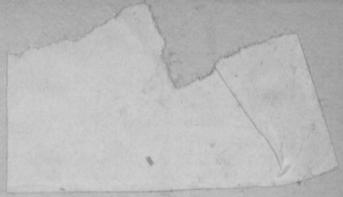


LS



1660



100





LIFE OF MAHOMET,
 FROM THE
 TENTH YEAR OF HIS MISSION
 TO THE HEGIRA.

*by William Muir Esq
 Bengal Civil Service*

[EXTRACTED FROM THE CALCUTTA REVIEW, NO. XLIX.]



CALCUTTA:

PRINTED BY SANDERS, CONES AND CO., NO. 65, COSSITOLLAH.

1855.



IV.E.27.0.





LIFE OF MAHOMET FROM THE 10TH YEAR
OF HIS MISSION TO THE HEGIRA.

[FROM THE CALCUTTA REVIEW, NO. XLIX.]



1. *Sirat Wâkidi. Arabic MS.*
2. *Sirat Tabari. Ditto Ditto.*
3. *Sirat Hishâmi. Ditto Ditto.*
4. *Life of Mohammed, by A. Sprenger, M. D. Allahabad, 1851.*
5. *Essai sur L'Histoire des Arabes pendant L'Epoque de Mahomet: par M. A. P. C. de Perceval. Paris, 1848, vols. 1 and 3.*
6. *Mohammed der Prophet. Dr. Gustav Weil. Stuttgart, 1843.*

IN the beginning of the tenth year of his Mission, (the 50th of his life,) Mahomet was still shut up in the isolated quarters of Abu Tâlib, whither all his near kinsmen, unbelievers as well as converts, had, in consequence of their support of the prophet, been forced to retire. No one ventured forth except at the annual pilgrimage. Buying and selling, giving and receiving in marriage,—all the intercommunications of social life, were suspended between them and the rest of the Coreish. The Hâshimites were thus virtually blockaded for the space of two or three years.

At last the sympathies of a numerous section of the Coreish were aroused. They saw in this form of persecution something more than a conscientious struggle against an Impostor. The justice of extending the ban to the whole Hâshimite stock seemed doubtful. Many, especially those related to the family, began to grieve at the breach.

It was discovered by some of the friends of Mahomet that the parchment in the Kaaba on which the ban was engrossed, had been almost entirely devoured by insects. The important news was told to Mahomet, and to Abu Tâlib, who resolved to found thereon an effort for the dissolution of the league. The venerable chief, now more than fourscore years of age,* issued forth from his shut-up quarters, with a band of followers, to the Kaaba. Addressing the chief men of the Coreish, as usual assembled there, he said,—“Intelligence hath reached me that your deed hath been eaten up of insects; if my words be found true, then desist from your evil designs,—if false, I will deliver up Mahomet that ye may do with him as ye list.” All agreed that it should be thus. So they sent for the document,

* *Wâkidi, p. 23.*

and when they had opened it, lo! it had been devoured by white-ants and was no longer legible. Abu Tâlib, perceiving their confusion, bitterly upbraided them with inhumanity and breach of social obligation: he then advanced with his band to the Kaaba, and standing behind the curtain, prayed to the Lord of the Holy House for deliverance from their machinations. Having done this, he retired again to his abode.

The murmurs of the party that favoured the Hâshimites, now found an opportunity of effective utterance. The partizans of the Prophet were emboldened. The Coreish had hardly recovered from surprise at the sudden appearance, and as sudden departure, of Abu Tâlib, when five chief men rose up from their midst, and declaring themselves inimical to the league, put on their armour, and proceeded to the quarter of Abu Tâlib. Standing by, they commanded all that had taken refuge there to go forth to their respective homes in security and peace. So they went forth in the tenth year of the prophet's mission, 619—620 A. D. The Coreish, confounded by the boldness of the stroke, offered no opposition: they perceived that a strong party had grown up who would resent by arms any attempt to lay violent hands upon the Moslems.*

The rest and liberty that followed the breaking up of the hostile league were not long to be enjoyed by Mahomet. In a few months he was visited by trials more severe than any that had yet befallen him. The tenth year of his mission (the third before the Hegira) had not yet passed when Khadija died, and five weeks later his protector Abu Tâlib also.†

* Among the five chiefs was Abul Bokhtari, whose safety Mahomet endeavoured in return vainly to secure at Badr. Another was Zohair, a maternal grandson of Abd al Muttalib. A third was Mutîm, who shortly afterwards took the Prophet under his protection on his return from Tayîf.

The version in the text is chiefly from Wäckidi, (p. 40,) with the omission only of the fiction that *God had communicated to his prophet*, the information that the document had been eaten up *all except the words "in the name of God,"* with which (according to the ancient Meccan custom, *Tabari*, p. 147,) it commenced, and that Abu Tâlib told this to the Coreish.

Two separate traditions are given both by Hishâmi and Tabari. One as above. The other that the five chiefs had first concerted together to procure the dissolution of the league: and that the Coreish were already influenced by their appeal when Mutîm arose to tear up the document, and found that it had been eaten up. *Hishâmi*, 118 — *Tabari*, 145.

We have endeavoured to weave both versions into the likeliest historical form. Weil supposes the document to have been destroyed during the night by some partizan of Mahomet. But this could hardly have been done. The ravages of white-ants could not thus have been easily counterfeited: they have a peculiar appearance.

† The authorities regarding the se dates are contradictory, and we must be content with probabilities.

The death of his wife was a sore affliction. For five-and-twenty years she had been his counsellor and support, and now his heart and home were left desolate. His family however no longer needed her maternal care. The younger daughter, Fâtima, was approaching womanhood,* and an attachment was perhaps already forming with Ali, her father's nephew and adopted son. Though Khadija, (at her death three score and five years old,) must have long ago lost the charms of youth, and though the custom of Mecca allowed polygamy, yet Mahomet was, during her life time, restrained from other marriages by affection and gratitude, and perhaps also by the wish to secure more entirely for his cause the influence of her family. His grief at her death was at first inconsolable, for he was liable to violent and deep emotion; but its effects were transient. The room of Khadija could be filled, though her devotion and virtues might not be rivalled, by numerous successors.

The loss of Abu Tâlib, who lived and died an unbeliever, was, if possible, a still severer bereavement. We may dismiss without much attention the legend that on his death-bed, in reply to the earnest appeal of his nephew, he declared that he was prevented from giving his assent to the creed of Islâm only because he feared the imputation of terror at the approach of death.† Whatever he may have said to comfort Mahomet, his whole life belies the accusation that the fear of the Coreish restrained him from avowing his convictions. The sacrifices and loss to which Abu Tâlib exposed himself and his

Wäckidi says (p. 23,) that Khadija died *after* Abu Tâlib a month and five days: Ibn Coteiba also, that she died after him three days. The authorities, however, quoted in the *Mowâhibâ-alladoniya*, give Ramadhân (December 619.) as the date of Khadija's death, and Shawwâl (January 620.) for that of Abu Tâlib. Sprenger is not clear; in one place (p. 196, note 2,) he says that "Khadija died *after* Abu Tâlib;" but in the next page, "one month and five days after his wife he lost his uncle and protector, the noble-minded Abu Tâlib."

The middle of Shawwâl is the date generally agreed upon for Abu Tâlib's decease, (Wäckidi, p. 23 :) and the end of the same month, or about a fortnight later, as the period when Mahomet, down-cast, and distressed at the *two* bereavements, set out for Tayif. We must therefore either suppose that Khadija died within this fortnight, *i. e.* within the last fifteen days of Shawwâl, or that she died *before* Abu Tâlib. Ibn Coteiba's tradition that she died three days after Abu Tâlib, would be consistent with the former supposition. But the interval between the two deaths is generally represented as thirty-five days; (Wäckidi, pp. 23, 40.)

In this view it seems more natural to adopt the alternative that she died in the first half of Ramadhân, (December 619;) that Abu Tâlib died in the middle of Shawwâl (January 620;) and that Mahomet, overcome by despondency at these successive bereavements, and by the renewed opposition of the Coreish, set out for Tayif the end of the latter month.

* She would be then about twelve or thirteen years of age.

† See Weil's *Mohammad*, p. 67, note 79; and Wäckidi, p. 22.

family for the sake of his nephew, while yet incredulous of his mission, stamp his character with singularly noble and unselfish features; while at the same time they afford strong proof of the sincerity of Mahomet himself. Abu Tâlib would not have acted thus for an interested deceiver; and he had ample means of scrutiny.

When the patriarch felt that life was ebbing, he summoned his brethren, the sons of Abd al Muttalib, around his bed, commended his nephew to their protection, and having delivered himself of this trust, died in peace.* Mahomet wept bitterly for his uncle; and not without good reason. For forty years he had been the prop of his childhood, the guardian of his youth, the tower of his defence in later life. The place of Khadija might be supplied, but not that of Abu Tâlib. His very unbelief rendered his influence the stronger. So long as he survived, Mahomet needed not to fear violence or attack. There was no strong hand now to protect him from his foes.

Grieved and dispirited by these bereavements, following so closely one upon the other, and dreading the now unrepressed insolence of the Coreish, Mahomet kept chiefly at home, and seldom went abroad.† The dying behest of Abu Tâlib had now an unexpected effect; for Abu Lahab, heretofore the avowed enemy of Mahomet, was softened by his despondency and distress, and spontaneously assumed his protection;—"Do," he said, "as thou hast been in the habit of doing, while Abu Tâlib was yet with us. By Lât! no one shall hurt thee while I live." But the generous pledge was not long observed. Abu Lahab was soon gained back by the Coreish to their party, and Mahomet left to protect himself as he best could.‡

* "After his death Mahomet prayed for his salvation; but he had not yet gone forth from the house, when Gabriel descended with the verse forbidding to pray for unbelievers who have died in incredulity." *Wâchidi*, p. 23, See *Sura IX.* 115. This verse however occurs in one of the latest Suras; there is no reason to believe that the rule enunciated in it had yet been given forth before the Hegira, though the system was fast tending towards it.

