention, more especially as the history of the Arabs of Granada, which properly belongs to this period, has been related in the preceding chapter.

Arabic ceases to be the language of the whole Moslem world.

The dynasty of the Mameluke[1] Sultans of Egypt was founded in 1250 A.D. by Aybak, a Turkish slave, who commenced his career in the service of the Ayyúbid, Malik Ṣáliḥ Najmu 'l-Dín. His successors[2] held sway in Egypt and Syria until the conquest of these countries by the Ottomans. The Mamelukes were rough soldiers, who seldom indulged in any useless refinement, but they had a royal taste for architecture, as the visitor to Cairo may still see. Their administration, though disturbed by frequent mutinies and murders, was tolerably prosperous on the whole, and their victories over the Mongol hosts, as well as the crushing blows which they dealt to the Crusaders, gave Islam new prestige. The ablest of them all was Baybars, who richly deserved his title Malik al-Ẓáhir, *i.e*, the Victorious King. His name has passed into the legends of the people, and his warlike exploits into

The Mamelukes of Egypt (1250–1517 A.D.).

Sultan Baybars (1260–1277 A.D.).

[1] Mameluke (Mamlúk) means 'slave.' The term was applied to the mercenary troops, Turks and Kurds for the most part, who composed the bodyguard of the Ayyúbid princes.

[2] There are two Mameluke dynasties, called respectively Baḥrí (River) Mamelukes and Burjí (Tower) Mamelukes. The former reigned from 1250 to 1390, the latter from 1382 to 1517.

romances written in the vulgar dialect which are recited by story-tellers to this day.[1] The violent and brutal acts which he sometimes committed—for he shrank from no crime when he suspected danger—made him a terror to the ambitious nobles around him, but did not harm his reputation as a just ruler. Although he held the throne in virtue of having murdered the late monarch with his own hand, he sought to give the appearance of legitimacy to his usurpation. He therefore recognised as Caliph a certain Abu 'l-Qásim Aḥmad, a pretended scion of the 'Abbásid house, invited him to Cairo, and took the oath of allegiance to him in due form. The Caliph on his part invested the Sultan with sovereignty over Egypt, Syria, Arabia, and all the provinces that he might obtain by future conquests. This Aḥmad, entitled al-Mustanṣir, was the first of a long series of mock Caliphs who were appointed by the Mameluke Sultans and generally kept under close surveillance in the citadel of Cairo. The last of the line bequeathed his rights of succession to the Ottoman Sultan Selím I, on which ground the Sultans of Turkey base their claim to supreme authority over the Moslem world.

The 'Abbásid Caliphs of Egypt.

The poets of this period are almost unknown in Europe, and until they have been studied with due attention it would be premature to assert that none of them rises above mediocrity. At the same time my own impression (based, I confess, on a very desultory and imperfect acquaintance with their work) is that the best among them are merely elegant and accomplished artists, playing brilliantly with words and phrases, but doing little else. No doubt extreme artificiality may coexist with poetical genius of a high order, provided that it has behind it Mutanabbí's power, Ma'arrí's earnestness, or Ibnu 'l-Fáriḍ's enthusiasm. In the absence of these

Arabic poetry after the Mongol Invasion.

[1] See Lane, *The Modern Egyptians*, ch. xxii.

qualities we must be content to admire the technical skill with which the old tunes are varied and revived. Let us take, for example, Ṣafiyyu 'l-Dín al-Ḥillí, who was born at Ḥilla, a large town on the Euphrates, in 1278 A.D., became laureate of the Urtuqid dynasty at Máridín, and died in Baghdád about 1350. He is described as "the poet of his age absolutely," and to judge from the extracts in Kutubí's *Fawátu 'l-Wafayát*[1] he combined subtlety of fancy with remarkable ease and sweetness of versification. Many of his pieces, however, are *jeux d'esprit*, like his ode to the Prophet, in which he employs 151 rhetorical figures, or like another poem where all the nouns are diminutives.[2] The following specimen of his work is too brief to do him justice:—

Ṣafiyyu 'l-Dín al-Ḥillí.

"How can I have patience, and thou, mine eye's delight,
All the livelong year not one moment in my sight?
And with what can I rejoice my heart, when thou that art a joy
Unto every human heart, from me hast taken flight?
I swear by Him who made thy form the envy of the sun
(So graciously He clad thee with lovely beams of light):
The day when I behold thy beauty doth appear to me
As tho' it gleamed on Time's dull brow a constellation bright.
O thou scorner of my passion, for whose sake I count as naught
All the woe that I endure, all the injury and despite,
Come, regard the ways of God! for never He at life's last gasp
Suffereth the weight to perish even of one mite!"[3]

We have already referred to the folk-songs (*muwashshaḥ* and *zajal*) which originated in Spain. These simple ballads,

[1] Ed. of Buláq (1283 A.H.), pp. 356–366.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 358.

[3] These verses are cited in the *Ḥadíqatu 'l-Afráḥ* (see Brockelmann's *Gesch. d. Arab. Litt.*, ii, 502), Calcutta, 1229 A.H., p. 280. In the final couplet there is an allusion to Kor. iv, 44: "*Verily God will not wrong any one even the weight of a mite*" (mithqála dharrat[in]).

with their novel metres and incorrect language, were despised by the classical school, that is to say, by nearly all Moslems with any pretensions to learning; but their popularity was such that even the court poets occasionally condescended to write in this style. To the *zajal* and *muwashshaḥ* we may add the *dúbayt*, the *mawáliyyá*, the *kánwakán*, and the *ḥimáq*, which together with verse of the regular form made up the 'seven kinds of poetry' (*al-funún al-sab'a*). Ṣafiyyu 'l-Dín al-Ḥillí, who wrote a special treatise on the Arabic folk-songs, mentions two other varieties which, he says, were invented by the people of Baghdád to be sung in the early dawn of Ramaḍán, the Moslem Lent.[1] It is interesting to observe that some few literary men attempted, though in a timid fashion, to free Arabic poetry from the benumbing academic system by which it was governed and to pour fresh life into its veins. A notable example of this tendency is the *Hazzu 'l-Quḥúf*[2] by Shirbíní, who wrote in 1687 A.D. Here we have a poem in the vulgar dialect of Egypt, but what is still more curious, the author, while satirising the uncouth manners and rude language of the peasantry, makes a bitter attack on the learning and morals of the Muḥammadan divines.[3] For this purpose he introduces a typical Fellah named Abú Shádúf, whose rôle corresponds to that of Piers the Plowman in Longland's *Vision*. Unfortunately, we cannot say that such isolated offshoots have gone any way to found a living school of popular poetry. The classical tradition remains as strong as ever. Only the future can show whether the Arabs are capable of producing a genius who will succeed in doing for the national folk-songs what Burns did for the Scots ballads.

Popular poetry.

[1] Hartmann, *Das Muwaššaḥ* (Weimar, 1897), p. 218.

[2] Literally, 'The Shaking of the Skull-caps,' in allusion to the peasants' dance.

[3] See Vollers, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der lebenden arabischen Sprache in Aegypten*, *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 41 (1887), p. 370.

Biography and History were cultivated with ardour by the savants of Egypt and Syria. Among the numerous compositions of this kind we can have no hesitation in awarding the place of honour to the *Wafayátu 'l-A'yán*, or 'Obituaries of Eminent Men,' by Shamsu 'l-Dín Ibn Khallikán, a work which has often been quoted in the foregoing pages. The author belonged to a distinguished family descending from Yaḥyá b. Khálid the Barmecide (see p. 259 seq.), and was born at Arbela in 1211 A.D. He received his education at Aleppo and Damascus (1229–1238) and then proceeded to Cairo, where he finished the first draft of his Biographical Dictionary in 1256. Five years later he was appointed by Sultan Baybars to be Chief Cadi of Syria. He retained this high office (with a seven years' interval, which he devoted to literary and biographical studies) until a short time before his death. In the Preface to the *Wafayát* Ibn Khallikán observes that he has adopted the alphabetical order as more convenient than the chronological. As regards the scope and character of his Dictionary, he says :—

Ibn Khallikán (1211–1282 A.D.).

"I have not limited my work to the history of any one particular class of persons, as learned men, princes, emírs, viziers, or poets; but I have spoken of all those whose names are familiar to the public, and about whom questions are frequently asked; I have, however, related the facts I could ascertain respecting them in a concise manner, lest my work should become too voluminous; I have fixed with all possible exactness the dates of their birth and death; I have traced up their genealogy as high as I could; I have marked the orthography of those names which are liable to be written incorrectly; and I have cited the traits which may best serve to characterise each individual, such as noble actions, singular anecdotes, verses and letters, so that the reader may derive amusement from my work, and find it not exclusively of such a uniform cast as would prove tiresome; for the most effectual inducement to reading a book arises from the variety of its style."[1]

His Biographical Dictionary.

[1] Ibn Khallikán, De Slane's translation, vol. i, p. 3.

Ibn Khallikan might have added that he was the first Muḥammadan writer to design a Dictionary of National Biography, since none of his predecessors had thought of comprehending the lives of eminent Moslems of every class in a single work.[1] The merits of the book have been fully recognised by the author's countrymen as well as by European scholars. It is composed in simple and elegant language, it is extremely accurate, and it contains an astonishing quantity of miscellaneous historical and literary information, not drily catalogued but conveyed in the most pleasing fashion by anecdotes and excerpts which illustrate every department of Moslem life. I am inclined to agree with the opinion of Sir William Jones, that it is the best general biography ever written; and allowing for the difference of scale and scope, I think it will bear comparison with a celebrated English work which it resembles in many ways—I mean Boswell's *Johnson*.[2]

Historians of the Mameluke period.

To give an adequate account of the numerous and talented historians of the Mameluke period would require far more space than they can reasonably claim in a review of this kind. Concerning Ibn Khaldún, who held a professorship as well as the office of Cadi in Cairo under Sultan Barqúq (1382–1398 A.D.), we have already spoken at some length. This extraordinary genius discovered principles and methods which might have been

[1] It should be pointed out that the *Wafayát* is very far from being exhaustive. The total number of articles only amounts to 865. Besides the Caliphs, the Companions of the Prophet, and those of the next generation (*Tábi'ún*), the author omitted many persons of note because he was unable to discover the date of their death. A useful supplement and continuation of the *Wafayát* was compiled by al-Kutubí († 1363 A.D.) under the title *Fawátu 'l-Wafayát*.

[2] The Arabic text of the *Wafayát* has been edited with variants and indices by Wüstenfeld (Göttingen, 1835–1850). There is an excellent English translation by Baron MacGuckin de Slane in four volumes (1842–1871).

expected to revolutionise historical science, but neither was he himself capable of carrying them into effect nor, as the event proved, did they inspire his successors to abandon the path of tradition. I cannot imagine any more decisive symptom of the intellectual lethargy in which Islam was now sunk, or any clearer example of the rule that even the greatest writers struggle in vain against the spirit of their own times. There were plenty of learned men, however, who compiled local and universal histories. Considering the precious materials which their industry has preserved for us, we should rather admire these diligent and erudite authors than complain of their inability to break away from the established mode. Perhaps the most famous among them is Taqiyyu 'l-Dín al-Maqrízí (1364–1442 A.D.). A native of Cairo, he devoted himself to Egyptian history and antiquities, on which subject he composed several standard works, such as the *Khiṭaṭ*[1] and the *Sulúk*.[2] Although he was both unconscientious and uncritical, too often copying without acknowledgment or comment, and indulging in wholesale plagiarism when it suited his purpose, these faults which are characteristic of his age may easily be excused. "He has accumulated and reduced to a certain amount of order a large quantity of information that would but for him have passed into oblivion. He is generally painstaking and accurate, and always resorts to contemporary evidence if it is available. Also he has a pleasant and lucid style, and writes without bias and apparently with distinguished impartiality."[3] Other well-known works belonging to this

Maqrízí.

[1] The full title is *al-Mawá'iẓ wa-'l-I'tibár fí dhikri 'l-Khiṭaṭ wa-'l-Athár*. It was printed at Buláq in 1270 A.H.

[2] *Al-Sulúk li-ma'rifati Duwali 'l-Mulúk*, a history of the Ayyúbids and Mamelukes. The portion relating to the latter dynasty is accessible in the excellent French version by Quatremère (*Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks de l'Égypte*, Paris, 1845).

[3] A. R. Guest, *A List of Writers, Books, and other Authorities mentioned by El Maqrízí in his Khiṭaṭ*, *J.R.A.S.* for 1902, p. 106.

epoch are the *Fakhrí* of Ibnu 'l-Ṭiqṭaqá, a delightful manual of Muḥammadan politics[1] which was written at Mosul in 1302 A.D.; the epitome of universal history by Abu 'l-Fidá, Prince of Ḥamát († 1331); the voluminous Chronicle of Islam by Dhahabí († 1348); the high-flown Biography of Tímúr entitled *'Ajá'ibu 'l-Maqdúr*, or 'Marvels of Destiny,' by Ibn 'Arabsháh († 1450); and the *Nujúm al-Záhira* ('Resplendent Stars') by Abu 'l-Maḥásin b. Taghríbirdí († 1469), which contains the annals of Egypt under the Moslems. The political and literary history of Muḥammadan Spain by Maqqarí of Tilimsán († 1632) was mentioned in the last chapter.[2]

Jalálu 'l-Dín al-Suyúṭí (1445–1505 A.D.).

If we were asked to select a single figure who should exhibit as completely as possible in his own person the literary tendencies of the Alexandrian age of Arabic civilisation, our choice would assuredly fall on Jalálu 'l-Dín al-Suyúṭí, who was born at Suyúṭ (Usyúṭ) in Upper Egypt in 1445 A.D. His family came originally from Persia, but, like Dhahabí, Ibn Taghríbirdí, and many celebrated writers of this time, he had, through his mother, an admixture of Turkish blood. At the age of five years and seven months, when his father died, the precocious boy had already reached the *Súratu 'l-Taḥrím* (Súra of Forbidding), which is the sixty-sixth chapter of the Koran, and he knew the whole volume by heart before he was eight years old. He prosecuted his studies under the most renowned masters in every branch of Moslem learning, and on finishing his education held one Professorship after another at Cairo until 1501, when he was deprived of his post in consequence of malversation of the bursary monies in his charge. He died

[1] The *Fakhrí* has been edited by Ahlwardt (1860) and Derenbourg (1895). The simplicity of its style and the varied interest of its contents have made it deservedly popular. Leaving the Koran out of account, I do not know any book that is better fitted to serve as an introduction to Arabic literature.

[2] See p. 413, n. 1.

four years later in the islet of Rawḍa on the Nile, whither he had retired under the pretence of devoting the rest of his life to God. We possess the titles of more than five hundred separate works which he composed. This number would be incredible but for the fact that many of them are brief pamphlets displaying the author's curious erudition on all sorts of abstruse subjects—*e.g.*, whether the Prophet wore trousers, whether his turban had a point, and whether his parents are in Hell or Paradise. Suyúṭí's indefatigable pen travelled over an immense field of knowledge—Koran, Tradition, Law, Philosophy and History, Philology and Rhetoric. Like some of the old Alexandrian scholars, he seems to have taken pride in a reputation for polygraphy, and his enemies declared that he made free with other men's books, which he used to alter slightly and then give out as his own. Suyúṭí, on his part, laid before the Shaykhu 'l-Islám a formal accusation of plagiarism against Qasṭalláni, an eminent contemporary divine. We are told that his vanity and arrogance involved him in frequent quarrels, and that he was 'cut' by his learned brethren. Be this as it may, he saw what the public wanted. His compendious and readable handbooks were famed throughout the Moslem world, as he himself boasts, from India to Morocco, and did much to popularise the scientific culture of the day. It will be enough to mention here the *Itqán* on Koranic exegesis; the *Tafsíru 'l-Jalálayn*, or 'Commentary on the Koran by the two Jaláls,' which was begun by Jalálu 'l-Dín al-Maḥallí and finished by his namesake, Suyúṭí; the *Muzhir* (*Mizhar*), a treatise on philology; the *Ḥusnu 'l-Muḥáḍara*, a history of Old and New Cairo; and the *Ta'ríkhu 'l-Khulafá*, or 'History of the Caliphs.'

To dwell longer on the literature of this period would only be to emphasise its scholastic and unoriginal character. A passing mention, however, is due to the encyclopædists Nuwayrí (†1332), author of the *Niháyatu 'l-Arab*, and Ibnu 'l-Wardí

(†1349). Ṣafadí (†1363) compiled a gigantic biographical dictionary, the *Wáfí bi 'l-Wafayát*, in twenty-six volumes, and the learned traditionist, Ibn Ḥajar of Ascalon (†1449), has left a large number of writings, among which it will be sufficient to name the *Iṣába fí tamyíz al-Ṣaḥába*, or Lives of the Companions of the Prophet.[1] We shall conclude this part of our subject by enumerating a few celebrated works which may be described in modern terms as standard text-books for the Schools and Universities of Islam. Amidst the host of manuals of Theology and Jurisprudence, with their endless array of abridgments, commentaries, and supercommentaries, possibly the best known to European students are those by Abu 'l-Barakát al-Nasafí (†1310), 'Aḍudu 'l-Dín al-Íjí (†1355), Sídí Khalíl al-Jundí (†1365), Taftázání (†1389), Sharíf al-Jurjání (†1413), and Muḥammad b. Yúsuf al-Sanúsí (†1486). For Philology and Lexicography we have the *Alfiyya*, a versified grammar by Ibn Málik of Jaen (†1273); the *Ájurrúmiyya* on the rudiments of grammar, an exceedingly popular compendium by Ṣanhájí (†1323); and two famous Arabic dictionaries, the *Lisánu 'l-'Arab* by Jamálu 'l-Dín Ibn Mukarram (†1311), and the *Qámús* by Fírúzábádí (†1414). Nor, although he was a Turk, should we leave unnoticed the great bibliographer Ḥájjí Khalífa (†1658), whose *Kashfu 'l-Ẓunún* contains the titles, arranged alphabetically, of all the Arabic, Persian, and Turkish books of which the existence was known to him.

Other scholars of the period.

The Mameluke period gave final shape to the *Alf Layla wa-Layla*, or 'Thousand and One Nights,' a work which is far more popular in Europe than the Koran or any other masterpiece of Arabic literature. The modern title, 'Arabian Nights,' tells only a part of the truth. Mas'údí (†956 A.D.) mentions

[1] *A Biographical Dictionary of Persons who knew Mohammad*, ed. by Sprenger and others (Calcutta, 1856–1873).

an old Persian book, the *Hazár Afsána* ('Thousand Tales') which "is generally called the Thousand and One Nights; it is the story of the King and his Vizier, and of the Vizier's daughter and her slave-girl: Shírázád and Dínázád."[1] The author of the *Fihrist*, writing in 988 A.D., begins his chapter "concerning the Story-Tellers and the Fabulists and the names of the books which they composed" with the following passage (p. 304):—

The 'Thousand and One Nights.'

"The first who composed fables and made books of them and put them by in treasuries and sometimes introduced animals as speaking them were the Ancient Persians. Afterwards the Parthian kings, who form the third dynasty of the kings of Persia, showed the utmost zeal in this matter. Then in the days of the Sásánian kings such books became numerous and abundant, and the Arabs translated them into the Arabic tongue, and they soon reached the hands of philologists and rhetoricians, who corrected and embellished them and composed other books in the same style. Now the first book ever made on this subject was the Book of the Thousand Tales (*Hazár Afsán*), on the following occasion: A certain king of Persia used to marry a woman for one night and kill her the next morning. And he wedded a wise and clever princess, called Shahrázád, who began to tell him stories and brought the tale at daybreak to a point that induced the king to spare her life and ask her on the second night to finish her tale. So she continued until a thousand nights had passed, and she was blessed with a son by him. . . . And the king had a stewardess (*qahramána*) named Dínárzád, who was in league with the queen. It is also said that this book was composed for Ḥumání, the daughter of Bahman, and there are various traditions concerning it. The truth, if God will, is that Alexander (the Great) was the first who heard stories by night, and he had people to make him laugh and divert him with tales; although he did not seek amusement therein, but only to store and preserve them (in his memory). The kings who came after him used the 'Thousand Tales' (*Hazár Afsán*) for this

Persian origin of the 'Thousand and One Nights.'

The *Hazár Afsán.*

[1] *Murúju 'l-Dhahab*, ed. by Barbier de Meynard, vol. iv. p. 90. The names Shírázád and Dínázád are obviously Persian. Probably the former is a corruption of Chihrázád, meaning 'of noble race,' while Dínázád signifies 'of noble religion.' My readers will easily recognise the familiar Scheherazade and Dinarzade.

purpose. It covers a space of one thousand nights, but contains less than two hundred stories, because the telling of a single story often takes several nights. I have seen the complete work more than once, and it is indeed a vulgar, insipid book (*kitábun ghaththun báridu 'l-ḥadíth*).[1]

Abú 'Abdalláh Muḥammad b. 'Abdús al-Jahshiyárí (†942–943 A.D.), the author of the 'Book of Viziers,' began to compile a book in which he selected one thousand stories of the Arabs, the Persians, the Greeks, and other peoples, every piece being independent and unconnected with the rest. He gathered the story-tellers round him and took from them the best of what they knew and were able to tell, and he chose out of the fable and story-books whatever pleased him. He was a skilful craftsman, so he put together from this material 480 nights, each night an entire story of fifty pages, more or less, but death surprised him before he completed the thousand tales as he had intended."

Different sources of the collection.

Evidently, then, the *Hazár Afsán* was the kernel of the 'Arabian Nights,' and it is probable that this Persian archetype included the most finely imaginative tales in the existing collection, *e.g.*, the 'Fisherman and the Genie,' 'Camaralzamán and Budúr,' and the 'Enchanted Horse.' As time went on, the original stock received large additions which may be divided into two principal groups, both Semitic in character : the one belonging to Baghdád and consisting mainly of humorous anecdotes and love romances in which the famous Caliph 'Haroun Alraschid' frequently comes on the scene ; the other having its centre in Cairo, and marked by a roguish, ironical pleasantry as well as by the mechanic supernaturalism which is perfectly illustrated in 'Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp.' But, apart from these three sources, the 'Arabian Nights' has in the course of centuries accumulated and absorbed an immense number of Oriental folk-tales of every description, equally various in origin and style. The oldest translation by Galland (Paris, 1704–1717) is a charming

[1] Strange as it may seem, this criticism represents the view of nearly all Moslem scholars who have read the 'Arabian Nights.'

paraphrase, which in some respects is more true to the spirit of the original than are the scholarly renderings of Lane and Burton.