It is also said that Mahomet wept and commanded Ali to wash his father's corpse, and place it in the winding sheet, and bury him. *Wâchidi*, *Ibid.* But this looks like one of the Alyite traditions, which would refer all important commissions to Ali. It is not probable that the last services to a man of Abu Tâlib's position, surrounded by brothers and sons, would be left to Ali alone, acting under Mahomet's orders.

† *Wâchidi*, p. 40—*Hishâmi*, p. 138—*Tabari*, p. 149. The two latter say that the indignities he suffered at this time were so great that on one occasion the lower classes cast dirt upon his head. He returned to his house in this plight, and one of his daughters arose to wipe it off, and she wept. And Mahomet said, "My daughter, weep not! for verily the Lord will be thy father's helper." They add that he suffered no such indignity as that while Abu Tâlib lived.

‡ This curious episode is given in detail by *Wâchidi*, p. 40. At first when Ibn Ghaitala abused Abu Lahab as a renegade for taking the part of Mahomet, the

The position of the Arabian prophet was now critical. He must either gain the ascendancy at Mecca, abandon his prophetic claims, or perish in the struggle. Islam must either destroy Idolatry, or Idolatry destroy Islam. He could not remain stationary. His followers, though devotedly attached to him, and numbering a few *once* influential citizens, were but a handful against a host. Open hostilities, notwithstanding all his endeavours to prevent them, might any day be precipitated, and his cause irretrievably lost. He was not gaining ground at Mecca. There had been no conversions, none at least of any note, since he was joined by Omar and Hamza, three or four years before. A few more years of similar discouragement, and his cause was lost.

Pondering thus, Mahomet began to look around him. The Meccans knew not the day of their visitation, and had well nigh sealed their doom. It was perhaps the will of the Lord that succour and salvation should come from some other people. Tâyif (about seventy miles to the east of Mecca,) was the nearest city of importance: it might be that God would turn the hearts of its inhabitants, the idolatrous Thâckifites, and use them as his instruments to chastise the Meccans, and establish his religion on the earth. To them, accordingly, he resolved to deliver his message.

Abu Tâlib had been buried hardly a fortnight, when Mahomet, followed only by the faithful Zeid, set out on his adventurous mission.* His road (as far as Arafat it was the Pilgrim track,) lay over dismal rocks and through barren defiles for about forty miles, when it emerged on the crowning heights of Jebel Kora, with its rich gardens and charming prospect. Thence descending through fertile valleys, the smiling fruits and flowers of which suggested perhaps the bright picture of the conversion of the Thâckifites, he advanced to their city. Though connected by frequent intermarriage, the inhabitants

Coreish admitted the excuse of Abu Lahab, and even praised him for his attempt "to bind up family differences." But shortly after Oeba and Abu Jahl told him to ask in what place Abd al Muttalib was, and on Mahomet's confessing that he was in Hell, Abu Lahab left him in indignation, saying, "I will not cease to be thine enemy for ever!"

Whatever may have been the immediate cause, it is evident that Abu Lahab was led again to abandon his nephew through the instigation of the evil-disposed Coreish.

* Hishâmi, (p. 136,) and Tabari, (p. 149,) say that he went entirely alone; — but Wâckidi, (p. 40½) that he was accompanied by Zeid, who was wounded in attempting to defend his master. As to the date Wâckidi says "there were still some days of Shawwâl remaining," when he started.

of Tayif were jealous of the Coreish.* They had a *Lât*, or chief idol, of their own. It might be possible, by appealing to their national pride, as well as to their conscience, to enlist them on the side of Islâm against the people of Mecca. Mahomet proceeded to the three principal men of the city, who were brothers;† and having explained his mission, invited them to the honour of sustaining the cause, and supporting him in the face of his hostile tribe. But he failed in producing conviction. They cast in his teeth the common objections of his own people, and recommended him to seek for protection in some other quarter.‡

Mahomet remained in Tayif for about ten days; but, though many of the influential men came at his call, no hopeful impression was made upon them. One favour he asked, that they would not divulge the object of his visit, for he feared the taunts and hostility of the Coreish; but this, even if possible, the men of Tayif were little likely to concede. For the first few days perhaps the common people regarded with awe the prophet who had turned Mecca upside down, and whose preaching probably many had heard at the pilgrimages or fairs. But the treatment he was receiving at the hands of their chiefs, and the disproportion to the outward eye between the magnitude of his claims and his solitary helpless condition, turned fear into contempt. They were stirred up to hasten the departure of the unwelcome visitor. They hooted him in the streets; they pelted him with stones; and at last he was obliged to flee out of their city, pursued by a relentless rabble. Blood flowed from wounds in both his legs; and Zeid, in endeavouring to shield him, received a severe injury in his head. The mob would not desist until they had chased him two or three miles across the sandy plain to the foot of the hills that surround the city. There, wearied and mortified, he took refuge in one of the numerous orchards, and rested under a vine.§

* They were descended from a common ancestor with the Coreish, Modhar, (B. C. 31.) See *Article on the Ante-Mahometan History of Arabia*, p. 42. In illustration of their independent and antagonistic position, see their hostile conduct in siding with Abrahâ in his invasion of Mecca: *Forefathers of Mahomet*, p. 17.

† One of them had a Coreishite wife of the Bani Jumb, a branch that contained many adherents of Islam, and must therefore have been intimately acquainted with the politics of Mecca and the claims and position of Mahomet.

‡ Hishâmi has given the words of each, but they are probably imaginary, p. 137.

§ "The town is celebrated all over Arabia for its beautiful gardens: but these are situated at the foot of the mountains which encircle the sandy plain. I did not see any gardens, nor even a single tree within the walls; and the immediate neighbourhood is entirely destitute of verdure." "The nearest gardens appeared

Hard by was the garden of two of the Coreish, Otba and Sheyba ; for the wealthy Meccans had their pleasure grounds, (as they still have,) near Tâyif.* They watched the flight of Mahomet ; and moved with compassion, sent a tray of grapes for his refreshment.† Their slave, a Christian from Nineveh, who brought them to him, was charmed by the pious style of the prophet's address : and Mahomet was perhaps solaced more by the humble devotion of Addâs than by the grateful shade and juicy grapes.‡ After a little, composed and reassured, he betook himself to prayer, and several touching and submissive petitions are still preserved as those in which his burdened soul gave vent to its complaint.§

to be on the S. W. side, at the distance of about half or three quarters of an hour." *Burkhardt's Travels in Arabia*, p. 85.

The quarter from which Mahomet made his escape, would be the west ; so that he would probably have at least some three miles of sandy plain to cross before he secured his retreat to one of the gardens.

* *Burkhardt*, p. 85.

† Burkhardt "tasted at Tâyif grapes of a very large size and delicious flavour. The gardens are also renowned for the abundance of their roses." *Ibid.* The gardens on the eminences of Jebel Kora also abound in vines "the produce of which is of the best quality," besides a variety of other fruits : *Idem*, p. 64. The grapes were ripe when the traveller passed in the months of August and September ; the visit of Mahomet was (according to M. C. de Perceval's calculations,) about four months later.

‡ The story of Addâs is not in Wâckidi. Hishâmi and Tabari give it with many fanciful additions. When Addâs offered the grapes Mahomet exclaimed, "in the name of God," as he stretched forth his hand to receive them. "Is this the mode of speech," asked the slave, "of the people of this country ?" "And of what country" said Mahomet, "art thou, and what is thy religion ?" "A Christian of the people of Nineveh."—"Ah !" replied Mahomet, "of the people of the righteous Jonas the son of Mattai !"—"And what hath made thee acquainted with Jonas son of Mattai ?"—"He was my brother ; for he was a prophet, and I too an a prophet." Whereupon Addâs fell to kissing the head and hands and feet of Mahomet, to the astonishment of his masters, who were looking on from a distance.

The story in this form is of course apocryphal ; and we should have omitted the incidents regarding Addâs altogether, but that it is difficult to conceive how they could have found their way into this particular part of the history, without some foundation of fact. It is probable therefore that Mahomet did meet and converse with a Christian slave on this occasion.

§ The prayer is touching and plaintive. It is thus given by Hishâmi, (p. 137,) and Tabari, (p. 151) :—

اللهم ايلك اشكو اضعف قوتي وقللة حيلتي وهواني علي
الناس * يا ارحم الراحمين انت رب المسضعفين وانت
ربي الي من تكلمي الي بعيد يتهمني او الي عدو
ملكته امرمي ان لم يكن يك علي غضب لا ابالي ولكن

Reinvigorated by this pause, he set forth on his journey homewards. About half way, loth to return to Mecca, he halted in the valley of Nakhla, where was an idol-fane, a grove and a garden.* There, as he arose at night to prayer, or perhaps as he dreamed, his excited and nervous imagination pictured crowds of Genii pressing forward to hear his exhortations, and ardent to embrace Islâm. The romantic scene has been perpetuated in the Coran:—

“And call to mind when We caused a company of the Genii to turn aside unto thee that they might listen to the Coran; And when they were present at the recitation thereof, they said *Give ear*. And when it was

عافيتك هي اوسع لي * اعوذ بنور وجهك الكريم
الذي اشرفت له الظلمات و صلح عليه امر الدنيا
والاخرة من ان ينزل بي غضبك او تحل علي سخطك
* لك العتبي حتي قرضي ولا حول ولا قوة الا بك *

“Oh Lord! I make my complaint unto thee of the feebleness of my strength, and the poverty of my expedients; and of my contemptibleness before mankind. Oh thou most Merciful! thou art the Lord of the Weak, and thou art my Lord. In whose power wilt thou leave me? In the power of Strangers who beset me, or of the Enemy to whom thou hast given the mastery over me? If thy wrath be not upon me, I have no anxiety, but rather thy favour is the more wide unto me. I take refuge in the light of thy benign Countenance, which disperseth the Darkness, and causeth Peace both for this world and the next, that thy Wrath light not upon me, and that thine Indignation rest not on me. It is thine to show Anger until thou art pleased, and there is no Resource or Power but with Thee.”

* *Nakhla* was a valley about half-way between Mecca and Tâyif. It is famous as the scene of the first expedition planned by Mahomet against the Meccans in which blood was shed. In describing it on that occasion, Wäckidi says, “the valley of Nakhla is a garden of the son of Amir near to Mecca.” But the nearness has reference only to Medîna, from which the expedition proceeded, and is quite consistent with the assumed position half-way between Mecca and Tâyif.

There was an image of *Uzza*, held in estimation by the Coreish and other tribes, and destroyed after the taking of Mecca. *Wäckidi*, p. 129.—*Hishâmi* p. 371.—*C. de Perceval*, vol. I, p. 269, III. 241. Its position is farther marked by the “engagement of Nakhla” in the sacrilegious war during the youth of Mahomet. The Hawâzin pursued the Coreish from the fair of Ocatz to this spot, which was within the sacred limits around Mecca, or at least close upon them;—See “*Life of Mahomet from his youth*, &c.” p. 3, *C. de Perceval*, I. 307.

It may probably be the same as the “Wady Mohram” noticed by Burkhârdt, as the place where the pilgrims for Mecca assume the *Ihrâm* or pilgrim garb, (p. 67.) The supposition is perhaps confirmed by the fact that the party sent by Mahomet to Nakhla shaved themselves there, to deceive the caravan they were about to attack into the belief that they were peaceable pilgrims. Wady Mohram, like the Nakhla of Mahomet’s time, has still fruit trees and gardens. Wäckidi’s statement that there was a garden at Nakhla proves that it was on the Tâyif side of the mountain range, as all on the Meccan side is barren.

On the whole M. C. de Perceval’s description of Nakhla as “midway between Mecca and Tâyif,” (vol. III. p. 34,) may be accepted as pretty accurate.

ended, they returned unto their people preaching:—they said, Oh our People! verily we have been listening to a Book which hath been sent down since Moses, attesting the Truth of the Scripture preceding it. It guideth unto the Truth and into the straight Path. Oh our People! Obey the Summoner from God, and believe in him, that He may forgive you your sins, and save you from an awful Punishment." *Sura XLVI.*, verse 29, &c.*

After staying some days at Nakhla, he again proceeded towards Mecca; but before entering the city, which he feared (now that the object of his visit to Tâyif could not remain a secret) to do without a protector, he turned aside by a northward path, to his ancient haunts in the vicinity of Mount Harâ.† From thence he despatched two unsuccessful messages to solicit the guardianship of influential chiefs. At last he bethought him of Mutîm, (one of the five who had been instrumental in procuring the cancelment of the ban,) and sent him word beseeching that he would bring him in unto the city under his protection; and he assented. So having summoned his sons and adherents, Mutîm bade them buckle on their armour, and take their stand by the Kaaba. Mahomet and

* The scene is also described in *Sura LXXII.*, which opens thus:—

"SAY; it hath been revealed to me that a company of Genii listened, and they said,—Verily we [have heard a marvellous discourse (lit. *Corân* :)]
It leadeth to the right direction; so we believed therein, and we will not henceforth associate [any with our Lord;

And as to Him,—may the Majesty of our Lord be exalted!—

He hath taken no Spouse, neither any Offspring.

But verily the foolish people amongst us have spoken of God that which is unjust;

And we verily thought that no one amongst Men or Genii would have uttered a lie against God.
And verily there are people amongst men, who seek for refuge unto people among the Genii, but [they only multiplied their Folly.

And verily they thought, as ye think, that God would not raise any from the dead.

And we tried the Heavens, but found them filled with a powerful Guard, and with flaming Darts;
And we sat on some of the Stations to listen, but whoever listeneth now-a-days findeth an am- [bush of flaming Darts.

And truly we know not whether evil be intended for them that are on Earth, or whether their Lord [intendeth for them right direction.

And verily there are amongst us righteous persons, and amongst us persons of another kind;—

[we are of various sorts:

And verily we thought that no one could frustrate God on earth, neither could we escape from [Him by flight;

Wherefore when we heard the direction, we believed therein,"—(and so on, the Genii speak- [ing as true Moslems)

† And verily when the servant of God (Mahomet) stood up to call upon Him, they (the Genii) were near jostling him by their numbers," &c.

Notwithstanding the *crowds* here alluded to, Hishâmi (whose traditional authorities seem to have had a wonderfully intimate acquaintance with the habits and haunts of the Genii,) states that they were *seven* Genii belonging to Nisibin, who happening to pass that way, were arrested by hearing Mahomet at his devotions reciting the *Coran*. Others say they were *nine* in number and came from Yeman, or from Nineveh. And it is added that they professed the Jewish religion! This of course from the reference made by them in the *Coran* to *Moses*.

† Burkhardt mentions that on the Meccan side of the Minâ valley (*i. e.* the Tâyif road,) there is "a side valley leading toward Jebel Nâr" or Harâ. It may have been by this or a similar glen by which Mahomet turned aside to his cave and old haunts. *Burkhardt*, p. 279.

Zeid then entered Mecca, and when they had reached the Kaaba, Mutím stood upright on his camel and called aloud,—“Oh ye Coreish! verily I have given a pledge of protection unto Mahomet; wherefore let not any one amongst you molest him.” Then Mahomet went forward and kissed the corner stone, and returned to his house guarded by Mutím and his party. The generosity and faithfulness of Mutím have been perpetuated by Hassân the poet of Medína and friend of the Prophet.*

There is something lofty and heroic in this journey of Mahomet to Táyif;—a solitary man, despised and rejected by his own people, going boldly forth in the name of God, like Jonah to Nineveh,—to summon an idolatrous city to repentance and to the support of his mission. It sheds a strong light on the intensity of his belief in the divine origin of his own calling.

Mahomet now sought for solace, amid family bereavement and public indignities, in a fresh matrimonial alliance. Sakrán with his wife Sawda, both of Coreishite blood, (but of a stock remote from that of Mahomet,) had early become converts to Islâm, and emigrated to Abyssinia. They had again returned to Mecca, where Sakrán died. Mahomet now made suit to Sawda, and the marriage, (so far as we know not one of mere interest and convenience, but of affection,) was celebrated within two months from the death of Khadíja.†

* The following are the lines, which form a good illustration of the value of contemporary poetry, in bringing auxiliary evidence in support of traditional facts:—

عيني الا ابكي سيد الناس واسفحى * وان انزفته
 فاسكبني الدما * فلو كان مجد يخلدك هر واحد ا
 من الناس ابقي مجد ليوم مطعما * اجرت رسول الله
 منهم فاصبحوا * عبيدك ما لبي مهن واحرما *

Weep, Oh my eyes! for the chief of men: let tears gush forth; and when they run dry then pour forth blood!

If Greatness had caused any to survive for ever amongst Mankind, then Greatness had preserved Mutím unto this day.

Thou pledgedst protection to the prophet of God from his enemies; and thy servants went forth [while he presented himself suppliant at the Holy House, and Sacred Precincts.

Mutím was a Chief descended from Abd Shamist the brother of Hashim (great grandfather of Mahomet;) and along with Harb son of Ossia, commanded his tribe in one of the great battles in the Sacreligious War, 586 A. D., *C. de Perceval*, I, 309.

† Sawda, (a cousin of her husband Sakrán, belonged to the distant branch of Amir ibn Lowey, which separated from the Hâshimite stem at the 7th remove from Mahomet. *Ibn Coteiba*.

Sprenger says she had a son by Sakrán, but if so, he did not survive, for Ibn Coteiba says that Sakrán left no issue.

Supposing Khadíja to have died in December, 619 A. D., Mahomet's nuptials with Sawda may have taken place in February or the beginning of March, 620.

About the same time he contracted a second marriage with Ayesha, the younger daughter of Abu Bakr :—a connection mainly designed to cement the attachment with his bosom-friend. The yet undeveloped charms of Ayesha could hardly have swayed the heart of Mahomet. Though her betrothed husband had reached fifty, she was now a child of only *six* years of age. Still there may have been something more than ordinarily precocious and interesting about her, for the real marriage took place not more than three years afterwards.

There is no information as to the terms on which Mahomet continued with the family of his deceased wife, Khadija ; and whether he retained any part of the property that belonged to her. During the few troublous years that had passed of his mission, and especially under the ban, it is probable that her wealth had much diminished. Perhaps it was shared with the poorer brethren. It is certain that during his remaining stay at Mecca, the Prophet had not much property at his disposal ; and there are even indications (as we shall see below,) that he was straitened in his means. He appears still to have continued to live, at least occasionally, in the quarter, if not in the house, of Abu Talib.*

Repulsed from Tâyif, and utterly hopeless of farther success at Mecca, the fortune of Mahomet was now enveloped in the thickest gloom, when hope suddenly dawned from an unexpected quarter.

The season of pilgrimage was at hand, [March, 620 A. D. ;] and as his custom was, the Prophet plied his solicitations wherever the crowds of pilgrims afforded a likely audience. The ceremonies were nearly at an end ; Mahomet had followed the pilgrims to the hill of Arafat, and now back again to Minâ, whence, after sacrificing their victims, the multitude would disperse to their homes. Wandering over the valley, he was attracted by a little group of six or seven persons, whom he recognized as strangers from Medina. "*Of what tribe are ye ?*" said he, coming up and kindly accosting them,—"*Of the tribe of Khazraj.*" "*Ah ! confederates of the Jews ?*"—"We are."—"Then, why should we not sit down a little, and I will speak with you ?" The offer was accepted willingly, for the fame of Mahomet had been noised abroad in Medina, and the strangers were curious to see more of the man who had created so great an excitement in Mecca. Then he expounded to them his doctrine, set forth

* Thus at the Mirâj or heavenly journey, Mahomet is said to have slept during the night in Abu Talib's house. *Hishâmi*, p. 129,—*Wâchidi*, p. 41.

the difficulties of his position at home, and enquired whether they would receive and protect him at Medîna. The listeners were not slow to embrace the faith of Islâm: "but as for protecting thee," said they, "we have hitherto been at variance among ourselves, and have fought great battles, as that of Boâth. If thou comest to us thus, we shall be unable to rally around thee. Let us, we pray thee, return unto our people, if haply the Lord will create peace amongst us; and we will come back again unto thee. Let the season of pilgrimage in the following year, be the appointed time." So they returned to their homes, and invited their people to the faith; and many believed, and there remained hardly a family in Medîna, in which mention was not made of the prophet.*