The 'Romance of 'Antar' (*Sírat̲u 'Antar*) is traditionally ascribed to the great philologist, Aṣma'í,[1] who flourished in the reign of Hárún al-Rashíd, but this must be considered as an invention of the professional reciters who sit in front of Oriental cafés and entertain the public with their lively declamations.[2] According to Brockelmann, the work in its present form apparently dates from the time of the Crusades.[3] Its hero is the celebrated heathen poet and warrior, 'Antara b. Shaddád, of whom we have already given an account as author of one of the seven *Mu'allaqát*. Though the Romance exhibits all the anachronisms and exaggerations of popular legend, it does nevertheless portray the unchanging features of Bedouin life with admirable fidelity and picturesqueness. Von Hammer, whose notice in the *Mines de l'Orient* (1802) was the means of introducing the *Sírat̲u 'Antar* to European readers, justly remarks that it cannot be translated in full owing to its portentous length. It exists in two recensions called respectively the Arabian (*Ḥijáziyya*) and the Syrian (*Shámiyya*), the latter being very much curtailed.[4]

The 'Romance of 'Antar.'

While the decadent state of Arabic literature during all

[1] Many episodes are related on the authority of Aṣma'í, Abú 'Ubayda, and Wahb b. Munabbih.

[2] Those who recite the *Sírat̲u 'Antar* are named '*Anátira*, sing. '*Antarí*. See Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, ch. xxiii.

[3] That it was extant in some shape before 1150 A.D. seems to be beyond doubt. *Cf.* the *Journal Asiatique* for 1838, p. 383; Wüstenfeld, *Gesch. der Arab. Aerzte*, No. 172.

[4] *Antar, a Bedoueen Romance*, translated from the Arabic by Terrick Hamilton (London, 1820), vol. i, p. xxiii seq. See, however, Flügel's Catalogue of the Kais. Kön. Bibl. at Vienna, vol. ii, p. 6. Further details concerning the 'Romance of 'Antar' will be found in Thorbecke's *'Antarah* (Leipzig, 1867), p. 31 sqq. The whole work has been published at Cairo in thirty-two volumes.

these centuries was immediately caused by unfavourable social and political conditions, the real source of the malady lay deeper, and must, I think, be referred to the spiritual paralysis which had long been creeping over Islam and which manifested itself by the complete victory of the Ash'arites or Scholastic Theologians about 1200 A.D. Philosophy and Rationalism were henceforth as good as dead. Two parties remained in possession of the field—the orthodox and the mystics. The former were naturally intolerant of anything approaching to free-thought, and in their principle of *ijmá'*, *i.e.*, the consensus of public opinion (which was practically controlled by themselves), they found a potent weapon against heresy. How ruthlessly they sometimes used it we may see from the following passage in the *Yawáqit* of Sha'ráni. After giving instances of the persecution to which the Ṣúfís of old—Báyazíd, Dhu 'l-Nún, and others—were subjected by their implacable enemies, the *'Ulamá*, he goes on to speak of what had happened more recently [1] :—

Orthodoxy and mysticism.

"They brought the Imám Abú Bakr al-Nábulusí, notwithstanding his merit and profound learning and rectitude in religion, from the Maghrib to Egypt and testified that he was a heretic (*zindíq*). The Sultan gave orders that he should be suspended by his feet and flayed alive. While the sentence was being carried out, he began to recite the Koran with such an attentive and humble demeanour that he moved the hearts of the people, and they were near making a riot. And likewise they caused Nasímí to be flayed at Aleppo.[2] When he silenced them by

Persecution of heretics.

[1] Sha'ráni, *Yawáqit* (ed. of Cairo, 1277 A.H.), p. 18.

[2] In 1417 A.D. The reader will find a full and most interesting account of Nasímí, who is equally remarkable as a Turkish poet and as a mystic belonging to the sect of the Ḥurúfís, in Mr. E. J. W. Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. i, pp. 343–368. It is highly improbable that the story related here gives the true ground on which he was condemned: his pantheistic utterances afford a sufficient explanation, and the Turkish biographer, Laṭífí, specifies the verse which cost him his life. I may add that the author of the *Shadharátu 'l-Dhahab* calls him Nasímu 'l-Dín of

his arguments, they devised a plan for his destruction, thus : They wrote the *Súratu 'l-Ikhlás*[1] on a piece of paper and bribed a cobbler of shoes, saying to him, 'It contains only love and pleasantness, so place it inside the sole of the shoe.' Then they took that shoe and sent it from a far distance as a gift to the Shaykh (Nasímí), who put it on, for he knew not. His adversaries went to the governor of Aleppo and said : 'We have sure information that Nasímí has written, *Say, God is One*, and has placed the writing in the sole of his shoe. If you do not believe us, send for him and see!' The governor did as they wished. On the production of the paper, the Shaykh resigned himself to the will of God and made no answer to the charge, knowing well that he would be killed on that pretext. I was told by one who studied under his disciples that all the time when he was being flayed Nasímí was reciting *muwashshaḥs* in praise of the Unity of God, until he composed five hundred verses, and that he was looking at his executioners and smiling. And likewise they brought Shaykh Abu 'l-Ḥasan al-Shádhilí[2] from the West to Egypt and bore witness that he was a heretic, but God delivered him from their plots. And they accused Shaykh 'Izzu 'l-Dín b. 'Abd al-Salám[3] of infidelity and sat in judgment over him on account of some expressions in his *'Aqída* (Articles of Faith) and urged the Sultan to punish him ; afterwards, however, he was restored to favour. They denounced Shaykh Táju 'l-Dín al-Subkí[4] on the same charge, asserting that he held it lawful to drink wine and that he wore at night the badge (*ghiyár*) of the unbelievers and the zone (*zunnár*)[5] ; and they brought him, manacled and in chains, from Syria to Egypt."

This picture is too highly coloured. It must be admitted for the credit of the Arab *'Ulamá*, that they seldom resorted to violence. Islam was happily spared the horrors of an organised Inquisition. On the other hand, their authority was

Tabríz (he is generally said to be a native of Nasím in the district of Baghdád), and observes that he resided in Aleppo, where his followers were numerous and his heretical doctrines widely disseminated.

[1] The 112th chapter of the Koran. See p. 164.

[2] Founder of the Shádhiliyya Order of Dervishes. He died in 1258 A.D.

[3] A distinguished jurist and scholar who received the honorary title, 'Sultan of the Divines.' He died at Cairo in 1262 A.D.

[4] An eminent canon lawyer († 1370 A.D.).

[5] It was the custom of the Zoroastrians (and, according to Moslem belief, of the Christians and other infidels) to wear a girdle round the waist.

now so firmly established that all progress towards moral and intellectual liberty had apparently ceased, or at any rate only betrayed itself in spasmodic outbursts. Ṣúfiism in some degree represented such a movement, but the mystics shared the triumph of Scholasticism and contributed to the reaction which ensued. No longer an oppressed minority struggling for toleration, they found themselves side by side with reverend doctors on a platform broad enough to accommodate all parties, and they saw the great freethinkers of their own sect turned into Saints of the orthodox Church. The compromise did not always work smoothly—in fact, there was continual friction—but on the whole it seems to have borne the strain wonderfully well. If pious souls were shocked by the lawlessness of the Dervishes, and if bigots would fain have burned the books of Ibnu 'l-'Arabí and Ibnu 'l-Fárid, the divines in general showed a disposition to suspend judgment in matters touching holy men and to regard them as standing above human criticism.

As typical representatives of the religious life of this period we may take two men belonging to widely opposite camps—Taqiyyu 'l-Dín Ibn Taymiyya and 'Abdu 'l-Wahháb al-Sha'ráni.

Ibn Taymiyya was born at Ḥarrán in 1263 A.D. A few years later his father, fleeing before the Mongols, brought him to Damascus, where in due course he received an excellent education. It is said that he never forgot anything which he had once learned, and his knowledge of theology and law was so extensive as almost to justify the saying, "A tradition that Ibn Taymiyya does not recognise is no tradition." Himself a Ḥanbalite of the deepest dye—holding, in other words, that the Koran must be interpreted according to its letter and not by the light of reason—he devoted his life with rare courage to the work of religious reform. His aim, in short, was to restore the primitive monotheism taught by the Prophet and to purge Islam

Ibn Taymiyya (1263—1328 A.D.).

of the heresies and corruptions which threatened to destroy it. One may imagine what a hornet's nest he was attacking. Mystics, philosophers, and scholastic theologians, all fell alike under the lash of his denunciation. Bowing to no authority, but drawing his arguments from the traditions and practice of the early Church, he expressed his convictions in the most forcible terms, without regard to consequences. Although several times thrown into prison, he could not be muzzled for long. The climax was reached when he lifted up his voice against the superstitions of the popular faith—saint-worship, pilgrimage to holy shrines, vows, offerings, and invocations. These things, which the zealous puritan condemned as sheer idolatry, were part of a venerable cult that was hallowed by ancient custom, and had engrafted itself in luxuriant overgrowth upon Islam. The mass of Moslems believed, and still believe implicitly in the saints, accept their miracles, adore their relics, visit their tombs, and pray for their intercession. Ibn Taymiyya even declared that it was wrong to implore the aid of the Prophet or to make a pilgrimage to his sepulchre. It was a vain protest. He ended his days in captivity at Damascus. The vast crowds who attended his funeral—we are told that there were present 200,000 men and 15,000 women—bore witness to the profound respect which was universally felt for the intrepid reformer. Oddly enough, he was buried in the Cemetery of the Ṣúfís, whose doctrines he had so bitterly opposed, and the multitude revered his memory—as a saint! The principles which inspired Ibn Taymiyya did not fall to the ground, although their immediate effect was confined to a very small circle. We shall see them reappearing victoriously in the Wahhábite movement of the eighteenth century.

Notwithstanding the brilliant effort of Ghazálí to harmonise dogmatic theology with mysticism, it soon became clear that the two parties were in essence irreconcilable. The orthodox clergy who held fast by the authority of the Koran and the

Traditions saw a grave danger to themselves in the esoteric revelation which the mystics claimed to possess; while the latter, though externally conforming to the law of Islam, looked down with contempt on the idea that true knowledge of God could be derived from theology, or from any source except the inner light of heavenly inspiration. Hence the antithesis of *faqíh* (theologian) and *faqír* (dervish), the one class forming a powerful official hierarchy in close alliance with the Government, whereas the Ṣúfís found their chief support among the people at large, and especially among the poor. We need not dwell further on the natural antagonism which has always existed between these rival corporations, and which is a marked feature in the modern history of Islam. It will be more instructive to spend a few moments with the last great Muḥammadan theosophist, 'Abdu 'l-Wahháb al-Sha'rání, a man who, with all his weaknesses, was an original thinker, and exerted an influence strongly felt to this day, as is shown by the steady demand for his books. He was born about the beginning of the sixteenth century. Concerning his outward life we have little information beyond the facts that he was a weaver by trade and resided in Cairo. At this time Egypt was a province of the Ottoman Empire. Sha'rání contrasts the miserable lot of the peasantry under the new *régime* with their comparative prosperity under the Mamelukes. So terrible were the exactions of the tax-gatherers that the fellah was forced to sell the whole produce of his land, and sometimes even the ox which ploughed it, in order to save himself and his family from imprisonment; and every lucrative business was crushed by confiscation. It is not to be supposed, however, that Sha'rání gave serious attention to such sublunary matters. He lived in a world of visions and wonderful experiences. He conversed with angels and prophets, like his more famous predecessor, Muḥiyyu 'l-Dín Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, whose *Meccan Revelations* he studied and epitomised. His autobiography entitled *Laṭá'ifu 'l-Minan*

Sha'rání († 1565 A.D.).

displays the hierophant in full dress. It is a record of the singular spiritual gifts and virtues with which he was endowed, and would rank as a masterpiece of shameless self-laudation, did not the author repeatedly assure us that all his extraordinary qualities are Divine blessings and are gratefully set forth by their recipient *ad majorem Dei gloriam*. We should be treating Sha'rání very unfairly if we judged him by this work alone. The arrogant miracle-monger was one of the most learned men of his day, and could beat the scholastic theologians with their own weapons. Indeed, he regarded theology (*fiqh*) as the first step towards Ṣúfiism, and endeavoured to show that in reality they are different aspects of the same science. He also sought to harmonise the four great schools of law, whose disagreement was consecrated by the well-known saying ascribed to the Prophet: "The variance of my people is an act of Divine mercy" (*ikhtiláfu ummatí raḥmat*[un]). Like the Arabian Ṣúfís generally, Sha'rání kept his mysticism within narrow bounds, and declared himself an adherent of the moderate section which follows Junayd of Baghdád († 909–910 A.D.). For all his extravagant pretensions and childish belief in the supernatural, he never lost touch with the Muḥammadan Church.

In the thirteenth century Ibn Taymiyya had tried to eradicate the abuses which obscured the simple creed of Islam. He failed, but his work was carried on by others and was crowned, after a long interval, by the Wahhábite Reformation.[1]

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahháb,[2] from whom its name is

[1] See *Materials for a History of the Wahabys*, by J. L. Burckhardt, published in the second volume of his *Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys* (London, 1831). Burckhardt was in Arabia while the Turks were engaged in re-conquering the Ḥijáz from the Wahhábís. His graphic and highly interesting narrative has been summarised by Dozy, *Essai sur l'histoire de l'Islamisme*, ch. 13.

[2] Following Burckhardt's example, most European writers call him simply 'Abdu 'l-Wahháb.

derived, was born about 1720 A.D. in Najd, the Highlands of Arabia. In his youth he visited the principal cities of the East, "as is much the practice with his countrymen even now,"[1] and what he observed in the course of his travels convinced him that Islam was thoroughly corrupt. Fired by the example of Ibn Taymiyya, whose writings he copied with his own hand,[2] Ibn 'Abd al-Wahháb determined to re-establish the pure religion of Muḥammad in its primitive form. Accordingly he returned home and retired with his family to Dir'iyya at the time when Muḥammad b. Sa'úd was the chief personage of the town. This man became his first convert and soon after married his daughter. But it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that the Wahhábís, under 'Abdu 'l-'Azíz, son of Muḥammad b. Sa'úd, gained their first great successes. In 1801 they sacked Imám-Ḥusayn,[3] a town in the vicinity of Baghdád, massacred five thousand persons, and destroyed the cupola of Ḥusayn's tomb; the veneration paid by all Shí'ites to that shrine being, as Burckhardt says, a sufficient cause to attract the Wahhábí fury against it. Two years later they made themselves masters of the whole Ḥijáz, including Mecca and Medína. On the death of 'Abdu 'l-'Azíz, who was assassinated in the same year, his eldest son, Sa'úd, continued the work of conquest and brought the greater part of Arabia under Wahhábite rule. At last, in 1811, Turkey despatched a fleet and army to recover the Holy Cities. This task was accomplished by Muḥammad 'Alí, the Pasha of Egypt (1812–13), and after five years' hard fighting the war ended in favour of the Turks, who in 1818 inflicted a severe defeat on the Wahhábís and took their capital, Dir'iyya, by storm. The sect, however, still maintains

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahháb and his successors.

[1] Burckhardt, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 96.

[2] MSS. of Ibn Taymiyya copied by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahháb are extant (Goldziher in *Z.D.M.G.*, vol. 52, p. 156).

[3] This appears to be the place usually called Karbalá or Mashhad Ḥusayn.

its power in Central Arabia, although it has lost all political importance.

The Wahhábís were regarded by the Turks as infidels and authors of a new religion. It was natural that they should appear in this light, for they interrupted the pilgrim-caravans, demolished the domes and ornamented tombs of the most venerable Saints (not excepting that of the Prophet himself), and broke to pieces the Black Stone in the Ka'ba. All this they did not as innovators, but as reformers. They resembled the Carmathians only in their acts. Burckhardt says very truly: "Not a single new precept was to be found in the Wahaby code. Abd el Waháb took as his sole guide the Koran and the Sunne (or the laws formed upon the traditions of Mohammed); and the only difference between his sect and the orthodox Turks, however improperly so termed, is, that the Wahabys rigidly follow the same laws which the others neglect, or have ceased altogether to observe."[1] "The Wahhábites," says Dozy, "attacked the idolatrous worship of Mahomet; although he was in their eyes a Prophet sent to declare the will of God, he was no less a man like others, and his mortal shell, far from having mounted to heaven, rested in the tomb at Medína. Saint-worship they combated just as strongly. They proclaimed that all men are equal before God; that even the most virtuous and devout cannot intercede with Him; and that, consequently, it is a sin to invoke the Saints and to adore their relics."[2] In the same puritan spirit they forbade the smoking of tobacco, the wearing of gaudy robes, and praying over the rosary. "It has been stated that they likewise prohibited the drinking of coffee; this, however, is not the fact: they have always used it to an immoderate degree."[3]

The Wahhábite Reformation.

The Wahhábite movement has been compared with the

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 112.
[2] *Essai sur l'histoire de l'Islamisme*, p. 416.
[3] Burckhardt, *loc. laud.*, p. 115.

Protestant Reformation in Europe; but while the latter was followed by the English and French Revolutions, the former has not yet produced any great political results. It has borne fruit in a general religious revival throughout the world of Islam and particularly in the mysterious Sanúsiyya Brotherhood, whose influence is supreme in Tripoli, the Sahara, and the whole North African Hinterland, and whose members are reckoned by millions. Muḥammad b. 'Alí b. Sanúsí, the founder of this vast and formidable organisation, was born at Algiers in 1791, lived for many years at Mecca, and died at Jaghbúb in the Libyan desert, midway between Egypt and Tripoli, in 1859. Concerning the real aims of the Sanúsís I must refer the reader to an interesting paper by the Rev. E. Sell (*Essays on Islam*, p. 127 sqq.). There is no doubt that they are utterly opposed to all Western and modern civilisation, and seek to regenerate Islam by establishing an independent theocratic State on the model of that which the Prophet and his successors called into being at Medína in the seventh century after Christ.

The Sanúsís in Africa.

Since Napoleon showed the way by his expedition to Egypt in 1798, the Arabs in that country, as likewise in Syria and North Africa, have come more and more under European influence.[1] The above-mentioned Muḥammad 'Alí, who founded the Khedivial dynasty, and his successors were fully alive to the practical benefits which might be obtained from the superior culture of the West, and although their policy in this respect was marked by greater zeal than discretion, they did not exert themselves altogether in vain. The introduction of the printing-press in 1821 was an epoch-making measure. If, on the one hand, the publication of

Islam and modern civilisation.

[1] I cannot enter into details on this subject. A review of modern Arabic literature is given by Brockelmann, *Gesch. der Arab. Litt.*, vol. ii, pp. 469–511, and by Huart, *Arabic Literature*, pp. 411–443.

many classical works, which had well-nigh fallen into oblivion, rekindled the enthusiasm of the Arabs for their national literature, the cause of progress—I use the word without prejudice—has been furthered by the numerous political, literary, and scientific journals which are now regularly issued in every country where Arabic is spoken.[1] Besides these ephemeral sheets, books of all sorts, old and new, have been multiplied by the native and European presses of Cairo, Buláq, and Beyrout. The science and culture of Europe have been rendered accessible in translations and adaptations of which the complete list would form a volume in itself. Thus, an Arab may read in his own language the tragedies of Racine, the comedies of Molière,[2] the fables of La Fontaine, 'Paul and Virginia,' the 'Talisman,' 'Monte Cristo' (not to mention scores of minor romances), and even the Iliad of Homer.[3] The learned and purely technical literature derived immediately or indirectly from Europe is extensive. In short, France and Britain have taken the place which was occupied in the Golden Age of Islam by Greece and India, but we must, I think, confess that down to the present day the results of all this activity amount to little more than the proverbial mouse.

Hitherto modern culture has only touched the surface of Islam. Whether it will eventually strike deeper and penetrate the inmost barriers of that scholastic discipline and literary tradition which are so firmly rooted in the affections of the Arab people, or whether it will always continue to be an exotic and highly-prized accomplishment of the enlightened and emancipated few, but an object of scorn and detestation to Moslems in general—these are questions that may not be solved for centuries to come.

[1] See M. Hartmann, *The Arabic Press of Egypt* (London, 1899).

[2] Brockelmann, *loc. cit.*, p. 476.

[3] Translated into Arabic verse by Sulaymán al-Bistání (Cairo, 1904). See Professor Margoliouth's interesting notice of this work in the *J.R.A.S.* for 1905, p. 417 sqq.

Meanwhile the Past affords an ample and splendid field of study.

> *"Man lam ya'i 'l-ta'rikha fi ṣadrihi*
> *Lam yadri ḥulwa 'l-'ayshi min murrihi*
> *Wa-man wa'á akhbára man qad maḍá*
> *Aḍáfa a'már^{an} ilá 'umrihi."*
>
> "He in whose heart no History is enscrolled
> Cannot discern in life's alloy the gold.
> But he that keeps the records of the Dead
> Adds to his life new lives a hundredfold."

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS BY EUROPEAN AUTHORS

THE following list is intended to give students of Arabic as well as those who cannot read that language the means of obtaining further information concerning the various topics which fall within the scope of a work such as this. Since anything approaching to a complete bibliography is out of the question, I have mentioned only a few of the most important translations from Arabic into English, French, German, and Latin; and I have omitted (1) monographs on particular Arabic writers, whose names, together with the principal European works relating to them, will be found in Brockelmann's great History of Arabic Literature, and (2) a large number of books and articles which appeal to specialists rather than to students. Additional information is supplied by Professor Browne in his *Literary History of Persia*, vol. i, pp. 481–496, and Mr. D. B. Macdonald in his *Development of Muslim Theology, etc.* (London, 1903), pp. 358–367; while many texts and translations of an older date are comprised in the 'Litteratura Arabica,' which occupies pp. 109–136 of J. H. Petermann's Grammar in the 'Porta Linguarum Orientalium' Series (1867). Those who require more detailed references may consult the *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux Arabes publ. dans l'Europe chrétienne de* 1810 *à* 1885, by V. Chauvin (Liège, 1892–1903), the *Orientalische Bibliographie*, edited by A. Müller, E. Kuhn, and L. Scherman (Berlin, 1887—), and the *Catalogue of the Arabic Books in the British Museum*, by Mr. A. G. Ellis, 2 vols. (London, 1894–1902).