This success at Medîna, though unexpected, was not without perceptible causes. Numerous and powerful Jewish tribes were settled in the city or its immediate vicinity, and (as we have seen in a former paper) divided their adherence between the two contending factions of the Aws and Khazraj, whose strife frequently stained with blood the city and its environs. "When the Jews used thus to fight with the idolaters of Medîna,"—relates Ibn Ishâc with much simplicity,—"they would say;—*'A prophet is about to arise: his time draweth nigh. Him shall we follow; and then we shall slaughter you with the slaughter of Ad, and Irem.* So when Mahomet addressed the pilgrims of Medîna at Minâ, they spake one with another,—*Know surely that this is the same Prophet, whom the Jews are wont to threaten us with. Wherefore let us make haste and be the first to join him.*"† There is truth, though exaggerated and distorted, in this statement. In the close and constant intercourse between the Jews and the Arabs of Medîna, the expectation of a Messiah, ingrained throughout the life and conversation of the former, could not but in some measure be borrowed by the latter. Nor could the idolatrous inhabitants live in daily contact with a race professing the pure Theism, and practising the stern morality of the Old Testament, without being influenced by the practical appeal thus continually made against the errors of Paganism, as contrasted

* The words of tradition have been almost literally followed. *Wâkidi*, p. 41½,—*Hishâmi*, 142,—*Tabari*, 160. *Wâkidi* mentions *six* as composing the company, and in another place *eight*. It is impossible satisfactorily to reconcile the names, See *Sprenger*, p. 202. In one tradition it is said that the Prophet first met and spoke with *two* persons from Medîna, not on the occasion of the *yearly*, but of the "Little" or *personal* pilgrimage (*Omrâ*.) It seems, however, more likely, from Mahomet's *being at Minâ* when he met the Converts, that it was the *annual* pilgrimage.

† *Hishâmi*, p. 143,—*Tabari*, p. 161.

with the spiritual worship of the one true God. Moreover, Medína was only half so distant as Mecca from the Christian tribes of southern Syria; the poet Hassán, and men of his stamp from Medína, used to frequent the Christian Court of the Ghassánide King; so that Christianity as well as Judáism, may have had an effect on the social position of Medína, more than was ordinary in Arabia.

The city had been long torn by internal war. The sanguinary conflict of Boâth, a few years before, had weakened and humiliated the Khazraj, without materially strengthening the Aws. Assassination had succeeded open fighting. There was none bold or commanding enough to seize the reins of Government; and the citizens, Arab and Jewish, lived in suspense and uncertainty. Little apprehension would be felt from the advent of a stranger, even although he was likely to usurp, or gain permission to assume, the vacant authority. Deadly jealousy at home, had extinguished the jealousy of influence from abroad.

Such was the position of Medína. A tribe addicted to the superstition of Mecca, yet well acquainted with a purer faith, was in the best preparation to join itself to a reformer of the Kaaba worship. An Arab idolater, with indefinite anticipations of a Messiah, would readily recognize Mahomet as his Prophet. A city wearied with faction and strife, would cheerfully admit him as a refugee, if not welcome him as a ruler.

The politics of Mecca, and the history of the Prophet, were not unknown at Medína. The Syrian Caravans of the Coreish used to rest there; there was occasional intermarriage between the two cities. Mahomet himself was descended from a distinguished lady of Khazraj birth, espoused by Hâshim; and the interest of that tribe at least, was thus secured. Abu Cays, a famous Poet of Medína, had, some time before, addressed the Coreish in verses intended to dissuade them from interference with Mahomet and his followers.* The Jews were already

* *Hishâmi* p. 75, *Caussin de Perceval*, I. 368. There is no apparent reason for doubting the authenticity of these verses. The following is one of them:—

ولي امرفا ختار دينا فلا يكن * عليكم رقيباً غير رب الثوب

“One who is his own master hath chosen a (new) religion, and there is none other keeper over you than the Lord of the Heavens.”

Abu Cays had a Coreishite wife, and had lived some time at Mecca. When Islâm began to spread at Medína, his adverse influence held back his own tribe (the Aws Monât, or Aws Allah,) from joining it. *Hishâmi* p. 147,—*C. de Perceval*, III., p. 5. He commanded the Awsites at the battle of Boâth, *C. de Perceval*, II., 680.

acquainted with the Prophet as a zealous supporter of their Scriptures. Parties from Medina went up yearly to the solemnities of the Meccan Temple. A few had thus come under the direct influence of his preaching,* and all were familiar with the general nature of his claims. To this was now superadded the advocacy of actual converts.†

This year was to Mahomet one of anxiety and expectation. Would the handful of Medina converts remain steady to his cause? Would they be able to extend that cause among their fellow-citizens? If they should prove unfaithful, or fail of success, what resource would then remain? He might be forced to emigrate to Syria or to Abyssinia, and seek refuge with the Najashy, or amongst the Christian tribes of the northern desert.

At last the days of pilgrimage again came round, and Mahomet sought the appointed spot in a sheltered glen near Minâ. His apprehensions were at once dispelled: for there he found

* The traditions regarding certain Jews coming to Mahomet when at Mecca, with questions to prove him, appear to be apocryphal. Yet there can be no doubt, from Mahomet's familiarity with Jewish history, as shown in the Coran, that there was a close relation between Mahomet and some Professors of the Jewish religion before the Hegira: and the Jews of Medina are the likeliest.

† There are indeed notices of actual conversion to Islâm, among the citizens of Medina, at an earlier period, but they are not well substantiated.

Thus, before the battle of Boâth, a deputation from the Bani Aws is said to have visited Mecca, to seek for auxiliaries from among the Coreish in the coming struggle; and they listened to Mahomet: and *Ayâs*, a youth of their number, declared that this was far better than the errand they had come upon; but Abul Haysar their Chief cast dust upon him saying, they had another business than to hear these things. *Ayâs*, who was killed shortly after in the intestine struggles at Medina, is said to have died a true Mussulman. *Hishâmî*, p. 142.—*Tabari*, p. 159.

Similarly *Suweid*, Son of *Sâmit*, an Awsite Poet, came and repented to Mahomet the Persian tale of *Loemân*. Mahomet, saying that he had something better than that, recited the Coran to him. And the Poet was delighted with it, "and he was not far from Islâm, and some said that he died a Moslem." *Hishâmî*, p. 141.—*Tabari*, p. 158.

Anticipations of Islâm are supplied by tradition for Medina as well as for Mecca. Thus; "The first that believed were *Asâd ibn Zorâra* and *Dzakwan*, who set out for Mecca to contend in rivalry with *Otba* son of *Rabia*. But on their arrival, *Otba* said to them,—*Thou praying fellow who fancieth himself to be the Prophet of God, hath occupied us to the exclusion of every other business.* Now *Asâd* and *Abul Haytham* used to converse at Medina with each other, about the unity of God. When *Dzakwan*, therefore, heard this saying of *Otba*, he exclaimed,—*Listen, oh! Asâd; this must be thy religion.* So they went straight to Mahomet, who expounded to them Islâm, and they both believed and returned to Medina. And *Asâd* related to *Abul Haytham* all that had passed, and he said "*I too, am a believer, with thee.*" *Wackidi*, p. 41½. Sprenger adopts this version as the true one, it corresponding with his theory of the pre-existence of Islâm before Mahomet.

It is admitted on all hands that *Asâd* and *Abul Haytham* were forward, and early, in the movement at Medina.

a band of twelve faithful disciples ready to acknowledge him as their prophet. Ten were of the Khazraj, and two of the Aws, tribe.* They plighted themselves thus to Mahomet: *We will not worship any but the One God; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery; we will not slander in anywise; and we will not disobey the Prophet,† in anything that is right.* This was afterwards called the "Pledge of Women,"‡ because, as not embracing any stipulation to defend the Prophet, it was the only oath required from females. When all had taken this engagement, Mahomet replied;—*If ye fulfil your pledge, Paradise shall be your reward: he that shall fail in any part thereof, to God belongeth his concern, either to punish or forgive.* This memorable proceeding is known in the annals of Islâm as THE FIRST PLEDGE OF ACABA§ that being the name of the little eminence or defile whither they retired from observation.

These twelve men were now committed to the cause of Mahomet. They returned to Medína the Missionaries of Islâm, again to report their success at the following pilgrimage. So prepared was the ground, so zealous the propagation, that the new faith spread rapidly from house to house and from tribe to tribe. The Jews looked on in amazement, while the people, whom they had in vain endeavoured for generations to teach the errors of Polytheism and to dissuade from the abominations of Idolatry, suddenly, and of their own accord, began to cast their idols to the bats, and to profess their belief in the One true God. The secret lay in the adaptation of the instrument. Judaism, foreign in its growth, touched few Arab sympathies: while Islâm, grafted upon the faith, the superstition, the customs, the nationality of the Peninsula, found ready access to every heart.

The leaders in the movement soon found themselves unable to keep pace with its rapid progress. So they wrote to Mahomet for a teacher, well versed in the Coran, who might initiate the enquirers in the rudiments of the new Faith. The youthful and devoted Musáb, who had lately returned from exile in

* We approach now to certain ground. There is no doubt or discrepancy whatever regarding the names of these twelve persons. *Wâchidi*, p. 42, — *Hishâmi* p. 143.

† Literally "him."

‡ بيعة النساء

§ بيعة العقبة الاولى

Abyssinia, was deputed for that purpose.* He lodged with Asád ibn Zorâra, who used to gather the converts together to him for prayer and the reading of the Coran. The combined devotions of the Aws and Khazraj, they say, were first conducted by Musáb, for even in such a matter they were impatient of a common leader from amongst themselves.† Thus speedily, without let or hindrance, did Islâm take firm root at Medina, and attain to a full and mature growth.‡

The hopes and expectations of Mahomet were now fixed upon Medina. Visions of his journey northwards flitted before his imagination. The musings of the day re-appeared in mid-

* *Wâkidi*, p. 42, — *Hishâmi*, p. 144, — *Tabari*, p. 169. According to *Hishâmi*. Mahomet sent Musáb back with the twelve, after the first pledge of Acaba. The statement of *Wâkidi* is clear, as in the text, that he was sent upon a written requisition from Medina.

Musáb will be remembered as the youth, whose pathetic interview with his mother has been described in a former paper. — *Extension of Islâm*, p. 13.