In each section works of outstanding authority and value are marked with an asterisk.

I

PHILOLOGY.

1. *Histoire générale des langues sémitiques*, by E. Renan (3rd ed., Paris, 1863).

*2. *Die Semitischen Sprachen*, by Th. Nöldeke (Leipzig, 1887).
An improved and enlarged reprint of the German original

of his article, 'Semitic Languages,' in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (9th edition).

*3. *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, by W. Wright, 3rd ed., revised by W. Robertson Smith and M. J. de Goeje, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1896–98).

The best Arabic grammar for advanced students. Beginners may prefer to use the abridgment by F. du Pre Thornton, *Elementary Arabic: a Grammar* (Cambridge University Press, 1905), or Socin's *Arabic Grammar*, translated by A. R. S. Kennedy (London, 1895).

*4. *Arabic-English Lexicon*, by E. W. Lane, 8 parts (London, 1863–93).

This monumental work is unfortunately incomplete. Among other lexica those of Freytag (Arabic and Latin, 4 vols, Halle, 1830–37), A. de Biberstein Kazimirski (Arabic and French, 2 vols., Paris, 1846–60, and 4 vols., Cairo, 1875), and Dozy's *Supplément aux Dictionnaires arabes*, 2 vols. (Leyden, 1881), deserve special notice. Smaller dictionaries, sufficient for ordinary purposes, have been compiled by Belot (*Vocabulaire arabe-français*, 5th ed., Beyrout, 1898), and Wortabet and Porter (*Arabic-English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., Beyrout, 1893).

*5. *Abhandlungen zur Arabischen Philologie*, by Ignaz Goldziher, Part I (Leyden, 1896).

Contains valuable essays on the origins of Arabic Poetry and other matters connected with literary history.

6. *Einleitung in das Studium der Arabischen Sprache*, by G. W. Freytag (Bonn, 1861).

7. *Die Rhetorik der Araber*, by A. F. Mehren (Copenhagen, 1853).

II

GENERAL WORKS ON ARABIAN HISTORY, BIOGRAPHY, GEOGRAPHY, LITERATURE, ETC.

*8. *Chronique de Ṭabarí, traduite sur la version persane de . . . Bel'amí*, by H. Zotenberg, 4 vols. (Paris, 1867–74).

*9. The *Murûju 'l-Dhahab* of Mas'údí (*Maçoudi: Les Prairies d'Or*), Arabic text with French translation by Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille, 9 vols. (Paris, 1861–77).

The works of Ṭabarí and Mas'údí are the most ancient and celebrated Universal Histories in the Arabic language.

*10. *Abulfedæ Annales Muslemici arabice et latine*, by J. J. Reiske, 5 vols. (Hafniæ, 1789–94).

*11 *Der Islam im Morgen und Abendland*, by August Müller, 2 vols. (Berlin, 1885–87).

12. *Histoire générale des Arabes: leur empire, leur civilisation, leurs écoles philosophiques, scientifiques et littéraires*, by L. A. Sédillot, 2 vols. (Paris, 1877).

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INDEX

In the following Index it has been found necessary to omit the accents indicating the long vowels, and the dots which are used in the text to distinguish letters of similar pronunciation. On the other hand, the definite article *al* has been prefixed throughout to those Arabic names which it properly precedes: it is sometimes written in full, but is generally denoted by a hyphen, *e.g.* '-'Abbas for al-'Abbas. Names of books, as well as Oriental words and technical terms explained in the text, are printed in italics. Where a number of references occur under one heading, the more important are, as a rule, shown by means of thicker type.

A

Aaron, 215, 273
'Abbad, 421
'Abbadid dynasty, the, 414, 421–424, 431
-'Abbas, 146, 249, 250, 251
-'Abbas b. -Ahnaf (poet), 261
'Abbasa, 261
'Abbasid history, two periods of, 257
'Abbasid propaganda, the, 249–251
'Abbasids, the, xxviii, xxix, xxx, 65, 181, **182,** 193, 194, 220, **249–253, 254–284,** 287–291, **365–367,** 373
'Abdullah, father of the Prophet, xxvii, 146, 148, 250
'Abdullah, brother of Durayd b. -Simma, 83
'Abdullah, the Amir (Spanish Umayyad), 411
'Abdullah b. -'Abbas, 145, 237, 249
'Abdullah b. Hamdan, 269
'Abdullah b. Ibad, 211
'Abdullah b. Mas'ud, 352
'Abdullah b. Maymun al-Qaddah, 271–274, 363
'Abdullah b. Muhammad b. Adham, 423
'Abdullah b. -Mu'tazz. See *Ibnu 'l-Mu'tazz*
'Abdullah b. Saba, 215, 216
'Abdullah b. Tahir, 129
'Abdullah b. Ubayy, 172
'Abdullah b. Yasin al-Kuzuli, 430
'Abdullah b. -Zubayr, 198, 199, 200, 202
'Abdu 'l-'Aziz (Marinid), 436
'Abdu 'l-'Aziz, brother of 'Abdu 'l-Malik, 200
'Abdu 'l-'Aziz, son of Muhammad b. Sa'ud, 466
'Abdu 'l-Ghani al-Nabulusi, 402
'Abdu 'l-Hamid, 267
'Abdu 'l-Malik (Umayyad Caliph), **200–202,** 206, 209, 224, 240, 242, 244, 247, 349, 407
'Abd Manaf, 146
'Abdu 'l-Mu'min (Almohade), 432
'Abdu 'l-Muttalib, 66–68, 146, 148, 154, 250
'Abdu 'l-Qadir al-Baghdadi, 131
'Abdu 'l-Qadir al-Jili, 393
'Abd al-Qays (tribe), 94
'Abdu 'l-Rahman I, the Umayyad, 253, 264, **405–407,** 417, 418
'Abdu 'l-Rahman II (Spanish Umayyad), 409, 418
'Abdu 'l-Rahman III (Spanish Umayyad), **411–412,** 420, 425
'Abdu 'l-Rahman V (Spanish Umayyad), 426
'Abdu 'l-Rahman b. 'Awf, 186
'Abd Shams, 146
'Abd Shams Saba, 14
'Abdu 'l-'Uzza, 159
'Abdu 'l-Wahhab, founder of the Wahhabite sect. See *Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab.*
'Abdu 'l-Wahhab al-Sha'rani. See *-Sha'rani*
'Abdu 'l-Wahid of Morocco (historian), 431, 433
'Abid b. -Abras (poet), 39, 44, 86, 101
'Abid b. Sharya, 13, 19, 247
'Abida b. Hilal, 239
'Abir, xviii
'Abla, 115
-Ablaq (name of a castle), 84
Ablutions, the ceremonial, incumbent on Moslems, 149
-Abna, 29
Abraha, 6, 15, **28, 65–66**
Abraham, xviii, 22, 62, 63, 66, 149, 150, 165, 172, 177
Abraham, the religion of, 62, 149, 177
'Abs (tribe), xix, 61, 88, 114–117
Absal, 433
Abu 'l-'Abbas (Marinid), 436
Abu 'l-'Abbas Ahmad al-Marsi, 327
Abu 'l-'Abbas al-Nami (poet), 270
Abu 'l-'Abbas-Saffah, 182, 253. See *-Saffah*
Abu 'Abdallah Ibnu 'l-Ahmar (Nasrid), 437
Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, 338
Abu Ahmad al-Mihrajani, 370
Abu 'l-'Ala al-Ma'arri, 166, 167, 206, 271, 289, 291, 296, 308, **313–324, 375,** 448
Abu 'Ali al-Qali, 420
Abu 'Ali b. Sina, 265. See *Ibn Sina*
Abu 'Amir, the Monk, 170
Abu 'Amr b. al-'Ala, 242, 285, **343**
Abu 'l-Aswad al-Du'ali, 342, 343
Abu 'l-'Atahiya (poet), 261, 291, **296–303,** 308, 312, 324, 374
Abu Ayman (title), 14
Abu Bakr (Caliph), xxvii, 142, 153, 175, 180, **183,** 185, 210, 214, 215, 257, 268, 297
Abu Bakr b. Abi 'l-Azhar, 344
Abu Bakr Ibnu 'l-'Arabi of Seville, 399
Abu Bakr b. Mu'awiya, 420
Abu Bakr al-Nabulusi, 460
Abu Bakr al-Razi (physician), 265. See *-Razi*

Abu Bakr b. 'Umar, 430
Abu 'l-Darda, 225
Abu Dawud al-Sijistani, 337
Abu 'l-Faraj of Isfahan, 32, 123, 131, 270, **347**, 419. See *Kitabu 'l-Aghani*
Abu 'l-Faraj al-Babbagha (poet), 270
Abu 'l-Fida (historian), 308, 316, 331, **454**.
Abu Firas al-Hamdani (poet), 270, 304
Abu Ghubshan, 65
Abu Hanifa, 222, 284, 402, 408
Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali b. Harun al-Zanjani, 370
Abu 'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari, 284. See *-Ash'ari*
Abu Hashim, the Imam, 220, 251
Abu Hashim, the Sufi, 229
Abu Hudhayl -'Allaf, 369
Abu 'l-Husayn al-Nuri, 392
Abu 'Imran al-Fasi, 429
Abu Ishaq al-Farisi. See *-Istakhri*
Abu Ja'far -Mansur, 258. See *-Mansur, the Caliph*
Abu Jahl, 158
Abu Karib, the Tubba', 12, 19. See *As'ad Kamil*
Abu Lahab, 159, 160
Abu 'l-Mahasin b. Taghribirdi (historiau), 257, 262, 267, 268, 350, 369, **454**
Abu Marwan Ghaylan, 224
Abu Ma'shar, 361
Abu Mihjan (poet), 127
Abu Mikhnaf, 210
Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, 192, 377
Abu Muslim, 220, **251-252,** 375
Abu Nasr al-Isma'ili, 339
Abu Nu'aym al-Isfahani, 338
Abu Nuwas (poet), 261, 277, **286,** 290, 291, **292-296,** 303, 308, 345, 375
Abu Qabus, *kunya* of -Nu'man III, 45
Abu 'l-Qasim Ahmad. See *-Mustansir*
Abu 'l-Qasim Muhammad, the Cadi, 421
Abu 'l-Qasim b. -Muzaffar, 312
Abu 'l-Qasim al-Zahrawi, 420
Abu Qays b. Abi Anas, 170
Abu Qurra, 221
Abu Sa'id b. Abi 'l-Khayr, 391, 394
Abu Salama, 257
Abu Salih Mansur b. Ishaq (Samanid), 265
Abu 'l-Salt b. Abi Rabi'a, 69
Abu Shaduf, 450
Abu Shamir the Younger, 50
Abu Shamir, *kunya* of -Harith b. 'Amr Muharriq, 50
Abu Shuja' Buwayh, 266
Abu Sufyan, 124, 175, 195
Abu Sulayman al-Darani, 384, 386, 388
Abu Sulayman Muhammad b. Ma'shar al-Bayusti, 370
Abu Talib, uncle of the Prophet, 146, 148, 154, 157, 183, 250
Abu Talib al-Makki, 338, 393
Abu Tammam, author of the *Hamasa*, 79, **129-130,** 288, 316, 324, 331. See *-Hamasa*
Abu 'Ubayda (philologist), 94, 242, 261, 280, 343, **344, 345,** 459
Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah, 51
Abu 'l-Walid al-Baji, 428
Abu Yazid al-Bistami, 391. See *Bayazid al-Bistami*
Abu Yusuf, the Cadi, 283
Abu Zayd of Saruj, 330, 331, 332, 335
Abu Zayd Muhammad al-Qurashi, 130
Abusir, 326
Abyssinia, 53, 155, 156
Abyssinians, the, xxi ; in -Yemen, 5, 6, 26-29 ; invade the Hijaz, 66-68
Academy of Junde-shapur, the, 358
Academy of Sabur, the, 267, 314
'Ad (people), **1, 2,** 3
adab, 283, 346
Adabu 'l-Katib, 346
Adam, xxvi, 62, 63, 244, 398
'Adana (river), 15
'Adawi dervishes, the, 393
Adharbayjan, 17
'Adi (tribe), 233
'Adi b. 'Amr, 94
'Adi Hakkari, 393
'Adi b. Marina, 244
'Adi b. Nasr, 35
'Adi b. Zayd, 40, **45-48,** 49, **138,** 244
'Adiya, 85
Adler, 316
'Adnan, xviii, xix, **xx,** 64
'Adudu 'l-Dawla (Buwayhid), 266, 307
Ælius Gallus, 9
Æthiopic language, the, xvi, xxi
Afghanistan, 268, 275
Africa, xv, xvi
Africa, North, 53, 203, 253, 271, 274, 405, 419, 423, 424, 429, 430, 434, 437, 439, 442, 443, 468
Afshin, 375
-Afwah al-Awdi (poet), 83
-Aghani. See *Kitabu 'l-Aghani*
Aghlabid dynasty, the, 264, 274, 441
Aghmat, 424
-Ahlaf, at -Hira, 38
Ahlu 'l-Kitab, 341
Ahlu 'l-Taswiya, 280. See *Shu'ubites, the*
Ahlu 'l-tawhid wa-'l-'adl, a name given to the Mu'tazilites, 224
Ahlwardt, 76, 101, 125, 128, 133, 136, 286, 293, 294, 304, 349, 454
Ahmad (Buwayhid), 266
Ahmad, brother of Ghazali, 339
Ahmad, father of Ibn Hazm, 426
Ahmad b. Hanbal, 284, 369, 376, 402
Ahmad al-Nahhas, 102
Ahmad b. Tulun, 354
Ahmar of Thamud, 3
Ahnum, 19
Ahqafu 'l-Raml (desert), 1
Ahsanu 'l-Taqasim fi ma'rifati 'l-Aqalim, 357
ahwal, mystical term, 231, 391
-Ahwas (poet), 237
-Ahwaz, 271, 293
A'isha, 151, 183
'Aja 'ibu 'l-Maqdur, 454
-'Ajam (the non-Arabs), 277. See *-Mawali*
-'Ajjaj (poet) 138
-Ajurrumiyya, 456
Akbar (Mogul Emperor), xxx
Akhbaru 'l-Zaman, 353
-Akhtal (poet), 221, 238, **239-242,** 285
akhu 'l-safa, 370
Akilu 'l-Murar (surname), 42
A'lam (philologist), 128
Alamut, 445
'Ala'u 'l-Din Muhammad Khwarizmshah, 444
Albategnius, 361
Albucasis, 420
Albumasar, 361
Alchemists, the, 361, 387
Alchemy, works on, translated into Arabic, 358
Aleppo, 269, 270, 275, 291, 303, 305, 313, 360, 415, 446, 451, 460, 461
Alexander the Great, 17, 276, 358, 457
Alexandria, 340
Alexandrian Library, the, 435
Alf Layla wa-Layla, 456, 459. See *Thousand Nights and a Night* and *Arabian Nights*
-Aliyya, 456
Alfraganus, 361
Algeria, 430
Algiers, 468
Alhambra, the, 435
'Ali (Buwayhid), 266
'Ali, grandson of 'Umar Ibnu 'l-Farid, 394
'Ali b. Abi Talib, the Prophet's son-in-law, xxvii, xxviii, 105, 153, 181, 183, **190-193,** 194, 196, 205, 207-211, **213-218,** 220-222, 243, 249, 250, 251, 264, 267, 273, 274, 342, 343, 349, 377, 432, 442
'Ali b. Abi Talib, public cursing of, 205
'Ali b. -Mansur, Shaykh, 319
'Ali b. Musa b. Ja'far al-Rida, 262, 385
'Alids, the, 258, 259, 337. See *'Ali b. Abi Talib* and *Shi'ites, the*

Allah, 62, 134, 135, 164, 231, 392
Allah, the Muhammadan conception of, 225, 231
Almaqa, 18
Almeria, 421
Almohades, the, 217, 429, **431–434**
Almoravides, the, 423, 429–431
Alp Arslan (Seljuq), 275, 276, 340, 379
Alphabet, the South Arabic, 6, 8, 12
Alphonso VI of Castile, 422, 423, 431
'Alqama b. 'Abada (poet), 121, **125,** 128
'Alqama b. Dhi Jadan (poet), 12
Alvaro, Bishop of Cordova, 414
Amaj, 22
-Amali, 420
-Amaliq (Amalekites), 2, **3,** 63
'Amidu 'l-Mulk al-Kunduri, 379
-Amin, the Caliph, 255, **262,** 293, 343
Amina, mother of the Prophet, 146
'Amir b. Sa'sa'a (tribe), 119
'Amir b. Uhaymir, 87
Amiru 'l-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful), 185
Amiru 'l-Umara (title), 264
'Amr, the Tubba', 25, 26
'Amr b. 'Adi b. Nasr, 35, 36, 37, 40
'Amr b. 'Amir (tribe), 94
'Amr b. 'Amir Ma' al-Sama al-Muzayqiya, 15, 16, 49
'Amr b. -'As, 192
'Amr b. -Harith (Ghassanid), 50, 54, 122
'Amr b. Hind (Lakhmite), 44, 107, 108, 109, 112
'Amr b. Kulthum (poet), 44, 82, 102, **109–113,** 128, 269
'Amr b. Luhayy, 63, 64
'Amr b. Ma'dikarib, 82
'Amr b. Mas'ud, 43
'Amr b. 'Ubayd, 223, 374
'Amr b. Zarib, 35
Amul, 350
Anas, 88
'analira, 459
'Anaza (tribe), xix
-Anbar, 38
-Anbari (philologist), 128
-Anbat, xxv. See *Nabatæans, the*
Ancient Sciences, the, 282
-Andarin, 111
Angels, the Recording, 161
Angora, 104
-Ansar (the Helpers) 171, 241
'Antar, the Romance of, 34, 459
'Antara (poet), 76, 109, **114–116,** 128, 459
'antari, 459
Anthologies of Arabic poetry, 128–130, 289, 325, 343, 347, 348, 417
Anthropomorphism, 369, 376, 379, 432
Antioch, 43
Anushirwan (Sasanian king). See *Nushirwan*
Anushirwan b. Khalid, 329
Aphrodite, 43
-'Aqida, by 'Izzu 'l-Din b. 'Abd al-Salam, 461
'Aqil, 35
Arab horses, the training of, 226
Arab singers in the first century A.H., 236
a'rabi (Bedouin), 210
Arabia, in the 'Abbasid period, 276
Arabia Felix, xvii, 4. See *-Yemen*
Arabian History, three periods of, xxvi
Arabian Nights, the, 238, 256, 261, 292, 421, **456–459**
Arabic language, the, xvi, xvii, xxi–xxv, 6, 77, 201, 203, 239, 265, 277–280, 336, 342, 344
Arabic literature, largely the work of non-Arabs, xxx, xxxi, 276–278
Arabic Press, the, 469
Arabic writing, 201 ; oldest specimens of, xxi, xxii
Arabs, the Ishmaelite, xviii
Arabs of Khurasan, the, thoroughly Persianised, 250
Arabs, the Northern. See *Arabs, the Ishmaelite*
Arabs, the Northern and Southern, racial enmity between, xx, 199, 200, 252, 405, 406
Arabs, the Southern, xvii, xviii, xx, 4. See *Arabs, the Yemenite*
Arabs, the Yemenite, xvii, xviii, xx, 38, 55, 199, 252, 405, 406. See *Sabæans, the ; Himyarites, the*
Arabs, the Yoqtanid, xviii. See *Arabs, the Yemenite*
Aramæans, the, xv, xxv
Aramaic language, the, xvi, xxv, 279, 375
-Araqim, 113, 114
Arbela, 451
Ardashir Babakan, founder of the Sasanian dynasty, 34, 38
Ἀρέθας τοῦ Γαβάλα, 51
Arhakim, 11
'arif (gnostic), 386
'Arifu 'l-Zanadiqa, 373
Aristocracy of Islam, the, 188, 190
Aristotle, 358, 359, 360
-'Arji (poet), 237
Armenia, xv, 352
Arnaud, Th., 9, 15, 17
Arnold, F. A., 105, 107, 109, 111, 113, 114
Arnold, T. W., 184, 223, 224
Arsacids, the, 21, 38
Aryat, 27, 28
-'Asa (name of a mare), 36
'asabiyya, 440
Asad (tribe), xix, 104
As'ad Kamil, the Tubba', 12, **19–23,** 25, 26, 137
Asad b. Musa, 247
Asal, 433
asalib, 289, 315
Ascalon, 456
Ascension of the Prophet, the, 169, 403
Asd (tribe), 19
-A'sha (poet), 16, 101, 121, **123–125,** 128, 138, 139
-Ash'ari (Abu 'l-Hasan), 284, **376–379,** 431
Ash'arites, the, 379, 380, 460
Ash'aru 'l-Hudhaiyyin, 128
-Ashram (surname of Abraha), 28
Asia, xv, 275, 352, 414
Asia, Central, 255
Asia Minor, 269, 399, 434, 446
Asia, Western, xvi, xxix, 358, 442, 444, 446
asama, 153
-Asma'i (philologist), 261, 343, 344. **345,** 459
Assassins, the, 272, 371, 372, 381, 445
Assyrians, the, xv
Assyrian language, the, xvi
Astrologers and Astronomers, 361
Astronomy, 276, 283
Aswad b. -Mundhir, 47
-Athar al-Baqiya, 361
Atharu 'l-Bilad, 416
Athens, 240, 358
'Athtar, 'Athtor (Sabæan divinity), 11, 18
Atlal, 286
'Attar (Persian mystic). See *Faridu'ddin 'Attar*
'Atwada, 28
Aurelian, 34
Aurora, 412
Avempace. See *Ibn Bajja*
Avenzoar, 434
Averroes. See *Ibn Rushd*
Avicenna. See *Ibn Sina*
awa'il (origins), 247
'Awarifu 'l-Ma'arif, 230, 338
-'Awfi, 370
awliya (saints). 393
Awrangzib (Mogul Emperor) xxx
Aws (tribe), 170
Aws b. Hajar (poet), 131
Awwam Abu 'Iran Alu, 11
ayat (verse of the Koran, sign, miracle), 166
Ayatu 'l-Kursi (the Throne-verse), 176
Aybak, 447
-Ayham b. -Harith (Ghassanid), 50

'Ayn Jalut, battle of, 446
'Ayn Ubagh, battle of, 52
ayyamu 'l-'Arab, 55, 356
Ayyubid dynasty, the, 275, 447, 453
Azd (tribe), 79, 374
-Azhar, the mosque, 395
Azraqites (-Azariqa), the, 208, 239

B

Baalbec, 111
Bab al-Mandab, 5
Babak, 258, 375
Babar (Mogul Emperor), xxix, 444
Babylon, xxv, 38
Babylonia, 34, 38, 138, 253, 255, 307. See *-'Iraq*
Babylonians, the, xv
Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions, the, xvi, xxv
Badajoz, 421, 423
Badis, 428
Badi'u 'l-Zaman al-Hamadhani, 328, 329, 331
Badr, battle of, 158, 174, 175
Badr, freedman of 'Abdu 'l-Rahman the Umayyad, 405, 406
-Baghawi, 337
Baghdad, xxviii, xxix, 131, 182, 254, **255–256**, 290–293, 303, 307, 313, **314**, 315, 326, 338, 340, 345, 346, 347, 350, 351, 352, 355, 357, 359, 362, 365, 369, 376, 380, 382, 385, 387, 392, 399, 412, 415, 418, 431, 441, **444–446**, 447, 449, 450, 458, 461, 465, 466
Baghdad, history of its eminent men, by -Khatib, 355
Baha'u 'l-Dawla (Buwayhid), 267, 314
Bahdala (tribe), 87
Bahira, the monk, 148
Bahman (Sasanian), 457
Bahram Gor (Sasanian), 40, 41
-Bahrayn (province), 107, 108, 186
Bahri Mamelukes, the, 447
Baju, 445
-Bakharzi, 348
Bakil (tribe), 12
Bakr (tribe), xix, 55–60, 61, 69, 70, 76, 93, 107, 109, 113, 114, 242
-Bakri (geographer), 357, 428
Balaam, 73
-Baladhuri (historian), 280, 349
-balagh al-akbar, 371
Balak, 73
-Bal'ami, 265, 352
Balaq (mountain), 17
Balkh, 232, 233, 259, 361, 385
-Balqa, 63
Banat Su'ad, the opening words of an ode, 119, 127, 327
Banu 'l-Ahrar, 29
Banu Hind, 58
Banu Khaldun, 437
Banu Musa, 359
Banu Nahshal, 243
Baptists, name given to the early Moslems, 149
Baqqa, 36
-Baramika, 259. See *Barmecides, the*
Barbier de Meynard, 13, 15, 37, 195, 259, 350, 352, 353, 380, 457
Bardesanes, 364
Barmak, 259
Barmakites, the. See *Barmecides, the*
Barmecides, the, 255, **259–261**, 262, 293
Barquq, Sultan (Mameluke), 452
Bashama, 119
Bashshar b. Burd, 245, 277, 290, **373–374**, 375
-basit (metre), 75
-Basra, xxiv, 127, 133, 134, 186, **189**, 195, 202, 209, 210, 215, 222, 223, 225, 226, 233, 242, 243, 246, 273, 281, 293, 294, 329, 331, 336, 341, 342, **343**, 345, 346, 369, 370, 374, 377, 378
Basset, R., 327
-Basus, 56
-Basus, the War of, **55–60**, 61, 76, 107, 114
-Batiniyya (Batinites), 381, 382, 402. See *Isma'ilis, the*
-Battani, 361
-bayan, 283
-Bayan al-Mughrib, 407
Bayard, 191
Bayazid of Bistam, 460. See *Abu Yazid al-Bistami*
Baybars, Sultan (Mameluke), 447, 448
-Baydawi, 145, 179
bayt (verse), 74, 77
Baytu 'l-Hikma, at Baghdad, 359
-Bazbaz, 60
Bedouin view of life, the, 136
Bedouin warfare, character of, 54, 55
Bedouin women, Mutanabbi's descriptions of, 310
Benu Marthadim, 11
Berber insurrection in Africa, 405
Berbers, the, 204, 274, 405–409, 413, 420, 423, 424, 429–432, 442, 443
Berbers, used as mercenaries, 407
Berlin Royal Library, 8, 12
Bevan, Prof. A. A., 46, 80, 151, 166, 168, 199, 205, 239, 244, 253, 350, 373, 374, 375
Beyrout, 238, 469
Bibliographical Dictionary, by Hajji Khalifa, 456
Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum, 356
Bidpai, the Fables of, 330, 346
Bilqis, 18
-Bimaristan al-'Adudi, 266
Biographies of poets, 346, 347, 348
Birnam Wood, 25
-Biruni (Abu Rayhan), 269, 280, **361**
Bishr b. Abi Khazim (poet), 86
Bishr al-Hafi, 228
Bishr b. -Mu'tamir, 369
Bistam, 391
Black, J. S., 184, 249, 258
Black, the colour of the 'Abbasids, 220, 262
Black Stone in the Ka'ba, the, 63, 274, 319, 467
Blunt, Lady Anne, 88, 101
Blunt, Wilfrid, 88, 101
Bobastro, 410
Boer, T. J. de, 433
Bohlen, 308, 312
Bokhara, 203, 265, 275, 360
Book of Examples, the, by Ibn Khaldun, 437
Book of Sibawayhi, the, 343
Book of the Thousand Tales, the See *Hazar Afsan*
Book of Viziers, the, 458
Books, the Six Canonical, 337
Boswell, 144, 313, 452
Brethren of Purity, the, 370–372
British Museum, the 12, 402
Brockelmann, C., 205, 236, 237, 308, 328, 339, 346, 349, 449, 459, 468, 469
Browne, Prof. E. G., 29, 42, 185, 217, 218, 230, 247, 251, 258, 265, 272, 275, 290, 329, 346, 362, 375, 381, 383, 394, 399, 445
Brünnow, R. E., 32, 35, 49, 51, 209, 210
Brutus, 252
Bu'ath, battle of, 170
Buddha, 297, 298
Buddhism, 373, 375, 390, 391. See *Nirvana*
-Buhturi (poet), 130, 316, 324
Bujayr b. 'Amr, 58
Bukhara. See *Bokhara*
-Bukhari, 144, 146, 151, 337
Bulaq, 469
Bunyan, 212
Burckhardt, 95, 465, 466, 467
Burd, 373
-Burda, 326, 327
-burda (the Prophet's mantle) 327, 366
Burji Mamelukes, the, 447
Burns, Robert, 450
burnus, the, a mark of asceticism, 210
Burton, Sir Richard, 459
Busir, 326

-Busiri (poet), 326, 327
Buthayna, 238
Butrites, the, a Shi'ite sect, 297
Buwayhid dynasty, the, 264, **266–268,** 271, 275, 303, 338
Byzantine Empire, the, 3, 29, 46, 171, 255, 261, 269, 359

C

Cadiz, 405
Cæsar, 252
Cætani, Prince, 149, 155, 156, 171
Cairo, 275, 350, 394, 395, 437, 447, 448, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 458, 461, 464, 469
Caliph, the, must belong to Quraysh, 207
Caliph, name of the, mentioned in the Friday sermon, 263, 264; stamped on the coinage, 264; title of, assumed by the Fatimids, 271; by the Umayyads of Spain, 412
Caliphs, the, -Mas'udi's account of, 354
Caliphs, the 'Abbasid. See *'Abbasids, the*
Caliphs, the Orthodox, xxiii, xxvii, 181–193
Caliphs, the Umayyad. See *Umayyad dynasty, the*
Calpe, 204
Canaanites, the, 3
Canonical Books, the Six, 337
Capuchins, the, 228
Carmathians, the, 272, **274,** 322, 324, 371, 375, 381, 467. See *Fatimid dynasty; Isma'ilis*
Carmona, 437
Casanova, P., 371
Caspian Sea, the, xxviii, 21, 264, 266, 350, 352, 391
Castile, 422, 437
Castles of -Yemen, the, 24
Catharine of Siena, 233
Cathay, xxv
Caussin de Perceval, 32
Cave-dwellers of Khurasan, the, 232
Celibacy condemned by Muhammad, 224
Cemetery of the Sufis, the, at Damascus, 463
Ceuta, 405, 412, 423, 434
Ceylon, 352
Chagar Beg, 275
Charles the Hammer, 204
Charter, the, drawn up by Muhammad for the people of Medina, 173
Chaucer, 289
Chauvin, Victor, 214
Chenery, T., 244, 328, 332, 333, 336
Chihrazad, 457
China, 203, 352, 419, 444
Chingiz Khan, 444
Christian poets who wrote in Arabic, 138, 139
Christianity in Arabia, 117, 137–140; in Ghassan, 51, 54, 123; at -Hira, 39, 41, 43, 44, 46, 49, 123, 124, 138; in Najran, 26, 27, 124, 137; in Moslem Spain, 407, 411, 412, 413, **414–415,** 431, 435, 441
Christianity, influence of, on Muhammadan culture, xxii, 176, 177, 216, 221, 231, 389, 390
Christians, supposed by Moslems to wear a girdle, 461
Christians, Monophysite, 51
Christians at the Umayyad court, 221, 240, 241
Chronology of Ancient Nations, the, by -Biruni, 361
Church and State, regarded as one by Moslems, 170, 182, 197
Chwolsohn, 363
Classicism, revolt against, 287–289
Cleopatra, 34
Coinage, Arabic, introduced by 'Abdu 'l-Malik, 201
Commercial terms derived from Arabic, 281
Companions of the Prophet, biographies of the, 144, 356, 456
Confession of faith, the Muhammadan, 403
Conquests, the early Muhammadan, work on the, 349
Constantinople, xxix, 29, 45, 52, 84, 104, 318, 362, 412
Cordova, 131, 341, 347, 406–411, **412,** 413–415, 418, 420–426, 428, 434, 435
Cordova, the University of, 420
Courage, Arabian, the nature of, 82
Criticism of Ancient and Modern Poets, 283–289
Cromwell, 189
Crusade, the Third, 275
Crusaders, the, 331, 447
Cruttenden, 8
Ctesiphon, 47, 48, 210. See *-Mada'in*
Cureton, 211, 216, 341

D

Dabba (tribe), xix
-Dahab al-'Ijli, 44
Dahis (name of a horse), 61
Dahis and -Ghabra, the War of, 61, 62, 114, 116
-dahriyyun, 381
da'i (missionary), 249, 272
-Daja'ima, 50
-Dajjal (the Antichrist), 216
dakhil, 95
Damascus, xxi, xxviii, 13, 46, 51, 53, 54, 111, 181, 194, 195, 202, 203, 207, 235, 240, 241, 242, 244, 247, 252, 255, 274, 304, 313, 335, 340, 374, 386 399, 408, 451, 462, 463
-Damigh, 375
Daniel, 162
Dante, 360
dapir (Secretary), 257
Daqiqi, Persian poet, 265
Daraya, 386
Darius, 256
Darmesteter, J., 217
Daru 'l-Rum(Constantinople), 362
Daughters, the birth of, regarded as a misfortune, 91, 156
Daughters of Allah, the, 135, 156
Davidson, A. B., 82
dawidar (*dawadar*), 445
Daws Dhu Tha'laban, 27
-Daylam, 266
Dead Sea, the, 249
Decline of the Caliphate, 257, 263
Derenbourg, H., 54, 122, 123, 194, 260, 331, 445, 454
Dervish orders, the, 393
Desecration of the tombs of the Umayyad Caliphs, 205
-Dhahabi (Shamsu 'l-Din), historian, 339, 446, 454
Dhamar'ali Dhirrih, 10
Dhu 'l-Khalasa, name of an idol, 105
Dhu 'l-Khursayn (name of a sword), 96
Dhu 'l-Majaz, 114
Dhu Nafar, 66, 67
Dhu 'l-Nun al-Misri, 386–388, 389, 460
Dhu 'l-Nusur (surname), 2
Dhu Nuwas, 12, **26–27,** 137 162
Dhu Qar, battle of, 69, 70
Dhu 'l-Qarnayn, 17, 18
Dhu 'l-Quruh (title), 104
Dhu Ru'ayn, 25, 26
Dhu 'l-Rumma (poet), 246
Dhu 'l-'Umrayn, nickname of Ibnu 'l-Khatib, 436
Dhu 'l-Wizaratayn (title), 425
Dhubyan (tribe), xix, 61, 62 116, 117, 121
Diacritical points in Arabic script, 201
Di'bil (poet), 261, 375
Dictionaries, Arabic, 343, 403, 456
Didactic poem by Abu 'l-'Atahiya, 300
Dierckx, 360
Dieterici, F., 270, 305, 307 308, 310, 312, 313, 371
dihqan, 291
Diminutives, 396, 449
din (religion), 178, 287
Dinarzad, 457
Dinarzade, 457

-Dinawar, 346
-Dinawari (historian), 251, 349
Dinazad, 457
Diodorus Siculus, 3
Dionysius the Areopagite, 387, 389
Dirge, the Arabian, 126
-Dir'iyya, 466
dithar, 152
Diwan-i Shams-i Tabriz, 298
Divine Right, the Shi'ite theory of, 214, 271
diwan (collection of poems), 127, 128
Diwan (Register) of 'Umar, the, 187, 188
Diwans of the Six Poets, the, 128
diya (blood-wit), 93
-Diyarbakri (historian), 445
Dog, the, regarded by Moslems as unclean, 445
Doughty, E. M., 3
Dozy, 214, 399, 407, 410, 411, 413, 414, 415, 420, 422, 424, 428, 429, 431, 465, 467
Drama, the, not cultivated by the Semites, 328
Drinking parties described in Pre-islamic poetry, 124, 125, 167
Droit du seigneur, le, 4
dubayt (a species of verse), 450
Dubeux, 352
Duka, T., 390
Dumas, 272
Dumyatu 'l-Qasr, 348
Duns Scotus, 367
Durayd b. Simma, 83
Durayd b. Zayd b. Nahd, 75
Durratu 'l-Ghawwas, 336
Duwalu 'l-Islam, 446
Dwarak, R., 304
Dyke of Ma'rib, the, 2, 5, **14–17**, 50, 63
Dynasties of the 'Abbasid period, 264–276

E

Eber, xviii
Ecbatana, 129, 328. See *Hamadhan*
Ecstasy, 387, 393, 394
Edessa, 331, 358
Egypt, xxiv, xxix, xxx, 4, 5, 132, 184, 186, 193, 215, 268, 274, 275, 307, 323, 326, 327, 350, 354, 355, 358, 387–390, 399, 419, 432, 434, 442, 443, 447, 448, 450, 451, 454, 460, 461, 464, 466, 468
Egypt, conquest of, by the Moslems, 184
Egypt, History of, by Ibn Taghribirdi, 454
Eichhorn, xv
Elegiac poetry, 126, 127
Elephant, the Sura of the, 68
Elephant, the year of the, 28, 66, 146
Eloquence, Arabian, 346, 347
Emanation, Plotinus's theory of, 393
Emessa, 304
Encomium of the Umayyad dynasty, by -Akhtal, 242
Epic poetry not cultivated by the Arabs, 325
Equality of Arabs and non-Arabs maintained by the Shu'ubites, 279, 280
Equites Thamudeni, 3
Erotic prelude, the. See *nasib*
Erpenius, 355
Essenes, the, 224
Euphrates, the, xv, 33, 36, 37, 38, 41, 53, 110, 113, 186, 189, 192, 196, 256, 418, 443, 449
Euting, Julius, 9

F

Fables of beasts, considered useful and instructive, 330
-Fadl, the Barmecide, 260
-Fadl b. al-Rabi', 293
-Fahl (surname), 125
Fahm (tribe), 81
Fairs, the old Arabian, 135
-Fakhri, 187, 188, 194, 203, 260, 331, 445, **454**
Fakhru 'l-Dawla (Buwayhid), 267
Fakhru 'l-Mulk, 340
Falcon of Quraysh, the, 407, 417
-falsafa (Philosophy), 283
fana (self-annihilation), 233, 391
fanak, 53
faqih, 464
faqir (fakir), 230, 464
faqr (poverty), 230
Farab, 360
-Farabi (Abu Nasr), 270, **360**, 393
-Farazdaq (poet), 196, 238, 239, 240, **242–244**, 245, 246
-Farghani, 361
Faridu'ddin 'Attar, 226, 228, 386
-Farqadan (name of two stars), 35
-Farra, 343
Farrukh-mahan, 45
Fars (province), 266
Fathers, the Christian, 341
-Fatiha, 143
Fatima, daughter of -Khurshub, 88
Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, 183, 218, 250, 251, 258, 267, 274
Fatima (mother of Qusayy), 64
Fatima, a woman loved by Imru'u 'l-Qays, 106
Fatimid dynasty, the, 217, 265, 268, 269, **271–275**, 322, 371, 412
-Fatra, 152
Fawatu 'l-Wafayat, 449, 452
Faylasufu 'l-'Arab (title), 360. See *-Kindi*
Faymiyun (Phemion), 26
Ferdinand I of Castile, 422
Ferdinand III of Castile, 434
Ferdinand V of Castile, 441
Fez, 436
-fiqh (Jurisprudence), 283; denoting law and theology, 339, 420, 465
Fihr (tribe), xix
-Fihrist, 13, 142, 345, 359, **361–364**, 387, 457
-Fihd, 58, 60, 84
Firdawsi, Persian poet, 265, 269
Firuz (Firuzan), father of Ma'ruf al-Karkhi, 385
Firuz, a Persian slave, 189
-Firuzabadi (Majdu 'l-Din), 403, 456
Fleischer, 400, 404
Flint, Robert, 441
Fluegel, G., 142, 297, 362, 364, 459
Folk-songs, Arabic, 238, 416–417, 449–450
Fons Vitæ, 428
Foreigners, Sciences of the, 282, 283
Forgery of Apostolic Traditions, 145, 146, 279
Forgery of Pre-islamic poems, 133, 134
France, 9, 412, 469
Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, 434, 441
Free schools, founded by Hakam II, 419
Free-thought in Islam, 283, 284, 298, 345, 460. See *Mu'tazilites* and *Zindiqs*
Free-will, the doctrine of, 223, 224
Freytag, G. W., 16, 31, 48, 50, 55, 73, 89, 91, 109, 129, 292, 373
Friedlaender, I., 428
Frothingham, 389
-Fudayl b. 'Iyad, 232, 233, 385
-fuhul, 138
Fukayha, 89
-fununu al-sab'a (the seven kinds of poetry), 450
Fuqaym (tribe), 28
-Fusul wa-'l-Ghayat, 318
Fususu 'l-Hikam, 400, 401
-Futuhat al-Makkiyya, 400, 464
Future life, Pre-islamic notions of the, 166

G

Gabriel, 63, 141, 150, 267
Galen, 358
Galland, 458
Gallienus, 33
Gaulonitis, the, 53

Gaza, 5
Geber, 361
Geiger, 162
Genealogy, Muhammadan, xx.
Genealogy, treatise on, by Ibu Durayd, 343
Genesis, Book of, xv
Geographers, the Moslem, 356, 357
George -Makin, 355
Georgians, the, 445
Germany, 8, 412
Gesenius, 8
-Ghabra (name of a mare), 61
-Gharid, 236
-Ghariyyan, 43
Ghassan, xxii, 33, 37, 38, 42, 43, 121, 122, 138, 139, 158, 332
Ghassanids, the, 33, **49–54,** 122
Ghassanid court, the, described by Hassan b. Thabit, 53
Ghatafan (tribe), xix, 61
-Ghawl, 119
ghayba (occultation), 216
Ghayman (castle), 24
Ghayz b. Murra, 117
Ghazala, 330
-Ghazali, 230, 234, 277, **338–341, 380–383,** 393, 431, 463
Ghazan, 446
Ghaziyya (tribe), 83
Ghazna, 268–269, 355
Ghaznevid dynasty, the, 265, **268–269,** 271, 275
ghiyar, 461
Ghiyathu 'l-Din Mas'ud (Seljuq), 326, 329
-*Ghulat* (the extreme Shi'ites), 216
Ghumdan (castle), 24
Gibb, E. J. W., 443, 460
Gibbon, 439
Gibraltar (Jabal Tariq), 204, 414
Glaser, E., 9, 15
Gnosis, the Sufi doctrine of, 386, 387
Gnosticism, 389, 390
Gobineau, Comte de, 320
Goeje, M. J. de, 179, 180, 253, 256, 257, 287, 322, 349, 350, 351, 353, 354, 356, 366, 371, 409
Goethe, 97
Gog and Magog, 18
Golden Meadows, the. See *Muruju 'l-Dhahab* and -Mas'udi
Goldziher, Ignaz, xx, xxii, 10, 18, 30, 73, 90, 119, 145, 177, 178, 199, 200, 221, 225, 246, 278, 279, 280, 285, 287, 289, 297, 298, 315, 344, 345, 366, 368, 370, 372, 374, 379, 390, 409, 431, 433, 466
Gospel, the, 165, 171
Grammar, Arabic, the origin of, 202, 278, 282, 341–343, 363
Grammars, Arabic, 343, 456
Granada, 421, 424, 428, 431, 434, **438–437,** 441, 442, 447
Gray, T., 77
Greece, 131, 296, 361, 434
Greece, the influence of, on Muhammadan thought, 220, 221, 229, 266, **358–361,** 363, 369, 379, 386, 388
Greek Philosophers, the, 341, 363
Green, the colour of the 'Alids, 262
Grimme, H., xv, 10
Grünert, M., 346
Guadalquivir, the, 422
Guest, A. R., 453
Guirgass, 251
Guyon, Madame, 233