† *Hishâmi*, *ibid.* The call to Mahomet for a teacher is stated by *Wâkidi* to have been made in common both by the Aws and Khazraj. *Hishâmi* mentions a Friday service, the first at Medina, held at the instance of Asád, and attended by forty men; but it looks anticipative and apocryphal.

‡ The following narrative, though probably fabricated in many of its details, will illustrate at any rate the manner in which Islâm was propagated at Medina.

“Asád and Musáb on a certain day went to the quarters of the Awsites, and entering one of their gardens, sat down by a well, when a company of believers gathered around them. Now Sád ibn Muâdz and Oseid ibn Khuzeir were chief men of the *Abdal Ashal* (an Awsite branch); and they were both idolaters following the old religion. So when they heard of the gathering at the well, Sád, who was unwilling himself to interfere (being related to Asád,) bade his comrade go and disperse them. Oseid seized his arms, and hurrying to the spot, began to abuse them: — *What brings you two men here amongst us, to mislead our youths, and silly folk? Begone, if ye have any care for your lives.* Musáb disarmed his wrath by courteously inviting him to sit down and listen to the doctrine. So he stuck his spear into the ground and seated himself; and as he listened, he was charmed with the new faith, and he purified himself and embraced Islâm. And he said “there is another beside me, even Sád ibn Muâdz, whom I will send to you: if you can gain him over, there will not be one in his tribe left unconverted.” So he sent Sád, and Musáb persuaded him in like manner. And Sád returned to his tribe and swore that he would not speak to man or woman that did not acknowledge Mahomet: — and so great was his influence, that by the evening every one of the tribe was converted.

“Such were the exertions of Asád and Musáb that there remained not a house among the Arabs of Medina in which there were not believing men and women, excepting the branches of the *Aws Allah*, who, owing to the influence of *Abn Cays* the poet, continued unbelievers, till after the siege of Medina.” *Hishâmi*, p. 146, — *Tabari*, p. 165.

There is a story of *Amr ibn al Jumoh*, who like the other chiefs of Medina, had an image in his house. This image the young converts used to cast every night into a filthy well, and the old man as regularly cleansed; till one day, they tied it to a dead dog and cast it into a well. Then the old man abandoned his image and believed. — *Hishâmi*, p. 153.

night slumbers. He dreamed that he was swiftly carried by Gabriel on a winged steed past Medína to the temple at Jerusalem, where he was welcomed by all the former Prophets assembled in solemn conclave. His excited spirit conjured up a still more transcendent scene. From Jerusalem he seemed to mount upwards, and ascend from Heaven to Heaven, till he found himself in the awful presence of his Maker, who dismissed him with the behest that his people were to pray five times in the day. When he awoke in the morning in the house of Abu Tâlib, where he had passed the night, the vision was vividly before his eyes, and he exclaimed to Omm Hâni, the daughter of Abu Tâlib, that during the night he had been praying in the Temple of Jerusalem. As he was going forth to tell the vision to others, she seized him by the mantle, and conjured him not thus to expose himself to the mockery and revilings of the unbelievers. But he persisted. As the story spread abroad, the idolaters scoffed, the believers were staggered, and some are said even to have gone back.* Abu Bakr supported the Prophet, declaring his implicit belief in the Vision†, and in the end the credit of Islâm suffered no material injury among its adherents.

The tale is one in which tradition revels with congenial ecstasy. The rein has been given loose to a pious imagination. Both the journey, and the ascent to Heaven, are decked out in the most extravagant colouring of Romance, and in all the gorgeous drapery that Fancy could conceive.‡

* This, though stated both by Wäckidi and Hishâmi, appears improbable; and no names are specified. The words in Wäckidi are—"upon this many went back, who had prayed and joined Islâm," p. 41. *Hishâmi*, p. 127. But the whole story is one of those marvellous subjects upon which tradition, when it touches, runs wild, and anything is thrown in which adds to the effect.

† He said, *Sadact*, "thou hast spoken the truth;" and hence according to some traditions, was called *Al Sadîck*. He appears, however, to have had this name, as Mahomet that of *Al Amîn*, from his probity and truthfulness.

‡ What is here stated is all that historical criticism warrants us in attributing to Mahomet himself. It is possible that in later life he may have gratified the morbid curiosity of his followers, by adding imaginary details to the Vision. But even this supposition is limited by the known reserve and taciturnity of the Prophet.

It is said that incredulous idolaters wished to throw him into confusion by asking for a description of the Temple he had thus been to see: and he was in great straits, until Gabriel placed before him a model of the Temple, and he was able then satisfactorily to answer all their questioning. But this is only of a piece with the other childish stories of the occasion. Thus Mahomet replied to his questioners that on his way to Jerusalem, he had passed over a caravan from Syria, that the whizzing noise of Borâc, the flying steed, had frightened away one of the camels, and that the people of the caravan could not find it till he pointed it out to them. So on his way back, he passed another caravan, in the encampment of which was a covered vessel filled with water: as he passed he drank up the

But the only mention in the Coran of this notable Vision, is contained in the XVII. Sura, which opens thus:—

Praise be to Him who carried His servant by night from the Sacred Temple, to the farther temple,* the environs of which we have blessed, that we might show him some of our signs. Verily He it is that heareth and seeth.†

water and restored the cover. And both caravans on arriving at Mecca confirmed the evidence! *Hishâmi*, p. 130.

Sprenger considers Mahomet here to have committed "an unblushing forgery: he sold a description of the Temple of Jerusalem, which he may have obtained from books or oral information, to the best advantage." We would rather look upon the tradition of the model in the same light as the two last foolish stories, equally worthless and fabricated. Sprenger holds by the respectability of the authorities: there is no event of his life, he says, "on which we have more numerous and genuine traditions than on his nightly journey." But on a supernatural and imaginary subject, numerous traditions forming around some early common type, were to be expected, and their number can add little if any thing to the historical value of their contents.

The earliest authorities point only to a vision, not to a real bodily journey. Sprenger seems to be in error when he says that "all historical records are for the latter opinion" (i. e. a bodily journey): "the former" (that it was a mere Vision) "is upheld by some Sceptics only," p. 136. I. In opposition to this, we have the story of Omm Hâni, as in the text, given both by Wäckidi (p. 41) and Hishâmi (p. 129.) II. Cutâda and Ayesha are quoted as holding that "the Prophet's body did not disappear, but that God carried him away by night in the spirit," *Hishâmi*, *ibid.* III. Hasan applies the verse in the Coran (Sura XVII., 61.) regarding "the Vision" correctly to this heavenly journey, and Muâvia farther illustrates it by the Vision in which Abraham appeared to himself to be sacrificing his son. Others make the Vision in the verse referred to, to mean the model of the Temple held by Gabriel before Mahomet! *Wäckidi*, p. 41. IV. Hishâmi draws the conclusion that whichever of the two views be accepted, "the vision at any rate was true and faithful." Tradition cannot therefore be said to be adverse to the theory that it was a simple Vision.

After his visit to Heaven Mahomet is said to have consoled his faithful Zeid by telling him how beautiful and happy he saw his little daughter in Paradise! *Hishâmi*, p. 153.

Most authors agree that the *Ascent to Heaven* (MIRAJ) occurred the same night as the journey to Jerusalem (ISRA:) but Wäckidi, who is more credulous and less critical than Ibn Ishâc and Hishâmi in this instance, makes the former to have happened on the 17th Ramadhân, a year and a half before Mahomet's flight to Medina; and the latter on the 17th Rabî I., six months later, p. 40.

* من المسجد الحرام الي المسجد الاقصى

† A farther allusion to the Journey is supposed to be contained in v. 61 of the same Sura.

"And (call to mind) when we said unto Thee, verily thy Lord hedgeth in mankind; and we made not the Vision which we showed unto Thee other than a trial unto the people, and likewise the accursed Tree in the Coran: and we (seek to) strike terror into them, but it only increaseth in them enormous wickedness."

This is quoted by traditionists as bearing out (but seemingly on insufficient grounds,) the falling away of those believers who were scandalized by the Vision. A pious gloss in Hishâmi goes still farther, for it says that had the journey been a mere Vision, nobody would have been scandalized; but scandal having been raised, and believers having gone back, therefore the journey was a real and a corporeal one! *Hishâmi*, p. 128.

The political events in the North had long engaged the attention of Mahomet; his interest now quickened by the prospect of approaching so much nearer to the scene of action. Almost from the period at which he had assumed the prophetic office, the victorious arms of Chosroes had been turned against the Grecian border. The desert tract, with its Arab Christian tribes, that used to oscillate between one dominion and the other according to the fortune of war, fell first into the hands of Persia: the enemy ravaged the whole of Syria; Jerusalem was sacked; Egypt and Asia Minor overrun; an army advanced upon the Thracian Bosphorus, "and a Persian Camp was maintained above ten years in the presence of Constantinople."* In 621 A. D., when the fortunes of the Grecian empire were at the lowest ebb, Heraclius was roused from inaction, and after several years of fighting, rolled back the invasion and totally discomfited the Persians.

In this struggle the sympathies and hopes of Mahomet were all enlisted on the side of the Cæsar. Christianity was a Divine Faith that might coalesce with Islâm: but the Fire worship and superstitions of Persia were utterly repugnant to its principles. It was while the career of Persian conquest was yet unchecked, that Mahomet, in the opening of the XXXth. Sura, uttered the following augury of the eventual issue of the conflict:—

The Greeks have been conquered

In the neighbouring coast; but, after their defeat, they shall again be victorious

In a few years. To God belongeth the matter from before, and after: and in that day, the believers shall rejoice.

In the aid of God. He aideth whom he chooseth: and He is the Glorious, the Merciful.

It is the Promise of God. God changeth not His promise; but the greater part of Mankind know it not.†—

There was now a lull at Mecca. Mahomet despaired that by the simple influence of preaching and persuasion, any farther progress could be effected there. His eye was fixed upon Medîna, and he waited in quietness until succour should come from thence. At home, meanwhile, offensive measures were abandoned. Islâm was no longer aggressive; and the Coreish, congratulating themselves that their enemy had tried his worst,

* *Gibbon's decline and fall.* Ch. XLVI.

† The commentators add a very convenient story in illustration. Abu Bakr, on the passage being revealed, laid a wager of 10 camels with Obba Ibn Khalf, that the Persians would be beaten within *three* years. Mahomet desired him to extend the period to *nine* years and to raise the stake. This Abu Bakr did, and in due time won 100 camels from Obba's heirs.

But the story is apocryphal. It is neither in Wâckidi nor Hishâmi; and bears the most suspicious stamp of being a late fabrication in illustration of the passage in the Coran.

and now was harmless, relaxed their vigilance and opposition. For this course Mahomet had, as usual, divine authority;—

Follow that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord: there is no God but He: and [retire from the Idolaters.

If God had wished they had not followed Idolatry: and we have not made thee a keeper over [them, neither art thou unto them a Guardian.

And revile not those that they invoke besides God, lest they revile God in enmity from lack [of knowledge

Thus have we adorned for every Nation their work, then unto the Lord

Shall be their return, and He shall declare unto them that which they have wrought.* Sura VI, [106-108.

But with this cessation of aggressive measures, there was no wavering of principle, nor any distrust of eventual success. A calm and lofty front was maintained, of superiority, if not of defiance. Eventual success, in spite of present discouragement, was clear and assured. The Lord had given to *all* his Apostles of old the Victory, and he would give the same to Mahomet;—

We shall hurl THE TRUTH against that which is false, and it shall shiver it, and Lo! that which is [False shall vanish; Wo unto you for that which ye imagine;

Vengeance shall fall suddenly upon them: it shall confound them: they shall not be able to op- [pose the same, nor shall they be respited.

Verily, Apostles before thee have been mocked; but they that laughed them to scorn were encom- [passed by the Vengeance they mocked at.

The unbelieving (Nations) said unto their Apostles, *We will surely expel you from our Land,* [or ye shall return to our Religion. And their Lord re-

vealed unto them, *Verily We shall destroy the Unjust; My*

And *We shall cause you to inherit the Land after thee: this for him that feareth My* [appearing, and feareth My threatening.

So they asked assistance of the Lord, and every Tyrant and rebellious one was destroyed.

Verily, they have devised evil devices; but their devices are in the hand of God, even if [their devices could cause the Mountains to pass away.

Wherefore do not thou think that God will work at variance with His promise that he made unto [His Apostles: verily the Lord is Mighty, and a God of Vengeance. †

A dearth fell upon Mecca: it was a punishment sent from God upon the citizens because of their rejection of His Messenger. Relief was vouchsafed, but it was meant to try whether the goodness of God would not lead to repentance; if they still hardened their hearts, a more fearful fate was denounced. ‡

* The opposite party begins to be termed "the confederates,"— *حزب* | S. XI., v. 18. So in the same Sura v. 25, "the likeness of the two parties *الفريقين* is as

the Blind and Deaf, compared with him that hath both Sight and Hearing: what! are these equal in similitude? Ah! do ye not comprehend?"

† Sura XXI, vv. 18, 41, 42. XIV., 14, 46, 47. Cnf. also Sura XLIII., 77-79. The whole tenor of the Coran at this period is indeed that of quiet but confident defiance.

‡ There is no satisfactory statement regarding this visitation in reliable tradition. The commentators have, of course, invented details to illustrate the notices of it, which occur in the Coran. Yet those notices are so clear and distinct as to admit of no doubt that *some* affliction of the kind did occur, which was attributed by Mahomet to the Divine Vengeance;—

And if We have mercy upon them and withdraw the affliction that befel them, they plunge unto [their Wickedness, wildly wandering.

And verily We visited them with Affliction, and they humbled not themselves before their Lord, [nor made Supplication;—

Until when we open unto them a Door of severe Punishment, Lo! they are in despair thereat. [Sura XXIII., 77-79.

That ten-fold vengeance would overtake the people if they continued to reject the truth, Mahomet surely believed. *He* might not live to see it; but the decree of God was unchangeable:—

What! Canst *thou* make the Deaf to hear, or guide the Blind, or him that is wandering widely? Wherefore, whether we take thee away, verily We will pour our vengeance upon them, Or, whether We cause thee to see that which We have threatened them with, verily We are all-^{[powerful over them.} Therefore hold fast that which hath been revealed unto thee, for thou art in the straight path.*

Mahomet, thus holding his people at bay, waiting in the still expectation of victory; to outward appearance defenceless, and with his little hand in the lion's mouth; yet, trusting in His almighty power whose Messenger he believed himself to be, resolute and unmoved;—presents a spectacle of sublimity paralleled only in the Sacred Records, amongst such as the Prophet of Israel who complained to his Master, "I, even I only, am left." Nay, the spectacle is in one point of view *more* marvellous; because the Prophets of old were upheld by a divine inspiration, accompanied (as we may conclude) by an unwavering consciousness thereof, and strengthened by the palpable demonstrations of miraculous power; while with the Arabian Prophet, the memory at least of former doubt, and the confessed inability to work any miracle, must ever and anon have caused a gleam of uncertainty to shoot across the soul. But this only throws out in bolder prominence the amazing self-possession, the enduring enthusiasm which sustained his course.

Say unto the Unbelievers;—*Work ye in your place, we also are working. Wait ye in expectation; we, too, are waiting in expectancy.* Sura XI. 121.

His bearing towards his own followers, no less than his opponents, exhibits the full assurance of being the Vicegerent of

The *latter* punishment referred to in this passage the commentators will have to be the battle of Badr; but that of course is an anachronism. Again:—

And when We made the People to taste Mercy, after the affliction that befel them, Lo! they [devise deceit against our Signs. *SAY*, God is more swift than ye in [deceit: Verily Our Messengers write down that which ye devise.

It is He that causeth you to travel by Land and by Water, so that when ye are in Ships, and [sail in them with a pleasant breeze, they rejoice thereat.

A fierce Storm overtaketh them, and the Waves come upon them from every quarter, and they [think that verily they are closed in thereby; then they call upon God, rendering unto Him [pure Service, and saying, *If Thou savest us from this, we shall verily be amongst the [Grateful.*

But when He hath saved them, behold! they work evil in the Earth unrighteously. Oh ye People, [verily your evil working is against your own Souls, &c. *Sura X., 22-24, Conf. S. VII., 95.*

* Sura XLIII, 38-41. There are various other passages in the Suras of this period to the same effect. Thus: "Wherefore persevere patiently, for the promise of God is truth, whether we cause thee to see some part of that wherewith we have threatened thee, or cause thee (first) to die; and unto Us shall they return, &c. Sura XL., 78. Compare also Suras XXIII., 95; X., 46; XXIX., 53; XXXVII., 178; XIII., 42,

God. Obedience to *God and his Apostle*, is now the watchword of Islâm :—

Whosoever disobeyeth GOD AND HIS PROPHET, verily to him shall be the Fire of Hell ; they shall [alway be therein,—for ever !*]

The confidence in his inspiration is sometimes expressed with imprecations, which one cannot read without a shudder :—

(I swear) by that which ye see,
And by that which ye do not see!
That this is verily the speech of an honourable Apostle !
It is not the speech of a Poet ; little is it ye believe !
And it is not the speech of a Soothsayer ; little is it ye reflect !
A Revelation from the Lord of Creation.
And if he (Mahomet,) had fabricated concerning us any sayings,
Verily We had caught him by the right hand,
Then had we severed the artery of his neck,
Nor would there have been amongst you any to hinder therefrom †
But verily it is an Admonition to the Pious,
And truly We know that there are amongst you who belie the same :
But it shall cause Sighing unto the Unbelievers.
And it is the TRUTH :—the CERTAIN !
Therefore praise the name of thy Lord,—the GLORIOUS !

Sura LXIX., v. 38-52.

It would seem as if the difficulties of the prophet were at this period increased by straitened means. Though supported probably by help from his relatives and followers, there was yet ground for care and anxiety. The Divine promise re-assures him in such terms as these :—

And stretch not forth thine eyes to the Provision we have made for divers among them,—the show of this present life,—that We may prove them thereby ; and the Provision of the Lord is better and more lasting.

And command thy Family to observe Prayer, and to persevere therein ; We ask thee not (to labour) for a Provision ; We shall provide for thee, and a successful issue shall be to Piety.

Sura XX., 130-131.

Thus another year passed away in comparative tranquillity, and the month of Pilgrimage, (March 662 A. D.,) when the Medina converts were again to rally around their prophet,

* *Sura LXXII., 23.* The sequel of this passage is singular. God sends a guard to attend his prophet, in order that he may see that the message is duly delivered, as if God had reason to doubt the fidelity of his prophet in this respect :—

When they see that with which they were threatened, then they shall know which side was the [weakest in succour, and the fewest in number.

SAY, I know not whether that which ye are threatened with be near, or whether my Lord shall [make for it a limit of time.

He knoweth the secret thing, and he unveileth not His Secret unto any,
Excepting unto such of His Apostles as pleaseh him, and He maketh a Guard to go before and [behind him (*i. e.* His Apostle,)

That He may know that they verily deliver the messages of their Lord.

He encompasseth whatever is beside them,
And counteth everything by number.

In farther illustration of the text see *Sura LXIV. :—*

Wherefore believe in GOD AND HIS APOSTLE, and the Light which We have sent down, &c. [verse 9.

And obey God and obey the Apostle ; but if ye turn back, verily our Apostle hath only to deliver [his message, v. 13.

Thenceforward the expression becomes common.