H

Haarbrücker, 220, 221, 223, 224, 297
Habib b. Aws. See *Abu Tammam*
-Hadi, the Caliph, 260, 373
Hadiqatu 'l-Afrah, 449
-*hadith* (Traditions of the Prophet), 132, 134, **143–146,** 201, 247, 258, 348. See *Traditions of the Prophet*
Hadramawt (province), 1, 5, 42
Hadrian, 137
Hafsa, 142
Hafsid dynasty, the, 442
Hagar. See *Hajar, wife of Abraham*
Hajar (in -Bahrayn), 94, 96
Hajar, wife of Abraham, xviii, 63
-Hajjaj b. Yusuf, 200, **201–203,** 209, 213, 244
Hajji Khalifa, 456
-Hakam I (Spanish Umayyad), 409
-Hakam II (Spanish Umayyad), 412, 419
hakim (philosopher), 387
hal, mystical term, 387
Halbatu 'l-Kumayt, 417
Halévy, Joseph, 9
Halila, 56
Halima, the Prophet's nurse, 147
Halima, daughter of -Harith al-A'raj, 50
Halima, the battle of, 43, 50, 51, 125
Halle, 8
Ham, xv
hama (owl or wraith), 94, 166
Hamadhan (Ecbatana), 129, 292, 328, 333
-Hamadhani, 328. See *Badi'u 'l-Zaman*
Hamal b. Badr, 61, 88
-*Hamasa*, of Abu Tammam, 55, 57–61, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 92, 93, 98, 100, 126, **129–130,** 136, 137, 199, 213, 324, 331
-*Hamasa*, of -Buhturi, 130, 324
hamasa (fortitude), 79, 326
Hamat, 454
-Hamaysa' b. Himyar, 12
Hamdan, 19
Hamdan Qarmat, 274
-Hamdani (geographer), 6, 11, **12,** 13, 17, 18, 20, 24
Hamdanid dynasty, the, 268, **269–271,** 291, 303
Hamilton, Terrick, 459
Hammad al-Rawiya, 103, 113 128, **132–134,** 344
Hammer, J. von, 308, 316, 396, 459
Hamza of Isfahan (historian), 14, 280
Hanbalites, the, 376, 462
handasa (geometry), 283
Hani', a chieftain of Bakr, 69
Hanifa (tribe), 183
Hanifs, the, 69, **149, 150,** 170, 318
Hanzala of Tayyi', 44
haqiqat, mystical term, 392
-*haqq*, mystical term, 392
Haram (tribe), 331
Harim b. Sinan, 61, 116, 117, 288
-Hariri, author of the *Maqamat*, 329–336
-Harith al-Akbar. See -*Harith b. Amr Muharriq*
-Harith b. 'Amr (Kindite), 42, 44, 103, 104
-Harith b. 'Amr Muharriq (Ghassanid), 50
-Harith al-A'raj (Ghassanid), 43, 50, 54, 125. See -*Harith b. Jabala*
-Harith b. 'Awf, 61, 116, 117
-Harith b. Hammam, 330, 331, 333
-Harith b. Hilliza (poet), 44, 100, 109, **113–114,** 128
-Harith b. Jabala (Ghassanid), 43, 50, **51, 82.** See -*Harith al-A'raj*
-Harith al-Ra'ish, 17
-Harith b. Surayj, 222
-Harith b. 'Ubad, 58, 59
-Harith the Younger (Ghassanid), 50
-Harith b. Zalim, 85
-*harj*, 249
Harran, 221, 358, 361, 462
Harran, the bilingual inscription of, xxii
Hartmann, M., 450, 468
Harun al-Rashid, the Caliph, xxix, 255, 258, 259, **260–261,** 262, 277, 283, 292, 293, 296, 298, 343, 345, 347, 366, 367, 368, 373, 385, 388, 458, 459
Harura, 208
Harwat, 11
hasab, 100
Hasan (Buwayhid), 266
-Hasan of -Basra, 208, 222, 223, **225–227,** 230, 243, 244, 294

-Hasan b. Ahmad al-Hamdani, 11. See *-Hamdani*
-Hasan b. 'Ali, the Nizamu 'l-Mulk, 276. See *Nizamu 'l-Mulk*
-Hasan b. 'Ali b. Abi Talib, 216, 297
-Hasan al-Burini, 396
-Hasan b. -Sabbah, 445
Hashid (tribe), 12
Hashim, 65, 146, 250
-Hashimiyya (Shi'ite sect), 220, 251
Hassan b. Thabit (poet), 18, 52, 53, 54, 127
Hassan (son of As'ad Kamil) the Tubba', 19, 23, 25
Hatim of Tayyi', **85–87,** 288
Hawazin (tribe), xix
Hayy b. Yaqzan, 433
Hayyum, 19
Hazar Afsan (*Hazar Afsana*), 363, 457–458
-Haziri (Abu 'l-Ma'ali), 348
Hazzu 'l-Quhuf, 450
Hebrews, the, xv
Hebrew language, the, xvi
Hellespont, the, xxix
Helpers, the. See *-Ansar*
Hengstenberg, 102
Heraclius, 52
Heresies of the Caliph -Ma'mun, 262
Herodotus, 353
Hierotheus, 389
hija (satire), 73, 294
-Hijaz, xvii, 3, 21, **62,** 63, 64, 69, 137, 149, 150, 215, 340, 395, 398, 399, 465, 466
-Hijr, the inscriptions of, xxi, 3
-Hijra (Hegira), xxv, 158, 171
-Hilla, 449
Hilyatu 'l-Awliya, 338
himaq (a species of verse), 450
Hims, 304
Himyar (person), 14
Himyar (people), xxv, 1, 6, 10, 17, 24, 25, 26, 429
Himyarites, the, xviii, xx, xxi, 4, **5, 6,** 7, 12, 17, 23, 26
Himyarite kings, the, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17–27. See *Tubba's, the*
Himyarite language, the, xvi, xvii, xxi, 6–11
Himyarite Ode, the, 12, 13
Hind, mother of Bakr and Taghlib, 58
Hind (a Bedouin woman), 46
Hind, daughter of -Nu'man III, 46, 47
Hind, wife of -Mundhir III, 44, 45, 110
Hinwam (hill), 20
-Hira, xxii, xxiii, 29, 33, 34, **37-49,** 51, 52, 53, 54, 60, 69 70, 85, 87, 103, 107, 108, 109, 110, 112, 114, 121, 122, 124, 138, 139, 189, 244, 439
Hira, Mount, 150
Hirran, 11
Hirschfeld, H., 151
Hisham (Umayyad Caliph), 200, 206, 224, 243
Hisham I (Spanish Umayyad), 347, 409
Hisham II (Spanish Umayyad), 412, 421
Hisham b. Muhammad al-Kalbi, 38, 39, 40, 348
Hisn Ghurab, 8
Historians, Arab. **11-14,** 144, 247, **348–386,** 420, 428, 435–440, **452–454**
Historical studies encouraged by the Umayyads, 247
History, the true purpose of, 437; subject to universal laws, 438; evolution of, 439, 440
History of the Berbers, by Ibn Khaldun, 420, 435
History of the Caliphs, by -Suyuti, 455
History of Islamic Civilisation, by Jurji Zaydan, 435
History of Old and New Cairo, by -Suyuti, 455
Holy Ghost, the, 150
Holy War, the, enjoined by the Koran, 174
Homer, the Iliad of, translated into Arabic verse, 469
Homeritæ, the, 5
Hommel, F., xv, 1
Honour, Pre-islamic conception of, 82–100
Horace, 326
Hospitality, the Bedouin ideal of, 85
House of the Prophet, the, 250. See *'Ali b. Abi Talib; 'Alids; Shi'ites.*
Houtsma, Th., 193, 242, 329, 349
Huart, C., 468
Hubal (name of an idol), 64
Hubba, 64
Hud (prophet), 2
Hudhalites (Hudhaylites), 22, 128. See *Hudhayl*
Hudhayfa b. Badr, 61
Hudhayfa b. al-Yaman, 142
Hudhayl (tribe), xix, 64, 98, 99, 100
Hughes, G., 80
Hujr (Kindite), 42
Hujr, father of Imru'u 'l-Qays, 104
Hulagu, xxix, 182, 444–446
Huhayl b. Hubshiyya, 64
-Hullat al-Siyara, 418
Hulton, 8
hulul (incarnation), 396, 402
Hulwan, 292
Humani, 457
-Humayma, 249
Hunayn b. Ishaq, 359
hur (houris), 167
Hurmuz (Sasanian), 47
Hurufis, the, 460
-Husayn, son of 'Ali b. Abi Talib, **196, 197,** 198, 216, 218, 243, 466
-Husayn b. Damdam, 117
-Husayn b. -Mansur -Hallaj, 363, 375, 399
Husnu 'l-Muhadara, 455
-Hutay'a (poet), 127, 131, 261
Hypocrites, the. See *-Munafiqun*
Huzwa, 398

I

Iamblichus, 389
'Ibad, the, of -Hira, 38, 39, 138
Ibadites (a Kharijite sect), the, 211
-'Ibar, by -Dhahabi, 339
Ibnu 'l-Abbar, 418, 424
Ibn 'Abdi Rabbihi, 102, 131 **347, 420**
Ibn Abi Du'ad, 376
Ibn Abi Usaybi'a, 266, 355
Ibn Abi Ya'qub al-Nadim, 362
Ibn Abi Zar', 429
Ibnu 'l-Ahmar (Nasrid), 435
Ibn 'A'isha, 236
Ibnu 'l-'Alqami, 445
Ibnu 'l-'Amid, 267
Ibn 'Ammar (poet), 422, 424
Ibnu 'l-'Arabi. See *Muhiyyu 'l-Din Ibnu 'l-'Arabi*
Ibnu 'l-'Arabi, the Cadi, of Seville, 399
Ibnu 'l-'Arabi (philologist), 128
Ibn 'Arabshah, 454
Ibnu 'l-Athir, 203, 205, 253, **355–356,** 376, 379, 420, 429
Ibn Bajja, 361, 434
Ibn Bashkuwal, 426, 434
Ibn Bassam, 422, 434
Ibnu 'l-Baytar, 434
Ibn Durayd, 253, 280, **343**
Ibnu 'l-Farid. See *'Umar Ibnu 'l-Farid*
Ibn Hajar, 456
Ibnu 'l-Hanafiyya. See *Muhammad Ibnu 'l-Hanafiyya*
Ibn Hani (poet), 419, 420
Ibn Hawqal, 356
Ibn Hayyan, 428
Ibn Hazm, 222, 341, 402, **426–428**
Ibn Hisham, 17, 22, 23, 63, 64, 69, **144,** 147, 150, 151, 152, 154, 156, 158, 166, 170, 173, 175, **349**
Ibn Humam, 105
Ibnu 'l-'Idhari, 407, 428, 429
Ibn Ishaq, 69, **144,** 146, 149, 156, 247, **349**
Ibn Jahwar, 424
Ibnu 'l-Jawzi, 355
Ibn Jubayr, 357, 434
Ibn Kabsha, nickname of Muhammad, 166
Ibn Khalawayh, 271
Ibn Khaldun, 32, 228, 229, 277, 278, 288, 289, 350, 353, 429, 435, **437–440,** 443, 452

Ibn Khallikan, 129, 132, 190, 213, 224, 234, 245, 261, 266, 267, 276, 288, 295, 308, 312, 326, 343, 344, 349, 348, 355, 357, 359, 360, 377, 378, 387, 408, 422, 425, 427, **451-452**
Ibn Khaqan, 425, 434
Ibnu 'l-Khatib, the Vizier, 413, 435, 436, 437
Ibn Khidham, 105
Ibn Khurdadbih, 356
Ibn Maja, 337
Ibn Malik of Jaen, 456
Ibn Mukarram (Jamalu 'l-Din), 456
Ibn Mujam, 193
Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa', 330, **346,** 348, 358
Ibnu 'l-Mu'tazz (poet), 325
Ibn Nubata (man of letters), 61
Ibn Nubata, the preacher, 271, 328
Ibnu 'l-Qifti, 355, 370, 387
Ibn Qutayba, xviii, 35, 49, 50, 51, 75, 77, 105, 117, 145, 202, 223, 257, 277, 280, **286, 287,** 288, 289, 293, 294, 345, **346**
Ibnu 'l-Qutiyya, 420
Ibn Quzman, 417
Ibn Rashiq, 71, 288
Ibnu 'l-Rawandi, 375
Ibn Rushd, 341, 361, 432, 434
Ibn Sab'in, 434
Ibn Sa'd, 144, 256, 349
Ibnu 'l-Sammak, 261
Ibnu 'l-Sikkit, 343
Ibn Sina (Avicenna), 265, 266, 341, **360, 361,** 393
Ibn Sirin, 244
Ibn Surayj, 236
Ibn Taymiyya, 371, **462, 463,** 465, 466
Ibnu 'l-Tiqtaqa, 454
Ibn Tufayl, 361, 432, 433, 434
Ibn Tumart, 431-432
Ibnu 'l-Wahshiyya, xxv
Ibnu 'l-Wardi, 455
Ibn Zaydun (poet), 419, 424-426
Ibn Zuhr, 434
Ibrahim (Abraham), xviii, 63. See *Abraham*
Ibrahim ('Alid), 258
Ibrahim b. Adham, 232
Ibrahim b. Hilal al-Sabi, 328
Ibrahim of Mosul, 261
Idol-worship at Mecca, 62-64
Idris, 264
-Idrisi (geographer), 357, 434
Idrisid dynasty, the, 264
Ihya'u 'Ulum al-Din, 230, 234, 338, 340
-Iji (Adudu 'l-Din), 456
ijma', 460
ikhlas, 164
Ikhmim, 387
-Ikhtiyarat, 128
Ikhwanu 'l-Safa, 370-372, 388
-Iklil, 6, **12,** 13, 24
-ilahiyyun, 382
Iliad, the, xxii, 325, 469
Il-Khans, the, xxix, 446
Il-Makab, 11
'ilmu 'l-hadith (Science of Apostolic Tradition), 283
'ilmu 'l-kalam (Scholastic Theology), 283
'ilmu 'l-nujum (Astronomy), 283
'ilmu 'l-qira'at (Koranic Criticism), 283
'ilmu 'l-tafsir (Koranic Exegesis), 283
'ilq, 101
'Imadu 'l-Dawla (Buwayhid), 266
'Imadu 'l-Din al-Katib al-Isfahani, 348, 355
Imam (head of the religious community), 210
Imam, the Hidden, 216-217, 371; the Infallible, 220, 432
Imam-Husayn, a town near Baghdad, 466. See *Karbala*
-imam al-ma'sum, 432
Imamites, the, 251
Imams, the Shi'ite, 214-220
Imams, the Seven, 217, 273
Imams, the Twelve, 217
Imamu 'l-Haramayn, 339, 379
iman (faith), 222
Imru'u 'l-Qays (poet), 42, 84, 85, 101, 102, **103-107,** 128, 136, 246, 280
India, 4, 17, 268, 341, 352, 361, 389
India, History of, by -Biruni, 361
India, the influence of, on Moslem civilisation, 361, 389, 390
India, Moslem conquests in, 203, 268
Indian religion, described by -Shahrastani, 341
Indus, the, xxiv, 203, 264
Infanticide, practised by the pagan Arabs, 149, 243
Initiation, the Isma'ilite degrees of, 273
Inquisition (*mihna*) established by -Ma'mun, 368, 369
Inscriptions, the Babylonian and Assyrian, xxv, 4
Inscriptions, Himyarite. See *Inscriptions, South Arabic*
Inscriptions, Nabatæan, xxv, 3
Inscriptions, South Arabic, xvi, xxi, xxvi, **6-11**
Inspiration, views of the heathen Arabs regarding, 72, 73, 152, 165
Intellectual and Philosophical Sciences, the, 282
Ionia, the dialect of, xxiii
-'Iqd al-Farid, 102, 131, **347,** 420
Iram, 1
-'Iraq, 34, 38, 42, 123, 132, 142, 201, 202, 207, 208, 243, 244, 255, 262, 266, 273, 303, **350,** 419, 445. See *Babylonia*
-Isaba fi tamyiz al-Sahaba, 456
Isabella of Castile, 441
Isaiah, 151
Isfahan, 14, 131, 268, 280, 326, 347, 355, 419
Isfandiyar, 330, 363
Ishaq b. Ibrahim al-Mawsili, 261, 362, 418
Ishaq b. Khalaf, 92
Ishmael. See *Isma'il*
Isidore of Hispalis, 198
Islam, meaning of, 153; cardinal doctrines of, 163-168; formal and ascetic character of, 168, 224; derived from Christianity and Judaism, 176, 177; pagan elements in, 177; opposed to the ideals of heathendom, 177, 178; identified with the religion of Abraham, 62, 177; a world-religion, 184
Isma'il (Ishmael), xviii, 63, 64
Isma'il (Samanid), 265
Isma'il b. 'Abbad, 267. See *-Sahib Isma'il b. 'Abbad*
Isma'il b. Naghdala, 428
Isma'ilis, the, 217, **272-274,** 363, **371, 372,** 381, 420, 445
isnad, 144, 278, 352
-Isnawi, 339
Israel, 73
Istakhr, 356
-Istakhri, 356
istifa, 228
Italy, 412, 414, 441
Ithamara (Sabæan king), 4
-Ithna -'ashariyya (the Twelvers), 217
I'timad, name of a slave-girl 422
-Iqan, 145, 455
ittihad, 402
'iyar, 207
Iyas b. Qabisa, 53
'Izzu 'l-Din b. 'Abd al-Salam, 461

J

Jabal Tariq (Gibraltar), 204
Jabala b. -Ayham (Ghassanid), 50, 51, 52, 53, 54
-Jabariyya (the Predestinarians), 224
Jabir b. Hayyan, 361, 387
jabr (compulsion), 224, 297
Jacob, G., 74, 76
Jadala (tribe), 429
Jadhima al-Abrash, 34, 35, 36, 40
Jadis (tribe), 4, 25
Jaen, 456
Ja'far, the Barmecide, 260
Ja'far, son of the Caliph -Hadi, 260

Jafna, founder of the Ghassanid dynasty, 50
Jafnites, the. See *Ghassanids, the*
Jaghbub, 468
Jahdar b. Dubay'a, 59
-jahiliyya (the Age of Barbarism), xxvi, **30,** 31, 34, 71, 90, 158, 287
-Jahiz, 267, 280, **346-347,** 375
jahiz, 346
-Jahiziyya (Mu'tazilite sect), 346
jahl, meaning 'barbarism,' 30
Jahm b. Safwan, 222
-Jahshiyari (Abu 'Abdallah Muhammad b. 'Abdus), 458
Jalalu 'l-Din al-Mahalli, 455
Jalalu 'l-Din Rumi, Persian poet, 298, 393, 404
Jallaban, 293
-Jamhara fi 'l- Lugha, 343
Jamharatu Ash'ari 'l-'Arab, 130
-Jami ('Abdu 'l-Rahman), Persian poet, 229, 284, 386, 433
-Jami', by -Tirmidhi, 337
-Jami'a, 371
Jamil, 238
Jandal, 245
Janissaries, the, 413
-Jannabi, 375
-Jaradatan (name of two singing girls), 2
Jarir (poet), 205, 238, 239, 240, 242, **244-246**
Jassas b. Murra, 56, 57
-Jawf, 9
Jawhar, 429
-Jawlan, 54
Jerusalem, 169, **177,** 233, 275, 340, 355, 357
Jesus, 215, 216
Jews, the, 341. See *Judaism*
-Jibal (province), 292, 356, 445
Jibril (Gabriel), 150
jihad, 430
Jinn, the, 72, 112, 119, 152, 165
jinni (genie), 165
Jirjis -Makin (historian), 355
John of Damascus, 221
John of Ephesus, 52
Johnson, Dr., 286, 313
Joktan, xviii
Jones, E. R., 433
Jones, Sir William, 102, 452
Jong, P. de, 366
Jordan, the, 446
-Jubba'i, 377, 378
Judaism, established in -Yemen, 23, 137; zealously fostered by Dhu Nuwas, 26; in Arabia, 137–140, 149, 158, 170–172, 173, 176, 177; in Spain, 415, 428, 429; in Sicily, 441
Judaism, influence of, on Muhammadan thought, 176, 177, 215, 216
-ju'iyya (the Fasters), 232
Juliana of Norwich, 233
-Junayd of Baghdad, 228, 230, 392, 465
Junde-shapur, 358
Jurhum (tribe), xviii, 63, 117
Jurjan, 339
Jurji Zaydan, 435
Justinian, 43, 51, 104, 358
Justinus (Byzantine Emperor), 27, 52
-Juwayni (Abu 'l-Ma'ali), 339, 379
Juynboll, 257, 262, 268, 350, 369

K

Ka'b (tribe), 246
Ka'b b. Zuhayr (poet), 119, 127, 327
-Ka'ba, **63, 64, 65-67,** 101, 117, 154, 155, 157, 164, 169, 177, 198, 319, 400, 402, 467
Ka'bu 'l-Ahbar, 185
-Kadhdhab (title of Musaylima), 183
Kafur (Ikhshidite), 306, 307
Kahlan, 14
-Kalabadhi, 338
-kalam (Scholasticism), 363, 378
Kalb (tribe), 199, 405
kalb, 445
Kalila and Dimna, the Book of, 346, 363
-Kamala (title), 88
-kamil (metre), 75
-Kamil of Ibnu 'l-Athir, 355, 379, 429. See *Ibnu 'l-Athir.*
–Kamil of -Mubarrad, 92, 131, 202, 226, 227, 237, 244, 343
kanwakan (a species of verse), 450
Karbala, 196, 198, 208, 216, 218, 243, 466
Kariba'il Watar, 10
-Karkh, a quarter of Baghdad, 267, 385
kasb, 379
Kashfu 'l-Zunun, 456
-Kashshaf, 145
katib (secretary), 257, 326
Kawadh (Sasanian), 42
Ketbogha, 446
Khadija, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 157
-khafif (metre), 75
Khalaf, 421
Khalaf al-Ahmar, 97, 134, 293, 344
Khalid b. -Mudallil, 43
Khalid b. -Walid, 184
Khalid b. Yazid, 358,
khalifa (Caliph), xxvii, 175
-Khalil b. Ahmad, 75, 285, **343**
Khamir (village), 19
-Khamriyya, by Ibnu 'l-Farid, 396
khamriyyat, 294
khanaqah (monastery), 229
-Khansa (poetess), 126, 127
Kharidatu 'l-Qasr, 348
khariji (Kharijite), 209
Kharijites, the, 193, 207, **208–213,** 221, 222, 239, 248, 259, 428
Kharmaythan, 360
-Khasib, 373
khatib, 271
-Khatib, of Baghdad, 355
-Khatim b 'Adi, 94, 96
-Khawarij. See *Kharijites, the*
-Khawarnaq (castle), 40, 41
-Khaybar, 50
-Khayf, 237
Khazaza, battle of, 5
-Khazraj (tribe), 170
Khedivial dynasty, the, 468
Khidash b. Zuhayr, 95, 96
Khindif, xix
-Khitat, by -Maqrizi, 453
Khiva, 361, 444
Khizanatu 'l-Adab, 131
Khuda Bukhsh, S., 279
Khulafa al-Rashidun, xxvii. See *Caliphs, the Orthodox*
Khuday-nama, 348
Khurasan, xxviii, 129, 132, 220, 221, 232, 233, 239, **249, 250,** 251, 254, 256, 258, 263, 265, 266, 275, 303, 339, 341, 379, 390, 391, 419, 444
Khurasan, dialect of, 339
khuruj (secession), 209
Khusraw Parwez. See *Parwez*
khutba, 263, 328
Khuza'a (tribe), 63, 64, 65
Khuzayma (tribe), xix
Khuzistan, 266, 274, 293, 358
Khwarizm, 357, 361, 444
-Khwarizmi (Abu 'Abdallah), 361
-kibrit al-ahmar, 399
Kilab (tribe), 246
Kilab b. Murra, 64
-kimiya (the Philosophers' Stone), 401
Kimiya'u 'l-Sa'adat, 340
-kimiya'un (the Alchemists), 364
Kinana (tribe), xix, 64
Kinda (tribe), xviii, 42, 43, 69, 85, 103, 104, 360
-Kindi, 288, 360
-Kisa'i (philologist), 261, 343
Kisra (title), 45
Kitabu 'l-Aghani (the Book of Songs), 19, 26, 31, **32,** 37, 43, 44, 46, 47, 53, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 94, 102, 104, 109, 110, 123, 124, 131, 134, 138, 139, 150, 200, 205, 216, 236, 237, 239, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, **270,** 279, 291, 292, 297, 345, **347,** 374, **419**
Kitabu 'l-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya, 338
Kitabu 'l-Akhbar al-Tiwal, 349
Kitabu Ansabi 'l-Ashraf, 349
-Kitab al-Awsat, 353

Kitabu 'l-'Ayn, 343
Kitabu 'l-Badi', 325
Kitabu 'l-Bayan wa-'l-Tabyin, 347
Kitabu 'l-Falahat al-Nabatiyya, xxv
Kitabu Futuhi 'l-Buldan, 349
Kitabu 'l-Hayawan, 346, 375
Kitabu 'l-Ibar, by Dhahabi, 339
Kitabu 'l-'Ibar, by Ibn Khaldun, 437
Kitabu 'l-Ibil, 345
Kitabu 'l-Ishtiqaq, 343
Kitabu 'l-Kamil fi 'l-Ta'rikh, 355. See *-Kamil of Ibnu 'l-Athir*
Kitabu Khalq al-Insan, 345
Kitabu 'l-Khayl, 345
Kitabu 'l-Ma'arif, xviii, 202, 223, 224, 345, **346**
Kitabu 'l-Maghazi, by Musa b. 'Uqba, 247
Kitabu 'l-Maghazi, by -Waqidi, 144
-Kitab al-Mansuri, 265
Kitabu 'l-Masalik wa-'l-Mamalik, 356
Kitabu 'l-Milal wa-'l-Nihal, by Ibn Hazm, 341, 427, 428
Kitabu 'l-Milal wa-'l-Nihal, by -Shahrastani, 341. See *-Shahrastani*
Kitabu 'l-Muluk wa-akhbar al-Madin, 13
Kitabu 'l-Shi'r wa-'l-Shu'ara, 75, 78, 105, 117, 257, 293, 346
Kitabu 'l-Ta'arruf li-Madhhabi ahli 'l-Tasawwuf, 338
Kitabu 'l-Tabaqat al-Kibar, 144
Kitabu 'l-Tanbih wa-'l-Ishraf, 353, 354
-Kitab al-Yamini, 355
Kitabu 'l- Zuhd, 247
Koran, the, xvii, xx, xxii–xxv, xxvi, xxvii, 1, 2, 3, 15, 17, 18, 27, 68, 74, 91, 102, 119, 132, 134, **141–143,** 144–152, 154–156, 158, **159–168,** 169, 172, 174, **175, 176,** 178, 179, 183, 184, 185, 187, 192, 201, 203, 207–212, 215, 221, 223, 225, 231, 234, **235,** 237, 247, 249, 273, 277, 278, 279, 282, 284, 287, 294, 318, 327, 329, 330, 342, 343, 344, 363, 365, 368, 369, 375, 378, 379, 397, 398, 402, 403, 408, 417, 433, 449, 454, 455, 460, 461, 462, 463, 467
Koran, the, derivation of, 159; collection of, 142; historical value of, 143; arrangement of, 143, 161; style of, 159, 318, 368; not poetical as a whole, 160; held by Moslems to be the literal Word of God, 159, 235; heavenly archetype of, 151, 163, 368; revelation of, 150–152, 159; designed for oral recitation, 161; commentaries on, 144, 145, 351, 455; imitations of, 318, 368, 375; dispute as to whether it was created or not, 262, 368, 369
Koran-readers (*-qurra*), the, 209, 210, 277
Kosegarten, 128
Krehl, L., 151, 360
Kremer, Alfred von, 13, 14, 18, 19, 23, 24, 101, 139, 140, 220, 221, 225, 233, 279, 281, 302, 304, 316, 318, 321, 323, 324, 360, 373, 379, 383, 399, 439
-Kufa, xxiv, 38, 70, 127, 133, 134, 186, **189,** 193, 196, 198, 202, 207–210, 215, 218, 219, 229, 250, 253, 291, 293, 296, 304, 342, **343,** 344
-Kulab, battle of, 253
Kulayb (tribe), 244, 245
Kulayb b. Rabi'a, 5, 55, 56, 57, 76, 93
Kulayb b. Wa'il, 110. See *Kulayb b. Rabi'a*
Kulthum b. Malik, 110
-Kumayt (poet), 138
kunya (name of honour), 45, 50, 112
-Kusa'i, 244
Kuthayyir (poet), 216
-kutub al-sitta (the Six Books), 337
-Kutubi, 449, 452

L

La Fontaine, 469
Labid (poet), 50, 109, **119–121,** 128, 139, 140
Lagrange, Grangeret de, 396, 417
Lahore, 268
Lakhmites, the, of -Hira, 33, 38, **39-49,** 54, 69
Lamis (name of a woman), 82
Lamiyyatu 'l-'Ajam, 326
Lamiyyatu 'l-'Arab, **79, 80,** 89, 134, 326
Lamta (tribe), 429
Lamtuna (tribe), 429
Lane, E. W., 53, 164, 448, 459
Lane-Poole, Stanley, 264, 275, 371, 432
-Lat (goddess), 135, 155
Lata'ifu 'l-Minan, 464
Latifi (Turkish biographer), 460
Laus duplex (rhetorical figure), 311
Law, Muhammadan, the schools of, 283, 284, 363, 465; the first *corpus* of, 337
Lawaqihu 'l-Anwar, 225, 226, 392
-Lawh al-Mahfuz, 163, 378
Layla, the beloved of -Majnun, 238
Layla, mother of 'Amr b. Kulthum, 44, 109, 110
Le Strange, G., 256, 356, 357
Learning, Moslem enthusiasm for, 281
Lees, Nassau, 386
Leo the Armenian, 359
Letter-writing, the art of, 267
Lexicon, the first Arabic, 343
Library of Nuh II, the Samanid, 265, 266; of Hakam II, the Spanish Umayyad, 419
Linguistic Sciences, the, 282
Lippert, 370
Lisanu 'l-'Arab, 456
Lisanu 'l-Din Ibnu 'l-Khatib. See *Ibnu 'l-Khatib*
Literary culture despised by the Arabs, 278
litham, 423
Littmann, Enno, 73
Lollards, the, 374
Longland, 450
Loth, O., 1
Lourdes, 382
Love, Divine, the keynote of Sufiism, 231; two kinds of, 234; an ineffable mystery, 387; hymn of, 396; in Sufi poetry, 397, 398, 402
Loyalty, as understood by the heathen Arabs, 83–85
Lucian, 319
-lugha (Lexicography), 283
Luhayy, 63
Lulu, 3041
Luqman b. 'Ad (king), 2, 14
-Luzumiyyat, 315, 316, 319, 323, 324
Luzumu ma la yalzam, 315. See *-Luzumiyyat*
Lyall, Sir Charles, 32, 54, 71, 75, 82, 89, 92, 97, 101, 109, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 118, 120, 121, 125, 129, 139, 140, 149

M

Ma' al-Sama (surname), 41
Ma'ab, 63
ma'ad (place of return), 215
Ma'add, xix, xx, 112
Ma'arratu 'l-Nu'man, 313, 314, 323
-Ma'arri (Abu 'l-'Ala), 448. See *Abu 'l-'Ala al-Ma'arri*
Ma'bad (singer), 236
Ma'bad al-Juhani, 224
Macbeth, Arabian parallel to an incident in, 25
Macdonald, D. B., 273, 378, 382, 433
Macedonia, 276
Machiavelli, 439
Macoraba, 5, 62
Madagascar, 352
-Mada'in (Ctesiphon), 29, 33, 46, 47, 48. See *Ctesiphon*
Mada'in Salih, 3
-madh al-muwajjah 311
-madid (metre), 98
madih (panegyric), 78, 294

Madinatu 'l-Salam, 255. See *Baghdad*
Madrid, 420
mafakhir, 100
maghazi, 247
-Maghrib, 460
Magi (Magians), the. See *Zoroastrians, the*
Magian fire-temple at Balkh, the, 259
Mahaffy, J. P., 82
Mahdi, the, **216, 217,** 248, 249, 274, 431
-Mahdi, the Caliph, 103, 128, 257, 258, 296, 343, 367, 373, 374, 418
-Mahdiyya, 274
Mahmud (Ghaznevid), 268–269, 355
Mahra, dialect of, xxi
Maimonides, 434
Majdu 'l-Din al-Firuzabadi. See *-Firuzabadi*
-Majmu' al-Mubarak, 355
-Majnun, 238
majnun, 165
Malaga, 410, 421, 428, 434
Malik (boon companion of Jadhima), 35
Malik (brother of Qays b. Zuhayr), 61
Malik the Azdite, 34
Malik, the slayer of -Khatim b. 'Adi, 94, 95
Malik b. Anas, 284, **337, 366,** 408
-Malik al-Dilili (title of Imru'u 'l-Qays), 104
-Malik al-Kamil (Ayyubid), 395, 434
-Malik al -Salih Najmu'l-Din (Ayyubid), 447
Malik Shah (Seljuq), 275, 276, 326, 349
-Malik al-Zahir (Ayyubid), 275
-Malik al-Zahir Baybars. See *Baybars, Sultan*
Malikite books burned by the Almohades, 433
Malikite school of Law, the, 408
Mamelukes, the, 413
Mameluke dynasty, the, xxix, 442, 446, **447, 448,** 453, 464
mamluk, 447
-Ma'mun, the Caliph, 92, 129, 255, 257, **262, 263,** 284, 302, 343, **358–359,** 361, **368,** 369, 373, 388
Manat (goddess), 135, 155
Mandeville, Sir John, xxv
Manfred, 441
-Manfuha, 124
Mani (Manes), 364, 375
Manichæans, the, 218, 297, 341, 372–375. See *Zindiqs, the*
-Mansur, the Caliph, 128, 206, 252, 253, 255, 256, 257, **258–259,** 291, 314, 337, 346, 349, 358, 373, 407
Mansur I (Samanid), 265, 352
-Mansur Ibn Abi 'Amir, 412, 413, 426
Mantle Ode (-Burda), the, 326, 327
maqama, 328
-Maqamat, of Badi'u 'l-Zaman al- Hamadhani, 328, 329
-Maqamat, of -Hariri, 329–336
Maqamu Ibrahim, 63
-Maqdisi. See *-Muqaddasi*
-Maqqari, 399, 401, **413,** 418, 419, 427, 436, 454
-Maqrizi (Taqiyyu 'l-Din), 453
-Maqsura, 343
Marabout, modern form of *murabit*, 430
Marasidu 'l-Ittila', 357
marathi, 294
Marathon, battle of, 174
Marcion, 364
Margoliouth, Prof. D. S., xxiv, 183, 267, 314, 316, **317,** 319, 357, 469
Mariaba, 5
Ma'rib, 2, 5, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 50. See *Dyke of Ma'rib*
Maridin, 449
ma'rifat (gnosis), 386
Marinid dynasty, the, 442
Mariya, mother of -Mundhir III, 41
Mariya (name of a hand-maiden), 46, 47
Mariya of the Ear-rings, 50
Marj Rahit, battle of, 199
Marr al-Zahran, 95
Marriage, a loose form of, prevailing among the Shi'ites, 262
Ma'ruf al-Karkhi, 385, 386, 388
Marwan I (Umayyad Caliph), 199
Marwan II (Umayyad Caliph), 181, 251, 253, 347
-Marzuqi (philologist), 128
Masabihu 'l-Sunna, 337
Masaliku 'l-Mamalik, 356
-masbaf, 294
Mashhad -Husayn, 466
Maslama b. Ahmad, 420
Masruq, 28
Mas'ud, Sultan, 320. See *Ghiyathu 'l-Din Mas'ud*
-Mas'udi, 13, 15, 37, 195, 203, 205, 206, 259, 260, 267, 349, **352–354,** 387, 456
Materia Medica, by Ibnu 'l-Baytar, 434
mathalib, 100, 280
Mathnawi, the, by Jalalu 'l-Din Rumi, 404
-Matin, 428
matla', 309
matn, 144
Mauritania, 412
-Mawa'izwa 'l-I'tibar fi dhikri 'l-Khitat wa 'l-Athar, 453
-Mawali (the Clients), 198, 207, **219,** 222, **248,** 250, **278, 279,** 373
-Mawali (the Clients), coalesce with the Shi'ites, 198, 219, 220, 250; treated with contempt by the Arabs, 219, 248, 278, 279; their culture, 248; their influence, 278, 279
mawaliyya, a species of verse, 250.
-Mawardi, 337, 338
Mawiyya, mother of -Mundhir III, 41
Mawiyya, wife of Hatim of Tayy', 87
-Maydani, 31. See *Proverbs, Arabic*
Maymun b. Qays. See *-A'sha*
Maysun, 195
Mazdak, 42, 258, 364
Mazyar, 375
Mecca, xviii, xxiii, xxvi, xxvii, 2, 3, 5, 6, 22, 28, 53, **62,** 63, 64, 65–68, 101, 102, 114, 117, 146, 150, 154–156, 158, 169, 171, 174, 175, 196, 198, 202, 236, 249, 274, 319, 339, 340, 395, 396, 429, 431, 434, 439, 466, 468
Mecca, Pre-islamic history of, 62; attacked by the Abyssinians, 66–69; submits to the Prophet, 64, 175
Mecca, the dialect of, xxiii
Meccan Revelations, the, 464. See *Futuhat al-Makkiyya*
Meccan *Suras* of the Koran, the, 160–168
Media, 356
Medina (-Madina), xxvi, xxvii, 3, 21, 22, 49, 50, 52, 62, 71, 84, 150, 157, 158, 169, 170, 171, 173, 175, 176, 177, 181, 185, 186, 188, 198, 208, 209, 236, 241, 243, 337, 339, 365, 466, 468
Medina, *Suras* of the Koran revealed at, 175, 176
Mediterranean Sea, the, 5, 255, 275, 404 412, 444
Merv, 252, 346
Merx, A., 384, 389
Mesopotamia, 35, 186, 238, 240, 269, 355, 358, 385, 388, 411, 446
Messiah, Moslem beliefs regarding the, 215–217, 248, 249. See *Mahdi, the*
Metempsychosis, the doctrine of, 207
Metres, the Arabian, 74, 75
Meylevi dervish order, the, 393
mihna, 368
-Mihras, 124
Mihrgan, Persian festival, 250
Milton, 212
Mina, 119
Minæan language, the, xxi
Minæans, the, 7
minbar (pulpit), 199

Minqar, 57
Miqlab (castle), 24
Miracles demanded by the Quraysh from Muhammad, 165; falsely attributed to Muhammad, 166
-*Mi'raj* (the Ascension of the Prophet), 169, 403
Mir'atu 'l-Zaman, 355
Mishkatu 'l-Masabih, 337
Misr (Old Cairo), 394
misra' (hemistich), 74
-*Mizhar*, 455. See -*Muzhir*
Moguls, the Great, xxix, 444
Molière, 469
Monasticism, alien to Islam, 225
Mongol Invasion, the, xxiv, xxix, xxx, 272, 277, 326, 443, **444–446**
Mongols, the, 254, 264, 275, 442, 443, 462. See *Mongol Invasion, the*
Monte Cristo, 469
Montrose, 191
Mordtmann, 9
Morocco, 264, 341, 423, 424, 430, 431, 442
Moses, 165, 172, 185, 215, 273, 397
Moslem, meaning of, 153
Moslems, the first, 153
Moslems, the non-Arabian. See -*Mawali*
Mosul (-Mawsil), 261, 269, 281, 326, 355, 362, 399, 445, 454
-*Mu'allaqat*, 77, 82, **101–121**, 128, 131, 416, 459
Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan (Caliph), xxviii, 13, 119, 181, 191, 192, 193, **194–195**, 196, 206, 207, 208, 213, 214, 222, 256, 377, 407, 426
Mu'awiya b. Bakr (Amalekite prince), 2
Mu'awiya, brother of -Khansa, 126
Mu'ayyidu 'l-Dawla (Buwayhid), 267
-Mubarrad (philologist), 92, 131, 202, 226, 237, 244, **343, 344**
Mudar b. Nizar, xix, 252
Mudar, the tribes descended from, xix
-*Mudhhabat*, -*Mudhahhabat*, 101
-Mufaddal al-Dabbi (philologist), 31, **128,** 133, **343**
-*Mufaddaliyyat*, 90, **128,** 343
-Mughammas, 69
muhajat (scolding - match), 238
-Muhajirun (the Refugees), 171, 209
Muhalhil b. Rabi'a, 58, 76, 109, 110
-Muhallab b. Abi Sufra, 239
-Muhallabi, the Vizier, 267, 347
Muhammad, the Prophet, xxiii, xxvi–xxviii, 3, 10, 15, 18, 27, 30, 51, 62, 64, 65, 66, 69, 70, 71, 74, 86, 87, 105, 124, 132, 134, 135, 137, 139, **141–180**, 181–183, 186–188, 190–193, 201, 202, 207–209, 213–218, 223, 224, 229, 231, 233, **235**, 237, 249, 250, 251, 257, 258, 267, 273, 274, 277, 278, 279, 280, 318, 327, 330, 341, 342, 348, 349, 355, 356, 380, 383, 392, 400, 403, 420, 428, 433, 449, 455, 462, 463, 465, **467**
Muhammad, question as to whether he could read and write, 151; his attitude towards the heathen poets, 159, 212, 235; his aim in the Meccan *Suras*, 160; his death, 175; his character, 179, 180; biographies of, 144, 146, 247, 349; poems in honour of, 124, 127, 326, 327, 449; mediæval legend of, 327; pilgrimage to the tomb of, 463; his tomb demolished by the Wahhabis, 467
Muhammad ('Alid), 258
Muhammad (Seljuq), 326
Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab, 465–467
Muhammad b. 'Ali ('Abbasid), 251
Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, 466, 468
Muhammad b. 'Ali b.-Sanusi, 468
Muhammad Ibnu 'l-Hanafiyya, 216, 218, 220
Muhammad b. -Hasan, the Imam, 217
Muhammad b. Isma'il, the Imam, 217, 272–274
Mubammad al-Kalbi, 348
Muhammad b. Sa'ud, 466
Muhiyyu 'l-Din Ibnu 'l-'Arabi, **399–404**, 434, 462
Muhiyyu 'l-Maw'udat (title), 243
-Muhtadi, the Caliph, 264
Muir, Sir W., 142, 143, 146, 156, 184, 197, 338
Mu'izz (Fatimid Caliph), 420
Mu'izzu 'l-Dawla (Buwayhid), 266, 267, 347
Mu'jamu 'l-Buldan, 17, 357
Mu'jamu 'l-Udaba, 357
-Mujammi' (title), 65
Mukarrib (title), 10
-Mukhadramun (a class of poets), 127
-Mukhtar, 198, **218–220**, 250
-*Mukhtarat*, 128
-Muktafi, the Caliph, 257, 269, 325
-Mulaththamun, 423
Müller, A., 5, 101, 261, 266, 355, 429
Müller, D. H., 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 18, 24
Multan, 203
Muluku 'l-Tawa'if (the Party Kings of Spain), 414
-Munafiqun (the Hypocrites), 171, 172, 176
-Munakhkhal (poet), 49
-Mundhir I (Lakhmite), 41
-Mundhir III (Lakhmite), **41–44,** 45, 50, 51, 60, 87, 103, 104
-Mundhir IV (Lakhmite), 45, 47
-Mundhir b. -Harith (Ghassanid), 50, 52
-Mundhir b. Ma' al-samа, 50, 51. See -*Mundhir III*
-Munjibat (title), 88
Munk, S., 360
-*Munqidh mina 'l-Dalal*, 340, 380
munshi, 326
-Muqaddasi (geographer), 356, 357, 409
-*Muqaddima*, of Ibn Khaldun, 32, 229, 278, 289, **437–440**. See *Ibn Khaldun*
-Muqanna', 258
-Muqattam, Mt., 394, 396
-*Muqtabis*, 428
-Muqtadir, the Caliph, 325, 343, 399
-*murabit*, 430
-Murabitun, 423. See *Almoravides, the*
murid, 392
murji' (Murjite), 221
Murjites, the, 206, 220, **221–222**, 428
Murra, 56, 57, 58
Mursiya (Murcia), 399
Muruju 'l-Dhahab, 13, 15, 37, 195, 203, 205, 206, 259, 260, 267, **349, 353, 354,** 387, 457
muruwwa (virtue), 72, 82, 178, 287
Musa b. Maymun (Maimonides), 434
Musa b. Nusayr, 203, 204, 405
Musa b. 'Uqba, 247
Mus'ab, 199
Musaylima, 183
-*Mushtarik*, 357
Music in Pre-Islamic Arabia, 236
Musicians, Arab, 236
-*musiqi* (Music), 283
Muslim (author of -*Sahih*), 144, 337
Muslim b. 'Aqil, 196
Muslim b. -Walid (poet), 261
Muslim (Moslem), meaning of, 153
-*musnad* (inscriptions), 6
-Mustakfi (Spanish Umayyad), 424
-Mustakfi, 'Abbasid Caliph, 266
-Mustansir ('Abbasid), 448
-Mustarshid Billah, the Caliph, 329
-Musta'sim, the Caliph, 254 445