† The commentators observe that the allusion is to the Oriental mode of execution. The condemned culprit is seized by the executioner by the right hand, while with a sharp sword or axe a blow is aimed at the back of the neck, and the head detached at the first stroke. This mode of execution is still practised by Mahometan states in India.

arrived. Written accounts, as well as messages, of the amazing success of Islâm had no doubt reached Mahomet,* yet he was hardly prepared for the large and enthusiastic band ready to crowd to his standard, and swear allegiance to him as their prophet and their master. But it was necessary to proceed with caution. The Coreish, if aware of this extensive and hostile confederacy,—hostile because pledged to support (though only as yet defensively,) a faction in their community,—would have good ground for umbrage; the sword might prematurely be unsheathed, and the cause of Islâm seriously endangered. The movements were, therefore, all conducted with the utmost secrecy. Even the pilgrims from Medîna, in whose company the converts travelled, were unaware of their object.†

Musáb, the teacher, who also joined the pilgrimage to Mecca, immediately on his arrival repaired to Mahomet, and related all that had happened during his absence at Medîna. The prophet, when he heard of the numbers of the converts, and their eagerness in the service of Islâm, rejoiced greatly.‡

To elude the scrutiny of the Meccans, the meeting between Mahomet and his Medîna followers was to be by night; and that the strangers might, in case suspicions were aroused, be for as short a time as possible within reach of their enemies, it was deferred to the very close of the pilgrimage, when the ceremonies and sacrifices being finished, the multitude on the following day dispersed to their homes.§ The spot was to be

* The converts at Medîna had, as we have seen, *written* to Mahomet early in the year, for a teacher. Both they and the teacher (Musáb,) would no doubt communicate to Mahomet by letter and verbal message, the wonderful success they had met with.

† *Hishâmi*, p. 148.—*Tabari*, p. 169. Sprenger gives the total number of pilgrims from Medîna that year (both heathen and Mussulman) at upwards of 570; of whom seventy only were of the Aws tribe, and the remainder Khazrajites.

‡ *Wâckidi*, p. 201½. It was immediately after this that the affecting scene occurred, when Musáb went to visit his mother.—“*Extension of Islâm*,” p. 13.

§ This appears to be the likeliest date, as the events following seem to prove that the next day the multitudes broke up, and the Medîna party proceeded homewards. The date would thus be the night of the 11th Dzul Hijj, or that intervening between the 31st March and the 1st April, A. D. 622.

The expression in all our three authorities is من اوساط ايام التشريق
—in the days of the Tashrîc, *i. e.*, between the 10th and 12th of Dzul Hijj. A tradition in *Hishâmi* adds that it was after the pilgrimage was ended:—

ثم وعدهم—*Wâckidi* relates as follows:—*p.* 147. فلما فرغنا من الحج
منا وسط ايام التشريق ليلة النفر الاول اذا هدائت الرجل

“Then Mahomet arranged that they should meet him at Minâ, in the days of the Tashrîc, *on the first night of departure* (?) when men had fallen asleep,” *p.* 42½. (The exact meaning of the words in Italics is not quite clear.)

For the ceremonies here alluded to see “Ante-Mahomedan History of Arabia,” *p.* 49.

the secluded glen, where the twelve had before met Mahomet, close by the road as you quit the valley of Minâ, and beneath the well-known eminence of Acaba.* They were to move cautiously thither, when all had retired to rest; "waking not the sleeper,—nor tarrying for the absent."†

One or two hours before midnight, Mahomet repaired to the rendezvous, the first of the party.‡ He was attended only by his uncle Abbâs. To secure the greater secrecy, the assembly was perhaps kept private even from the Moslems of Mecca.§ Abbâs was the wealthiest of the sons of Abd al Muttalib, but he was weak in character, and ordinarily sailed with wind and tide. He was not a convert; but close relationship, and the long community of interest excited by the three years' confinement in the Sheb of Abu Tâlib, rendered him sufficiently reliable on the present occasion.||

Mahomet had not long to wait. Soon the Medîna converts, singly and by twos and threes, were descried through the moonlight moving stealthily towards the spot.¶ The number amounted to seventy-three men, and two women, and included all the early converts who had before met the prophet there

* It is called "the right hand glen (*Sheb*,) as you descend from Minâ, below the height (Acaba,) where the mosque now stands." *Wâckidi*, p. 42½.

فى الشعب الايمن اذا تكدروا من منا باسفل العقه
حيث المسجد اليوم *

As the valley of Minâ descends towards Mecca, the "right hand" means probably that of a person proceeding to Mecca, and therefore points to the north side of the valley. See *Burkhardt*, pp. 59—277.

† *Wâckidi*, *ibid*.

‡ *Ibid*.

§ Or if they were in the secret they were instructed not to be present, the less to excite suspicion. We may suppose that Mahomet's more intimate friends, Abu Bakr, Zeid, &c., were aware of his intentions. It is remarkable that not even Musâb appears to have come to the rendezvous with his Medîna converts; for it is distinctly said by Wâckidi that "there was no one with Mahomet besides Abbâs."

Hishâmi makes the Medîna converts to have assembled first, and to have waited for Mahomet, who arrived later. p. 148. *Tabari*, p. 170.

|| For more particulars of Abbâs, see the "Birth and Childhood of Mahomet," p. 16. Some hold Abbâs to have been a *secret* believer long before the conquest of Mecca: but this is evidently an Abbâside fiction. His faith was that of *expediency*. He held with the Meccans until Mahomet became too powerful to admit of doubt as to his eventual success; and then he colluded with him, shortly before the attack on Mecca.

The presence of Abbâs at this meeting is supported by traditions in each of our early authorities. *Tabari* has one to the effect that the Medîna converts recognized him, because he used frequently to pass through their city on his mercantile expeditions to Syria.

¶ As the Meccan month commenced with the new moon, it would, on the 12th of Dzul Hijj, be within two or three days of full moon.

on the two preceding pilgrimages.* When they were seated, Abbâs, in a low voice, broke the silence by a speech something to the following effect:—

“Ye company of the KHAZRAJ!† This my kinsman dwelleth amongst us in honor and safety. His clan will defend him,—both those that are converts, and those who still adhere to their ancestral faith. But he preferreth to seek protection from *you*. Wherefore, consider well the matter; and count the cost. If ye are resolved, and are able, to defend him,—well. But if ye doubt your ability, at once abandon the design.”‡

Then spake Abu Barâ, an aged Chief:—“We have listened to thy words. Our resolution is unshaken. Our lives are at his service. Now, let *him* speak.”

Mahomet began, as was his wont, by reciting appropriate passages from the Coran, invited all present to the service of God, dwelt upon the claims and blessings of Islâm, and concluded by saying that he would be content if the strangers pledged themselves to defend him as they did their own wives and children.§ From every quarter the

* There were only eleven of the Aws tribe; the remaining sixty-two being Khazrajites. The two women were Nuseiba, daughter of Kâb (several traditions from whom regarding the assembly have been preserved;) and Asmâ, daughter of Amr, whose husband (Hishâmi adds,) two sons, and *sister*, were present with her. This would seem to imply that there were *three* women there. *Hishâmi*, p. 157.

† Hishâmi states that the people of Mēdīna, both of the Aws and Khazraj tribes, used to be addressed collectively by the Arabs as Khazrajites.

‡ The speech of Abbâs is given in all three of our authorities, but with great variation. Indeed it could not be expected that its purport should have been exactly preserved. It seems certain, however, that it was he who opened the proceedings. The sentiments are those which would naturally be attributed to him; and are appropriate enough, excepting that, both here and in the other addresses, there is an anticipation of the future armed struggle, which could not yet have been foreseen. Thus Abbâs speaks of the people of Mēdīna incurring by their league with Mahomet the enmity of “all the Arabs, who would discharge themselves against Mēdīna, like arrows from one bow.” And Abbâs ibn Obâda, one of the Mēdīna converts, tells his brethren that they have “now pledged themselves to *fight all mankind*,” (lit. *the red and the white amongst men*.) The last tradition is not in Wâkidi, and possesses little weight.

§ Hishâmi says that Abul Haytham interrupted Barâ in his address, saying that by their present act they were cutting their bonds with their allies the Jews, and asked Mahomet whether, if God gave him the victory, he would not desert them and return to Mecca; whereupon Mahomet smiled graciously and said:—*Nay! your blood is mine, your destruction would be that of my very self. I am yours, ye are mine. I shall fight with whom ye fight, and make peace with whom ye make peace.*

But the sentiment is altogether an after-thought. There was not at that time the slightest suspicion that Mahomet would break with the Jews. One of the first things that Mahomet did on going to Mēdīna, was to make a close and firm treaty with them.

The fact is that by their present act in joining Mahomet, the Mēdīna converts were drawing nearer to the Jews, rather than “cutting their bonds with them.”

seventy* began to testify their readiness, and to protest that they would receive him at the risk of the loss of property, and the slaughter of their chiefs. Then Abbâs, who stood by holding his nephew's hand, called aloud :—" Hush ! † There are spies about. Let your men of years stand forth, and let them speak on your behalf. We fear our people on account of you. Then when ye have plighted your faith depart to your encampments." And their chief men stood forth. Then said Barâ : "Stretch out thy hand, Oh Mahomet !" And he stretched it out ; and Barâ clapped his hand thereon, as the manner was in taking an oath of fealty. ‡ Then the seventy came forward one by one, and did the same. § And Mahomet named twelve of the chief men and said :—*Moses chose from amongst his people twelve Leaders. Ye shall be the sureties for the rest, even as were the Apostles of Jesus ; and I am the surety for my people.* And all answered ; "Be it so." ¶ At this moment the voice of one calling aloud, probably of a

* Though there were seventy-three men, yet by tradition they are ordinarily called "the seventy."

† Literally :—"Hush your bells."

‡ As usual in such meritorious actions, other claimants of the honor are brought forward. The Najjâr say that Asâd was the *first* that struck the hand of Mahomet ; and the Abd al Ashal, that it was Abul Haytham. *Hishâmi*, p. 151,—*Wâckidi*, 42½, —*Tabari*, 172.

Abu Bara, who bore so conspicuous a part throughout this transaction, died the next month (*Sofar*, i. e. May 622 A. D.) before Mahomet reached Medîna. He is said to have been the first over whose grave Mahomet prayed in the formula that became usual afterwards :—*Oh Lord, pardon him ! Be merciful unto him ! Be reconciled unto him ! And verily thou art reconciled.* He is said to have left a third of his property to Mahomet to dispose of as he chose : and to have desired that he should be buried with his face towards the Meccan Kibla. The latter tale has reference to a curious fiction that Barâ *anticipated* the divine command, declared a year and a half later, that Mussulmans were to turn in prayer to the Kaaba, and not as hitherto to the Temple at Jerusalem. *Wâckidi*, p. 299.

§ The women, it is said, only repeated the words of the pledge taken by the twelve at the first Acaba :—Mahomet never took a woman by the hand on such an occasion ; but they used to come forward, and then Mahomet would say, "Go : for you have pledged yourselves." *Hishâmi*, p. 157.