-Mustawrid b. 'Ullifa, 210
-*mut'a*, 262
-Mu'tadid ('Abbadid), 421, 425
-Mu'tadid ('Abbasid Caliph), 325
-Mu'tamid ('Abbadid), 421–424
-Mutajarrida, 49, 122
-Mutalammis (poet), 107, 108, 138
Mutammim b. Nuwayra, 127
-Mutanabbi (poet), 266, 269, **270,** 289, 290, 291, 292, **304–313,** 315, 316, 324, 396, 416, 448
mutasawwifa (aspirants to Sufiism), 229
-Mu'tasim, the Caliph, 129, 257, 263, 369, 375
-Mutawakkil, the Caliph, 257, 264, 284, 344, 350, 369, **378, 376,** 388
mutawakkil, 233
Mu'tazilites, the, 206, 220, **222–224,** 225, 230, 262, 268, 284, 346, **367–370,** 376, 377, 378, 392, 409, 428, 431
-Mu'tazz, the Caliph, 325
-Muti', the Caliph, 353
Muti' b. Iyas (poet), 291, 292
muwahhid, 432
-Muwalladun, 278, 408
muwashshah, verse-form, 416, 417, 449
-*Muwatta'*, 337, 408, 409
Muzaffar Qutuz (Mameluke), 446
Muzayna (tribe), 116
-Muzayqiya (surname), 15
-*Muzhir*, 71, 455
Mystical poetry of the Arabs, the, 325, 396–398
Mysticism. See *Sufiism*

N

-Nabat, the Nabatæans, xxv, 279
Nabatæan, Moslem use of the term, xxv
Nabatæan Agriculture, the Book of, xxv
Nabatæan inscriptions, xxv, 3
-Nabigha al-Dhubyani (poet), 39, 49, 50, **54,** 86, 101, **121–123,** 128, 139
nadhir (warner), 164
Nadira(tribe), 170
-Nadr b. Harith, 330
Nafahatu 'l-Uns, by Jami, 386
Nafhu 'l-Tib, by -Maqqari, 399, 413, 436
Nafi' b. -Azraq, 208
-Nafs al-zakiyya (title), 258
-Nahhas (philologist), 102
-Nahrawan, battle of, 208
-*nahw* (grammar), 283
Na'ila, 35
-Najai, 40
-Najashi (the Negus), 26, 27, 28
Najd, xvii, 62, 107, 466
Najda b. 'Amir, 209
Najdites (a Kharijite sect), the, 208
Najran, 26, 27, 105, 124, 136, 137, 162
Na'man, 11
Namir (tribe), xix
Napoleon, 468
-*Naqa'id*, of Akhtal and Jarir, 240
-*Naqa'id*, of Jarir and -Farazdaq, 239
Naqb al-Hajar, 8
-Nasafi (Abu 'l-Barakat), 456
-Nasa'i, 337
Nashwan b. Sa'id al-Himyari, 12, 13
nasib (erotic prelude), 77, 310
Nasim, a place near Baghdad, 461
-Nasimi (the Hurufi poet), 460, 461
Nasir-i Khusraw, Persian poet, 323
Nasiru 'l-Dawla (Hamdanid), 269, 411
Nasr b. Sayyar, 251
Nasr II (Samanid), 265
Nasrid dynasty of Granada, the, 435, 442
nat', 257
-Nawaji (Muhammad b. -Hasan), 417
Nawar, wife of -Farazdaq, 243, 244
Nawar, the beloved of Labid, 121
Nawruz, Persian festival, 250
Naysabur, 232, 276, 338, 339, 340, 348
Nazmu 'l-Suluk, 396
-Nazzani, 369
Neo-platonism, 360, 384, 389, 390
Neo-platonist philosophers welcomed by Nushirwan, 358
Nero, 325
Nessus, 104
Nicephorus, 261
Niebuhr, Carsten, 7
Night journey of Muhammad, the, 169, 403
Night of Power, the, 150
Nihayatu 'l-Arab, 455
Nile, the, xxviii, 264, 354, 455
Nirvana, 233, 391
-Nizamiyya College, at Baghdad, 276, 340, 380, 431
-Nizamiyya College, at Naysabur, 276, 340
Nizamu 'l-Mulk, 276, 340, 379
Nizar, xix
Noah, xv, xviii, 165
Nöldeke, Th., xv, xx, xxxiii, xxv, 5, 27, 29, 38, 42, 44, 45, 48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 57–60, 66, 70, 78, 80, 83, 101, 102, 103, 109, 113, 122, 123, 126, 127, 130, 134, 145, 151, 160, 167, 172, 184, 195, 228, 237, 238, 249, 252, 258, 288
Nomadic life, characteristics of, 439, 440
Nominalists, 367
Normans, the, 441
Nubia, 387
Nuh I (Samanid), 265
Nuh II (Samanid), 265
-*Nujum al-Zahira*, 257, 262, 268, 369, **454**
-Nu'man I (Lakhmite), 40, 41, 139
-Nu'man III (Lakhmite), **45–49,** 50, 53, 54, 69, 86, 121, 122
-Nu'man al-Akbar. See *Nu'man I*
-Nu'man al-A'war (Lakhmite). See *-Nu'man I*
-Nu'man b. -Mundhir Abu Qabus. See *-Nu'man III*
Numayr (tribe), 245, 246
-Nuri (Abu 'l-Husayn), 392
Nushirwan (Sasanian king), 29, 42, 45, 358
-Nuwayri, 15, 455

O

Occam, 367
Ockley, Simon, 433
Ode, the Arabian, 76–78. See *qasida*
Odenathus, 33, 35
Odyssey, the, xxii
Ordeal of fire, the, 23
Orthodox Caliphs, the, xxiii, xxvii, 181–193
Orthodox Reaction, the, 284, 376. See *-Ash'ari*
Osiander, 9
Ottoman Turks, the, xxix, 442, 447, 464–467
Oxus, the, xxviii, 341, 444

P

Pahlavi (Pehlevi) language, the, 214, 330, 346, 348, 358
Palermo, 441
Palestine, 52, 104, 137, 229
Palmer, E. H., 172, 176, 260
Palms, the Feast of, 54
Palm-tree, verses on the, by 'Abd al-Rahman I, 418
Palm-trees of Hulwan, the two, 292
Palmyra, 33, 53
Panegyric, two-sided (rhetorical figure), 311
Panjab (Punjaub), the, 203, 268
Pantheism, 231, 233, 234, 275, 372, **390, 391,** 394, 403, 460
Paracelsus, 388
Paradise, the Muhammadan, burlesqued by Abu'l -'Ala al-Ma'arri, 318, 319
Parthian kings, the, 457
Parwez, son of Hurmuz (Sasanian), 48, 69
Passion Play, the, 218

Paul and Virginia, 469
Pavet de Courteille, 349
Pearl-fishing in the Persian Gulf, 354
Pedro of Castile, 437
Penitents, the (a name given to certain Shi'ite insurgents), 218
Pentateuch, the, 165, 171, 323
Persecution of the early Moslems, 154, 155, 157; of heretics, 224, 368, 369, 372–375, 376, 436, 460, 461
Persepolis, 356
Persia, xxiv, xxvii, xxix, 21, 29, 33, 34, 38, 41, 42, 48, 113, 160, 182, 184, 185, 188, 208, 214, 247, 255, 258, 265, 266, 274, 279, 328, 348, 349, 390, 394, 404, 444, 446, 454, 457
Persia, the Moslem conquest of, 184
Persia, the national legend of, 349
Persian divines, influence of the, 278
Persian Gulf, the, 4, 107, 354, 357
Persian influence on Arabic civilisation and literature, xxviii, xxix, 182, 250, 256, 265, 267, **276–281**, 287, 288, 290, 295, 418
Persian influence on the Shi'a, 214, 219
Persian Kings, History of the, translated by Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa', 348
Persian literature, fostered by the Samanids and Buwayhids 265, 303
Persian Moslems who wrote in Arabic, xxx, xxxi, 276–278
Persians, the, rapidly became Arabicised, 280, 281
Persians, the, in -Yemen, 29
Petra xxv, 5
Petrarch, 425
Pharaoh, 162, 403
Pharaohs, the, 4, 5
Philip III, 431
Philistines, the, 3
Philologists, the Arab, xxiv, 32, 127, 128, 133, 246, **341-348**
Philosophers, the Greek, 341, 363
Philosophers, the Moslem, 360, 361, 381, 382, 432–434
Philosophers and scientists, Lives of the, by Ibnu 'l-Qifti, 355
Philosophus Autodidactus, 433
Phœnician language, the, xvi
Phœnicians, the, xv
Physicians, History of the, by Ibn Abi Usaybi'a, 266, 355
Piers the Plowman, 450
Pietists, the, 207, 208
Pilgrimage to Mecca, the, 63, 65, 135, 136, 319
Pilgrimage, of the Shi'ites, to the tomb of -Husayn at Karbala, 218, 466
pir (Persian word), 392
Plato, 204
Plutarch, 363
Pocock, E., 433
Poems of the Hudhaylites, the, 128
Poems, the Pre-islamic, xxii, xxiii, 30, 31, **71-140,** 282, 285–289, 290; chief collections of, 127–131; the tradition of, 131–134; first put into writing, 132
Poems, the Suspended. See *-Mu'allaqat*
Poetics, work on, by Ibnu 'l-Mu'tazz, 325
Poetry, Arabian, the origins of, 72–75; the decline of, not due to Muhammad, 235; in the Umayyad period, 235–246; in the 'Abbasid period, 285–336; in Spain, 415–417, 425, 426; after the Mongol Invasion, 448–450.
Poetry, conventions of the Ancient, criticised, 286, 288, 315
Poetry, Muhammadan views regarding the merits of, 308–312; intimately connected with public life, 436; seven kinds of, 450
Poetry, the oldest written Arabic, 138
Poetry and Poets, Book of, by Ibn Qutayba. See *Kitabu 'l-Shi'r wa-'l-Shu'ara*
Poets, the Modern, 289–336; judged on their merits by Ibn Qutayba, 287; pronounced superior to the Ancients, 288, 289
Poets, the Pre-islamic, character and position of, 71–73; regarded as classical, xxiii, 72, 285, 286
Politics, treatise on, by -Mawardi, 337, 338
Portugal, 416
Postal service, organised by 'Abdu 'l-Malik, 201
Postmaster, the office of, 45
Prætorius, F., 10
Prayers, the five daily, 149, 168
Predestination, 157, 223, 224, 378, 379
Preston, Theodore, 330
Prideaux, W. F., 11, 13
Primitive races in Arabia, 1–4
Proclus, 389
Procreation, considered sinful, 317
Prophecy, a, made by the Carmathians, 322
Prose, Arabic, the beginnings of, 31
Proverbs, Arabic, 3, 16, **31,** 50, 84, 91, 109, 244, 292, 373
Ptolemies, the, 276
Ptolemy (geographer), 3, 358
Public recitation of literary works, 314
Pyramids, the, 354
Pyrenees, the, xxviii, 204
Pythagoras, 102

Q

Qabus (Lakhmite), 44, 45, 52
qadar (power), 224
-Qadariyya (the upholders of free-will), 224
qaddah (oculist), 271
qadi 'l-qudat (Chief Justice), 395
Qadiri dervish order, the, 393
-Qahira, 275, 394. See *Cairo*
qahramana, 457
Qahtan, xviii, 12, 14, 18, 200
Qala'idu 'l-'Iqyan, 425
-Qamus, 403, 456
-Qanun, 361
qara'a, 159
-Qarafa cemetery, 396
-Qaramita, 274. See *Carmathians, the*
qarawi, 138
qarn, meaning 'ray,' 18
qasida (ode), 76–78, 105, 288
qasida (ode), form of the, 76, 77; contents and divisions of the, 77, 78; loose structure of the, 134; unsuitable to the conditions of urban life, 288
Qasidatu 'l-Burda. See *-Burda*
Qasidatu 'l-Himyariyya, 12
Qasir, 36, 37
Qasirin, 111
Qasiyun, Mt., 399
-Qastallani, 455
Qatada, 294
Qatari b. -Fuja'a, 213
-Qayrawan, 264, 429
Qays 'Aylan (tribe), xix, 199 293, 405
Qays b. -Khatim, 94–97, 137
Qays b. Zuhayr, 61, 62
Qaysar (title), 45
Qazwin, 445
-Qazwini (geographer), 416
Qift, 355
qiyas, 297
Qonya, 403, 404
Quatremere, M., xxv, **437, 445,** 453
Qudar the Red, 3
Qumis (province), 391
Qur'an, 159. See *Koran, the*
Quraysh (tribe), xix, xxiii, xxvii, 22, **64,** 65–68, 117, 124, 134, 142, 146, 153–158, 164, 165, 170, 174, 175, 183, 207, 216, **237,** 241, 279, 330, 347, 375, 407, 417
Quraysh, the dialect of, xxiii, 142; regarded as the classical standard, xxiii, 134
Qurayza (tribe), 21, 170

qurra (Readers of the Koran), 277. See *Koran-readers, the*
Qusayy, 64, 65, 146
-Qushayri, 226, 227, 228, 230, **338**, 379
Quss b. Sa'ida, 136
qussas, 374
Qusta b. Luqa, 359
Qutu 'l -Qulub, 338, 393

R

rabad, 409
Rabi', son of Fatima, the daughter of -Khurshub, 88
Rabi'a b. Nizar, xix, 5
Rabi'a (b. Nizar), the descendants of, xix
Rabi'a al-'Adawiyya, 227, **232, 233–234**
Racine, 469
-Radi, the Caliph, 376
Radwa, Mount, 216
Rafidites, the, 268. See *Shi'ites, the*
Ra'i 'l-ibil (poet), 245, 246
rai'a (palingenesis), 215
-rajaz (metre), 74, 75, 76, 77
Rakhman, 126
Rakusians, the, 149
Ralfs, C.A., 327
Ramadan, the Fast of, 224, 450
Ramla, 229
Raqqada, 274
Rasa'ilu Ikhwan al-Safa, 370, 371
Rasmussen, 61
Rationalism. See *Free-thought*
-Rawda, island on the Nile, 455
rawi (reciter), 131
Rawis, the, 131–134
Raydan, 10
-Rayy, 258, 259, 268, 333, 350, 361, 420, 445
-Rayyan, 120
-Razi (Abu Bakr), physician, 361. See *Abu Bakr al-Razi*
-Razi (Abu Bakr), historian, 420
Reading and writing despised by the pagan Arabs, 39
Realists, 368
Red Sea, the, 4, 5, 62
Reformation, the, 468
Reforms of 'Abdu 'l-Malik, 201 ; of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz, 205
Refugees, the. See *-Muhajirun*
Register of 'Umar, the, 187, 188
Reiske, 15, 102, 308, 312, 316, 331
Religion, conceived as a product of the human mind, 317
Religion of the Sabæans and Himyarites, 10, 11 ; of the Pagan Arabs, 56, 135–140, 164, 166 ; associated with commerce, 135, 154
Religions and Sects, Book of, by -Shahrastani, 341 ; by Ibn Hazm, 341. See *Kitabu 'l-Milal wa-'l-Nihal*
Religious ideas in Pre-islamic poetry, 117, 119, 123, 124, 135–140
Religious literature in the 'Abbasid period, 337–341
Religious poetry, 298–302
Renaissance, the, 443
Renan, xv, 432
Renegades, the, 408, 415, 426
Resurrection, the, 166, 215, 297, 299, 316
Revenge, views of the Arabs concerning, 93, 94 ; poems relating to, 97
Rhages. See *-Rayy*
Rhapsodists, the, 131
Rhazes, 265, 361. See *Abu Bakr al -Razi*.
Rhetoric, treatise on, by Jahiz, 347
Rhinoceros, the, 354
Rhymed Prose. See *sai'*
Ribah b. Murra, 25
ribat, 276, 430
Richelieu, 195
Rifa'i dervish order, the, 393
-Rijam, 119
Risalatu 'l-Ghufran, 166, 167, 206, **318, 319, 375**
-Risalat al-Qushayriyya, 226, 227, 338
Roderic, 204, 405
Rödiger, Emil, 8
Roger II of Sicily, 434
Rome, 33, 34, 41, 43, 50, 52, 113, 252, 314. See *Byzantine Empire, the*
Ronda, 410
Rosary, use of the, prohibited, 467
Rosen, Baron V., 375
Rothstein, Dr. G., 37, 53
-Rub' al -Khali, xvii
Rubicon, the, 252
Rückert, Friedrich, 93, 97, 104, 292, 332
Rudagi, Persian poet, 265
Ruhu 'l-Quds (the Holy Ghost), 150
-ruju, 152
Ruknu 'l-Dawla (Buwayhid), 266, 267
-Rumaykiyya, 422
Rushayd al-Dahdah, 394, 396
Rustam, 330, 363
Ruzbih, 346. See *Ibnu 'l-Muqaffa'*

S

-Sa'b Dhu 'l-Qarnayn, 17
-Sab' al-Tiwal (the Seven Long Poems), 103
Saba (Sheba), xxv, i, **4, 5,** 6, 10, 16, 17. See *Sabæans, the*
Saba (person), 14
Sabæan language, the, xvi See *South Arabic language, the*
Sabæans, the, xv, xvii, xviii, xx, xxi, i, **4, 5,** 7, 14, 17
Saba'ites, the, a Shi'ite sect, 215, 216, 217, 219
Sabians, the, 149, 341, 354, 358, 363, 364, 388
-Sab'iyya (the Seveners), 217
Sabota, 5
Sabuktagin, 268
Sabur I, 33
Sabur b. Ardashir, 267, 314
Sachau, E., xxii, 361
Sacy, Silvestre de, 8, 80, 102, 353, 354
Sa'd (tribe), 147
Sa'd b. Malik b. Dubay'a, 57
sada (owl or wraith), 94, 166
Sa'd-ilah, 11
sadir, 259
-Sadir (castle), 41
Sadru 'l-Din of Qonya, 403, 404
safa (purity), 228, 370
Safa, the inscriptions of, xxi
-Safadi, 326, 456
Safar-Nama, 324
Safawid dynasty, the, xxix
-Saffah, 253, 254, 257, 259
-Saffah b. 'Abd Manat, 253
-Saffah, meaning of the title, 253
-Saffar (title), 265
Saffarid dynasty, the, 265
safi (pure), 228
Safiyyu 'l-Din al-Hilli (poet) 449, 450
sag (Persian word), 445
-Sahaba (the Companions of the Prophet), 229
Sahara, the, 423, 429, 468
-Sahib Isma'il b. 'Abbad, 267, 347
Sahibu 'l-Zanadiqa (title), 373
-Sahih, of -Bukhari, 144, 146, 337
-Sahih, of Muslim, 144, 337
Sahl b. 'Abdallah al-Tustari, 392
Sa'id b. -Husayn, 274
St. John, the Cathedral of, 203
St. Thomas, the Church of, at -Hira, 46
Saints, female, 233
Saints, the Moslem, 386, 393, 395, 402, 403, 463, 467
saj' (rhymed prose), 74, 75, 159, 327, 328
Sakhr, brother of -Khansa, 126, 127
Sal', 398
Saladin, 275, 348, 355
Salahu 'l-Din b. Ayyub, 275. See *Saladin*
Salama b. Khalid, 253
Salaman, 433

Salaman (tribe), 79
Salamiyya, 274
Salih (prophet), 3
Salih (tribe), 50
Salih b. 'Abd al-Quddus, 372–375
Salim al-Suddi, 204
Saltpetre industry, the, at -Basra, 273
Sam b. Nuh, xviii. See *Shem, the son of Noah*
sama' (religious music), 304
sunna' (oral tradition), 297
Samah'ali Yanuf, 10, 17
-Sam'ani, 339
Samanid dynasty, the, **265, 266,** 268, 271, 303
Samarcand, 203, 268, 447
Samarra, 263
-Samaw'al b. 'Adiya, 84, 85
Samuel Ha-Levi, 428, 429
San'a, 8, 9, 17, 24, 28, 66, 215
sanad, 144
-Sanhaji, 456
Sanjar (Seljuq), 264
-Sanusi (Muhammad b. Yusuf), 456
Sanusiyya Brotherhood, the, 468
-Saqaliba, 413
Saqtu 'l-Zand, 313, 315
Sarabi (name of a she-camel), 56
Sargon, King, 4
Sari al-Rafi'a (poet), 270
Sari al-Saqati, 386
Saruj, 330, 331, 332
Sa'sa'a, 242
Sasanian dynasty, the, 34, 38, 40, 41, 42, 214, 256, 358, 457
Sasanian kings, the, regarded as divine, 214
Satire, 73, 200, 245, 246
Saturn and Jupiter, conjunction of, 322
Sa'ud b. 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Muhammad b. Sa'ud, 466
Sawa, 333
Sayf b. Dhi Yazan, 29
-Sayfiyya College, the, in Cairo, 305
Sayfu 'l-Dawla (Hamdanid), **269–271, 303–307,** 311, 313, 360
Saylu 'l-'Arim, 14
Schack, A. F. von, 360, 416, 436, 441
Schefer, C., 324
Scheherazade, 457
Scholasticism, Muhammadan, 284, 363, 460. See *-Ash'ari ; Ash'arites ; Orthodox Reaction*
Schreiner, 379
Schulthess, F., 87
Sciences, the Foreign, 282, 283, 358–364
Sciences, the Moslem, development and classification of, **282, 283**
Scripture, People of the, 341
Sea-serpent, the, 354
Sédillot, 360
Seetzen, Ulrich Jasper, 8
Seleucids, the, 276
Self-annihilation (*fana*), the Sufi doctrine of, 233
Selim I (Ottoman Sultan), 448
Seljuq dynasty, the, 264, 265, 268, **275, 276,** 326, 445
Seljuq b. Tuqaq, 275
Seljuq Turks, the, 275, 444
Sell, Rev. E., 468
Semites, the, xv, xvi. 1, 328
Semitic languages, the, xv, xvi
Senegal, 430
Seville, 399, 406, 416, 420, 421, 422, 424, 425, 427, 431, 435, 437, 447
Shabib, 209
Shabwat, 5
Shaddad (king), 1
Shaddad b.-Aswad al-Laythi, 166
Shadharatu 'l-Dhahab, 339, 399, 436, 460
-Shadhili (Abu 'l-Hasan), 461
Shadhili order of dervishes, 393, 461
-Shafi'i, 284, 409
Shafi'ite doctors, biographical work on the, 339
Shahnama, the, by Firdawsi, 265, 325
-Shahrastani, 211, 216, 220, 221, 223, 224, 297, **341,** 388
Shahrazad, 457
sha'ir (poet), 72, 73
Shakespeare, 252
Shamir b. Dhi 'l-Jawshan, 196, 197, 198
Shams (name of a god), 11
Shams b. Malik, 81
Shamsiyya, Queen of Arabia, 4
Shamsu 'l-'Ulum, 13
-Shanfara, **79–81,** 89, 97, 134, 326
Shaqiq (Abu 'Ali), of Balkh, 232, 233, 385
Sharahil (Sharahbil), 18
-Sha'rani, 225, 226, 392, 400, 403, 443, 460, 462, **464–465**
shari'at, 392
-Sharif al-Jurjani, 456
-Sharif al-Radi (poet), 314
Sharifs, of Morocco, the, 442
Sharik b. 'Amr, 44
Sharwasan, 391
Shas, 125
Shayban (clan of Bakr), 58
-Shaykh al-Akbar, 404. See *Muhiyyu 'l-Din Ibnu 'l-'Arabi*
Sheba, 4
Sheba, the Queen of, 18
Shem, the son of Noah, xv, xviii
shi'a (party), 213
Shi'a, the, 213. See *Shi'ites, the*
-Shifa, 361
Shihabu 'l-Din al-Suhrawardi. See *-Suhrawardi*
-Shihr, dialect of, xxi
Shi'ites, the, xxviii, 207, 208, **213–220,** 222, 248, 249, 250, 262, 267, 268, 271–275, 297, 379, 409, 428, 432, 445, 466
shikafi (Persian word), 232
-shikafiyya (the Cave-dwellers), 232
Shilb, 416
Shiraz, 266, 307
Shirazad, 457
-Shirbini, 450
shurat (the Sellers), 209
Shu'ubites, the, 279–280, 344, 372
Sibawayhi, 343
Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi, 355
Sicily, xvi, 52, 441
siddiq, meaning of, 218, 375
-Siddiq (title of Abu Bakr), 183
Sidi Khalil al-Jundi, 456
Sifatu Jazirat al-'Arab, 12, 18, 20
Siffin, battle of, 192, 208, 377
-sihr wa-'l-kimiya (Magic and Alchemy), 283
-Sila fi akhbari a'immati 'l-Andalus, 426
Silves, 416
Simak b. 'Ubayd, 210
Sinbadh the Magian, 258
Sindbad, the Book of, 363
Sinimmar, 40
Siqadanj, 252
Siratu 'Antar, 459
Siratu Rasuli 'llah, 349
siyaha, 394
Siyaru Muluk al-'Ajam, 348
Slane, Baron MacGuckin de, 32, 104, 129, 132, 136, 190, 213, 224, 229, 245, 261, 267, 278, 288, 289, 295, 326, 343, 344, 348, 355, 357, 359, 360, 371, 377, 378, 387, 408, 422, 425, 427, 429, 435, 437, 438, 440, 451
Slaves, the, 413
Smith, R. Payne, 52
Smith, W. Robertson, 56, 199
Snouck Hurgronje, 217
Solecisms, work on, by -Hariri, 336
Solomon, xvii
Solomon Ibn Gabirol, 428
Soothsayers, Arabian, 72, 74, 152, 159, 165
South Arabic inscriptions, the. See *Inscriptions, South Arabic*
South Arabic language, the, xvi, xxi, 6–11
Spain, xvi, xxx, 199, 203, 204, 253, 264, 276, 399, **405–441,** 442, 443, 449, 454
Spain, the Moslem conquest of, 203, 204, 405
Spencer, Herbert, 382
Spitta, 378
Sprenger, A., 143, 145, 149, 153, 456
Steiner, 369

Steingass, F., 328
Stephen bar Sudaili, 389
Stones, the worship of, in pagan Arabia, 56
Stories, frivolous, reprobated by strict Moslems, 330
Street-preachers, 374
Stylistic, manual of, by Ibn Qutayba, 346
-Subki (Taju 'l-Din), 461
Suetonius, 354
suf (wool), 228
Sufi, derivation of, 227, 228; meaning of, 228, 229, 230
Sufiism, **227–235**, 382, **383–404**, 460, 462, 463–465
Sufiism, Arabic works of reference on, 338
Sufiism, origins of, 228–231, 383–389; distinguished from asceticism, 229, 230, 231; the keynote of, 231; argument against the Indian origin of, 233; composed of many different elements, 389, 390; different schools of, 390; foreign sources of, 390; principles of, 392; definitions of, 228, 385, 392
Sufis, the, 206, 327, 339, 381, 460–465. See *Sufiism*
Sufyan b. 'Uyayna, 366
Suhaym b. Wathil (poet), 202
-Suhrawardi (Shihabu 'l-Din Abu Hafs 'Umar), 230, 232, 338, 396
-Suhrawardi (Shihabu 'l-Din Yahya), 275
-Sukkari, 128, 343
-Sulayk b. -Sulaka, 89
Sulaym (tribe), xix
Sulayma, 34
Sulayman (Umayyad Caliph), 200, 203
Sulayman al-Bistani, 469
-Suli, 297
-Suluk li-ma'rifati Duwali 'l-Muluk, 453
-Sumayl b. Hatim, 406
Sumayya, 105
-Sunan, of Abu Dawud al-Sijistani, 337
-Sunan, of Ibn Maja, 337
-Sunan, of -Nasa'i, 337
-sunna, 141, 231
-sunna, collections of traditions bearing on, 337
Sunnis, the, 207
Sunnis and Shi'ites, riot between the, 445
sura, 143, 159
Sura of Abu Lahab, the, 160
Sura of Coagulated Blood, the, 151
Sura of the Elephant, the, 68
Sura of the Enwrapped, the, 152
Sura of the Morning, the, 152
Sura, the Opening, 143, 168
Sura of Purification, the, 164. See *Suratu 'l-Ikhlas*
Sura of the Severing, the, 161
Sura of the Signs, the, 162
Sura of the Smiting, the, 163
Sura of the Unbelievers, the, 163
Suratu 'l-Fatiha (the opening chapter of the Koran), 168. See *Sura, the Opening*
Suratu 'l-Ikhlas, 461. See *Sura of Purification, the*
Suratu 'l-Tahrim, 454
Surra-man-ra'a, 263
Surushan, 391
-Sus, 431
Suwayqa, 398
Suyut, 454
-Suyuti (Jalalu 'l-Din), 55, 71, 145, 403, **454**, **455**
Syria, xxiv, xxvii–xxx, 3, 5, 26, 33, 35, 43, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54 63, 73, 84, 123, 132, 142, 148, 170, 184, 185, 186, 191, 193, 199, 207, 215, 232, 240, 247, 255, 262, 268, 269, **271**, 274, 275, 303, 304, 350, 355, 358, 382, 386, 388, 390, 405, 418, 419, 442, 443, 446, 448, 451, 461, 468
Syria, conquest of, by the Moslems, 184

T

Ta'abbata Sharran (poet), 79, **81**, **97**, 107, 126
Tabala, 105
Tabaqatu 'l-Atibba, 266
Tabaqatu 'l-Sufiyya, 338
Tabaran, 339
-Tabari, 1, 27, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 44, 45, 48, 49, 66–68, 70, **145**, 155, 156, 158, 185, 186, 187, 189, 210, 212, 215, 218, 219, 256, 258, 259, 265, 277, **349–352**, 355, 356, 373, 376
-Tabari's *Annals*, abridgment of, by -Bal'ami, 265, 352
Tabaristan, 350
Tabi'un (the Successors), 229
tabi'iyyun, 381
Table, the Guarded, 163
Tabriz, 461
Tacitus, 194
Tadhkiratu 'l-Awliya, by Faridu'ddin 'Attar, 226, 228, 387
tadlis, 145
Tafsiru 'l-Jalalayn, 455
Tafsiru 'l-Qur'an, by -Tabari, 1, 145, 351
-Taftazani, 456
Taghlib (tribe), xix, 44, 55–60, 61, 76, 93, 107, 109, 110, 112, 113, 240, 253, 269
Tahafutu 'l-Falasifa, 341
Tahir, 262, 263
Tahirid dynasty, the, 263, 265
tahrimu 'l-makasib, 297
Ta'if, 158
-Ta'iyyatu 'l-Kubra, 396, 397, 402
-Taiyyatu 'l-Sughra, 397
tajrid, 394
Talha, 190
Ta'limites, the, 381, 382
Talisman, the, 469
Tamerlane, 437. See *Timur*
Tamim (tribe), xix, 125, **242**, 293
Tamim al-Dari, 225
tanasukh (metempsychosis), 267
Tanukh (tribe), xviii, 34, **38**
taqlid, 402
Tarafa (poet), 44, 101, **107–109**, 128, 138, 308
tardiyyat, 204
Ta'rikhu 'l-Hind, 361
Ta'rikhu 'l-Hukama, 355, 370
Ta'rikhu 'l-Khamis, 445
Ta'rikhu 'l-Khulafa, 455
Ta'rikhu 'l-Rusul wa-'l-Muluk, 351
Ta'rikhu 'l-Tamaddun al-Islami, 435
Tariq, 204, 405
Tarsus, 361
Tartary, 444
tasawwuf (Sufiism), **228**
Tasm (tribe), 4, 25
tawaf, 117
tawakkul, 233
tawhid, 401
ta'wil (interpretation), the doctrine of, 220
-tawil (metre), 75, 80
-Tawwabun (the Penitents), 218
Tayma, 84
Tayyi' (tribe), xviii, **44**, **53**, 115
ta'ziya (Passion Play), 218
Teheran, 361
Temple, the, at Jerusalem, 169, 177
Tennyson, 79
Teresa, St., 233
Testament, the Old, 161, 179
-Tha'alibi, 267, 271, 288, 290, 303, 304, **308**, **312**, **348**
Thabit b. Jabir b. Sufyan, **81**, 126. See *Ta'abbata Sharran*
Thabit b. Qurra, 359
Thabit Qutna, 221
Tha'lab, 344
Thales, 363
Thamud, 1, **3**, 162
thanawi, 374
Thapsus, 274
Thaqif (tribe), 69
Theodore Abucara, 221
Theologians, influence of, in the 'Abbasid period, 247, 283, 366, 367
Thoma (St. Thomas), 46
Thomas Aquinas, 367
Thorbecke, H., 55, 90, 114, 129, 336, 459
Thousand and One Nights, the, 34, 456–459. See *Arabian Nights, the*
-tibb (Medicine), 283
Tiberius, 194

-Tibrizi (commentator), 55, 130
Tibullus, 425
Tides, a dissertation on, 354
Tigris, the, 189, 238, 256, 446
-Tihama, 62
Tihama, the, of Mecca, 3
Tilimsan, 454
Timur, xxix, 444, 454. See *Tamerlane*
Timur, biography of, by Ibn 'Arabshah, 454
tinnin, 354
-Tirimmah (poet), 138
-Tirmidhi (Abu 'Isa Muhammad), 337
Titus, 137
Tobacco, the smoking of, prohibited, 467
Toledo, 204, 421–423
Toleration, of Moslems towards Zoroastrians, 184; towards Christians, 184, 414, 441
Torah, the, 402. See *Pentateuch*
Tornberg, 203, 205, 253, 355, 429
Tours, battle of, 204
Trade between India and Arabia, 4, 5
Trade, expansion of, in the 'Abbasid period, 281
Traditional or Religious Sciences, the, 282
Traditions, the Apostolic, collections of, 144, 247, 337
Traditions of the Prophet, **143–146,** 237, 277, 278, 279, 282, **337,** 356, 378, 462, 463, 464, 465, 467
Trajan, xxv
Translations into Arabic, from Pehlevi, 330, 346, 348, 358; from Greek, 358, 359, 469; from Coptic, 358; from English and French, 469
Translators of scientific books into Arabic, the, 358, 359, 363
Transoxania, 203, 233, 263, 265, 266, 275, 360, 419, 444
Transoxania, conquest of, by the Moslems, 203
Tribal constitution, the, 83
Tribes, the Arab, xix, xx
Tripoli, 468
Truth, the (Sufi term for God), 392
Tubba's, the (Himyarite kings), 5, 14, **17–26,** 42
Tudih, 398
tughra, 326
-Tughra'i (poet), 326
tughra'i (chancellor), 326
Tughril Beg, 264, 275
lulul, 286
Tumadir, 126
Tunis, 274, 428, 437, 441
Turkey, xvi, 169, 394, 404, 448, 466
Turkey, the Sultans of, 448
Turks, the, 263, 264, 268, 325, 343. See *Ottoman Turks; Seljuq Turks*
Tus, 339, 340
Tuwayli', 398
Tuways, 236
Twenty Years After, by Dumas, 272

U

'Ubaydu'llah, the Mahdi, 274
'Ubaydu'llah b. Yahya, 350
'Ubaydu'llah b. Ziyad, 196, 198
Udhayna (Odenathus), 33, 35
Uhud, battle of, 170, 175
'Ukaz, the fair of, 101, 102, 135
-'Ulama, 320, 367, 460, 461
Ultra-Shi'ites, the, 258. See *-Ghulat*
'Uman (province), 4, 62
'Umar b. Abd al-'Aziz (Umayyad Caliph), 200, 203, **204–206,** 283
'Umar b. Abi Rabi'a (poet), 237
'Umar Ibnu 'l-Farid (poet), **325, 394–398,** 402, 448, 462
'Umar b. Hafsun, 410
'Umar b. al-Khattab (Caliph), xxvii, 51, 105, 127, 142, 157, 183, **185–190,** 204, 210, 214, 215, 242, 254, 268, 297, 435
'Umar Khayyam, 339
'Umara, 88
Umayma (name of a woman), 90, 91, 92
Umayya, ancestor of the Umayyads, 65, 146, 181, 190
Umayya b. Abi 'l-Salt (poet), 69, **149–150**
Umayyad dynasty, the, xxviii, 65, 154, 181, 190, **193–206,** 214, 222, 264, 273, 274, 278, 279, 282, 283, 347, 358, 366, 373, 408
Umayyad literature, 235–247
Umayyads (descendants of Umayya), the, 190, 191. See *Umayyad dynasty, the*
Umayyads, Moslem prejudice against the, 154, 193, 194, 197, 207
Umayyads of Spain, the, 253, 264, 347, **408–414**
-Umda, by Ibn Rashiq, 288
Umm 'Asim, 204
Umm Jamil, 89
Unays, 67
-'Urayd, 398
Urtuqid dynasty, the, 449
Usdu 'l-Ghaba, 336
'Usfan, 22
ustadh, 392
Ustadhsis, 258
Usyut, 454
'Utba, a slave-girl, 296
-'Utbi (historian), 269, 354
'Uthman b. 'Affan, Caliph, xxvii, 142, 185, **190,** 191, 210, 211, 213, 214, 215, 221, 236, 297
'Uyunu 'l-Akhbar, 346
'Uyunu 'l-Anba fi Tabaqat al-Atibba, 355. See *Tabaqatu 'l-Atibba*
-'Uzza (goddess), 43, 135, 155

V

Valencia, 421
Valerian, 33
Van Vloten, 221, 222, 250
Vedanta, the, 384
Venus, 18
Vico, 439
Victor Hugo, 312
Villon, 243
Vizier, the office of, 256, 257. See *wazir*.
Viziers of the Buwayhid dynasty, the, 267
Vogué, C. J. M. de, xxii
Volleis, 450
Vowel-marks in Arabic script 201

W

Wadd, name of a god, 123
Wadi 'l-Mustad'afin, 394
Wafayatu 'l-A'yan, 451, 452. See *Ibn Khallikan*
-Wafi bi 'l-Wafayat, 456
-wafir (metre), 75
Wahb b. Munabbih, 247, 459
Wahhabis, the, 463, 465–468
Wahhabite Reformation, the, 465–468
-Wahidi (commentator), 305, 307
-wa'id, 297
Wa'il xix, 56, 57
wajd, mystical term, 387, 394
Wajra, 398
-Walid b. 'Abd al-Malik (Umayyad Caliph), 200, **203,** 405
-Walid b. Yazid (Umayyad Caliph), 132, **206,** 291, 375
Wallada, 424, 425
-Waqidi (historian), 144, 261, 349
Waraqa b. Nawfal, 149, 150
wasi (executor), 215
Wasil b. 'Ata, 223, 224, 374
Wasit, 385, 386
Water-diviners, honoured by the pagan Arabs, 73
-Wathiq, the Caliph, 257, 369
wazir, an Arabic word, 256. See *Vizier*
Wellhausen, J., 56, 128, 135, 139, 140, 149, 173, 198, 205, 207, 209, 210, 215, 218, 219, 222, 250, 365
Well-songs, 73
Wellsted, J. R., 8
West Gothic dynasty in Spain, the, 204
Weyers, 425

Wine-songs, 124, 125, 138, 206, 325, 417
Witches, Ballad of the Three, 19
Women famed as poets, 89, 126, 127 ; as Sufis, 233
Women, position of, in Pre-islamic times, 87–92
Woollen garments, a sign of asceticism, 228, 296
Wright, W., 202, 226, 343
Writing, the art of, in Pre-islamic times, xxii, 31, 102, 131, 138
Writing, Arabic, the oldest specimens of, xxi
Wüstenfeld, F., xviii, 17, 129, 132, 190, 213, 245, 253, 275, 295, 357, 378, 408, 416, 452, 459

X

Xerxes, 256
Ximenez, Archbishop, 435

Y

-Yahud (the Jews), 171
Yahya b. Abi Mansur, 359
Yahya b. Khalid, 259, 260, 451
Yahya b. Yahya, the Berber, 408, 409
-Yamama, 25, 111, 124
-Yamama, battle of, xxii, 142
Yaqsum, 28
Ya'qub b. -Layth, 265
Ya'qub al-Mansur (Almohade), 432
-Ya'qubi (Ibn Wadih), historian, 193, 194, 349
Yaqut, 17, 357
Ya'rub, 14
Yatha'amar (Sabæan king), 4
Yatha'amar Bayyin, 10, 17
Yathrib, 62. See *Medina*
Yathrippa, 62
-*Yatima*. See *Yatimatu 'l-Dahr*
Yatimatu 'l-Dahr, 267, 271, 304, **308, 348**
-*Yawaqit*, by -Sha'rani, 403, 460
Yazdigird I (Sasanian), 40, 41
Yazid b. 'Abd al- Malik (Umayyad Caliph), 200
Yazid b. Abi Sufyan, 426
Yazid b. Mu'awiya (Umayyad Caliph), **195–199**, 208, 241
Yazid b. Rabi'a b. Mufarrigh, 19
-Yemen (-Yaman), xvii, 2, 5, 7, 11, 12, 15, 17, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 42, 49, 65, 68, 87, 99, 103, 137, 215, 247, 252, 274, 405
Yoqtan, xviii
Yoqtanids, the, xviii, 4. See *Arabs, the Yemenite*
Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Barr, 428
Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Mu'min (Almohade), 432
Yusuf b. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Fihri, 406
Yusuf b. Tashifin (Almoravide), 423, 430, 431

Z

Zab, battle of the, 181, 253
Zabad, the trilingual inscription of, xxii
-Zabba, 35, 36, 37. See *Zenobia*
Zabdai, 34
zaddiq, 375
Zafar (town in -Yemen), 7, 8, 17, 19, 21
Zafar (tribe), 94
zahid (ascetic), 230
Zahirites, the, 402, 427, 433
-Zahra, suburb of Cordova, 425
zajal, verse-form, 416, 417, 449
Zallaqa, battle of, 423, 431
-Zamakhshari, 145, 280, 336
zandik, 375
-Zanj, 273
Zanzibar, 352
Zapiski, 375
Zarifa, 15
Zarqa'u 'l-Yamama, 25
Zayd, son of 'Adi b. Zayd, 48
Zayd b. 'Ali b. -Husayn, 297
Zayd b. 'Amr b. Nufayl, 149
Zayd b. Hammad, 45
Zayd b. Haritha, 153
Zayd b. Kilab b. Murra, 64. See *Qusayy*
Zayd b. Rifa'a, 370
Zayd b. Thabit, 142
Zaydites, the, 297
Zaynab (Zenobia), 35, 36
Zaynab, an Arab woman, 237
Zaynu 'l-'Abidin, 243
Zenobia, 33, 34, 35
Zinatu 'l-Dahr, 348
Zindiqs, the, 291, 296, 319, 368, **372–375**, 387, 400
Ziryab (musician), 418
Ziyad, husband of Fatima, the daughter of -Khurshub, 88
Ziyad ibn Abihi, 195, 256, 342
Ziyad b. Mu'awiya. See -*Nabigha al-Dhubyani*
Ziyanid dynasty, the, 442
Zone, the, worn by Zoroastrians, 461
Zoroaster, 184, 258
Zoroastrians, the, 184, 341, 354, 373, 461
Zotenberg, H., 352
Zubayda, wife of Harun al-Rashid, 262
-Zubayr, 190
-Zuhara, 18
Zuhayr b. Abi Sulma (poet), 62, **116–119**, 128, 131, 137, 140, 312
zuhd (asceticism), 229, 230, 299
zuhdiyyat, 294
Zuhra b. Kilab b. Murra, 64
-Zuhri (Muhammad b. Muslim b. Shihab), 153, 247, 258
zunnar, 461

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