¶ *Nackib*, or "Leader," is the term, which was ever after honourably retained by the twelve. Four of them, Abul Haytham, Asâd, Râfi ibn Mâlik, and Obâda ibn Sâmî, were also of the number who met Mahomet here on the two previous pilgrimages. Only three were of the Aws tribes, the rest Khazrajites. Several of them, as well as many amongst the seventy, are mentioned as able to write Arabic ; and as being *Kâmil*, i. e. expert in that art, in archery and in swimming. *Wâckidi*, p. 285½.

According to *Hishâmi*, Mahomet desired the seventy *themselves* to choose their Leaders. *Wâckidi*, on the contrary, not only says that Mahomet chose them, but that he added, "Let no one among you be vexed because another than he is chosen ; for it is Gabriel that chooseth." p. 42½. *Hishâmi* quotes poetry by Kaab (who was himself present on the occasion,) in which the names of the twelve are enumerated ; and it is probably genuine.

straggler seeking for his company, was heard near at hand; and the excited fancy or apprehensions of the party, conjured up a Meccan, if not an infernal, spy. Mahomet gave the command, and all hurried back to their halting places.*

So large a gathering could not be held close by Minâ, without rumours reaching the Coreish enough to rouse their suspicion. It was notorious that great numbers at Medîna had embraced the doctrines of Mahomet. The clandestine meeting must have been on his behalf, and therefore an unwarrantable interference with the domestic affairs of Mecca. It was virtually a hostile movement. Accordingly next morning their chief men repaired to the encampment of the Medîna pilgrims,† stated their suspicions, and complained of such conduct at the hand of a tribe, with whom, of all others in Arabia, they declared it would grieve them most to be at war. The converts glanced at each other, and held their peace.‡ The rest, ignorant of their

* Both Wäckidi and Hishâmi make the voice to have been that of a Devil or demon.

“And when the ceremony was ended, the Devil called out with a loud voice—*Ye people of Mecca! Have ye no concern for Mahomet and his renegades? They have counselled war against you*” *Wäckidi*, p. 42½. So Hishâmi:—When we had pledged ourselves to the Prophet, Satan called out with such a piercing cry as I never heard before,—*Oh ye that are encamped round about! Have ye no care for MUZZAMMAM (the “blamed,”—a nickname for Mahomet,) and the renegades that are with him? They have resolved upon war with you.* Then said Mahomet;—“This is the demon of Acaba: this is the Son of the Devil. Hearst thou, enemy of God? Verily I will ease myself of thee!” p. 151. The word used is *Azabb*.

هذا ارب العقبة هذا ابن ارب

So at Ohad, the party that cried “Mahomet is fallen,” is called “the Demon of Acaba, that is to say the Devil;” *Azabb al Acaba yâni al Sheitân*. *Hishâmi*, p. 258. We shall meet the Devil (who is easily conjured up by tradition,) again at the council of the Coreish to put Mahomet to death, and it will be remembered that he appeared in order to oppose Mahomet at the placing of the corner stone when the Caaba was re-built.

Weil has mistaken the word for *Izb* or *Azab*, “a Dwarf.” *Mohammad*, p. 75.

Both Wäckidi and Hishâmi add that Abbâs son of Obâda said to Mahomet:—“If thou wishest it, we shall now fall upon the people assembled at Minâ with the sword.” And no one had a sword that day but he. And Mahomet replied, “I have not received any command to do thus: depart to your homes.” But the circumstance is most improbable. We do not believe that any command to fight was given, till long after the emigration to Mecca. Sprenger (p. 207) appears to us at fault here. *Hishâmi* (p. 157) and *Tabari* (p. 181) speak of the command to fight, but Wäckidi has nothing of it, and *Tabari* elsewhere (p. 190) says that the emigration to Medîna preceded the command to fight. Indeed armed opposition was not dreamt of till long after. Mahomet and his followers were too glad to escape peaceably.

† Literally the “Sheb,” *glen*, or defile, in which they were encamped.

‡ *Hishâmi* relates a story told by Kâb, one of the covenanters, that while this inquisition was going on, in order to divert attention, he pointed to a pair of new shoes which one of the Meccan Chiefs had on, and said to Abu Jâbir, one of his own party:—“Why couldst not thou, our Chief, wear a pair of new shoes like this Coreishite

comrades' proceedings, protested that the Coreish had been misinformed, and that the report was utterly without foundation. Their chief, Abdallah ibn Obey, assured them that none of his people would venture on such a step without consulting him. The Coreish were satisfied and took their leave.

During that day, the vast concourse at Minâ broke up; the numerous caravans again prepared for their journey, and took each its homeward course. The Medîna party had already set out, when the Coreish having strictly enquired into the mid-night assembly, (which Mahomet hardly cared now to keep a secret) found to their disconcertment, that not only had it really taken place, but that far larger numbers than they suspected, had pledged themselves to the defence of Mahomet. Exasperated at being thus foiled, they pursued the Medîna caravan, if haply they might lay hands on any of the delinquents; but though they scoured the roads leading to Medîna, they fell in with only two. Of these one escaped; the other, Sâd ibn Obâda, they seized, and tying his hands, dragged him by his long hair back to Mecca. There he would no doubt have suffered farther maltreatment, had he not been able to claim protection from certain of the Coreish to whom he had been of service at Medîna. He was released, and joined the caravan, just as his friends were about to return in search of him.

It soon became evident to the Meccans that, in consequence of the covenant entered into at Acaba, both Mahomet and his followers contemplated an early emigration to Medîna. The prospect of such a movement, which would remove their opponents entirely out of reach, and plant them in an asylum where they might securely work out their machinations, and as opportunity offered, take an ample revenge,—at first irritated the Coreish. They revived again, after a long interval, the persecution of the believers, and wherever entirely in their power, sought either to make them recant, or to prevent their escape, by placing them in confinement.*

Chief?" The latter taking off the shoes, threw them at Kâb, saying, "put them on thyself."—Abu Jâbir said, "Quiet! give back the shoes," Kâb refused, and the Meccan Chief said he would snatch them from him. A commotion ensued, which was just what Kâb desired, as it covered the awkwardness of the converts. *Hishâmi*, p. 151.

Such tales, containing supposed proofs of service rendered to the cause of Islâm, were plentifully fabricated, even in the earliest time, and deserve little credit.

* *Wâkidi*, p. 43. The support of the Medîna adherents, and suspicion of an intended emigration, irritated the Coreish to severity, and this severity forced the

Such severities, or the dread of them, (for the Moslems were conscious that they had now seriously compromised their allegiance as citizens of Mecca,) hastened the crisis. And, indeed, when Mahomet had once resolved upon a general emigration, no advantage was to be gained by protracting their residence amongst enemies.

It was thus but a few days after the "*second covenant of Acaba*," that Mahomet gave command to his followers, saying: *Depart unto Medĭna; for the Lord hath verily given you brethren in that city, and a home in which ye may find refuge.** So they made preparation, and chose them companions for the journey, and set out in parties secretly. Such as had the means, rode two and two upon camels, and the rest walked.†

Persecution and artifice caused a few to fall away from the faith. One example will suffice. Omar had arranged a rendezvous with Ayâsh and Hishâm at a spot in the environs of Mecca, whence they were to set out for Medĭna. Hishâm was held back by his family, and relapsed for a time into idolatry. "Thus I, and Ayâsh," relates Omar, "went forward alone, and journeyed to Cubâ,‡ in the outskirts of Medĭna, where we alighted, and were hospitably received at the house of Rifâa. But Abu Jahl, and another brother (uterine,) of Ayâsh,§ fol-

Moslems to petition Mahomet for leave to emigrate. The two causes might co-exist and re-act on one another; — the persecution would hasten the departure of the converts, while each fresh departure would irritate the Coreish to greater severity.

Tabari says:—"There were two occasions on which persecution raged the hottest; viz., *first*, the period preceding the emigration to Abyssinia; *second*, that following the second covenant at Acaba." (p. 178.)

But there is good reason to suspect that stronger epithets have been used in tradition regarding this persecution than are warranted by facts. Had it been as bad as is spoken of, *we should have had plenty of instances*. Yet, excepting the imprisonment or surveillance of a few waverers, we have not a single detail of any injuries or sufferings inflicted on this occasion by the Coreish. There was, no doubt, abundant *apprehension*, and ground sufficient for it.

* Wäckidi makes Mahomet first to see the place of emigration in a dream, — "a saline soil, with palm trees, between two hills." After that he waited some days, and then went forth joyously to his followers, saying:—"Now have I been made acquainted with the place appointed for your emigration. It is *Yathreb*. Whoso desireth to emigrate, let him emigrate thither." (p. 43.) If this incident be real, the first vision may have been a sort of feeler to try what his people thought of going to Medĭna; for long before this time he must have fully made up his mind where he was going. But the story is most probably a fiction, growing out of the idea that Mahomet must have had a divine and special command for so important a step as that of emigration to Medĭna.

† *Ibid.*, and page 242.

‡ A suburb of Medĭna, about three quarters of an hour's walk on the road to Mecca. — *Burkhardt*, p. 328.

§ Being all three sons of Asmâ, a lady of the Tāmim tribe, but by different fathers.

lowed him to Medĭna, and told him his mother had vowed that she would retire beneath no shade, nor should a comb or any oil touch her hair, until she saw his face again. Then I cautioned him (continues Omar,) saying;—"By the Lord! they only desire to tempt thee from thy religion.* Beware, Ayāsh, of denying thy faith!" But he replied:—"Nay, I will not recant; but I have property at Mecca; I will go and fetch it, and it will strengthen me: and I will also release my mother from her vow." Seeing that he was not to be diverted from his purpose, I gave him a swift camel, and bade him, if he suspected treachery, to save himself thereon. So when they alighted to halt at Dhajnān, they seized him suddenly, and bound him with cords; and as they carried him into Mecca, they exclaimed: *Even thus, ye Meccans, should ye treat your foolish ones!* Then they kept him in durance."†

It was about the beginning of the month Muharram (19th April, 622 A. D.) that the emigration commenced.‡ Medĭna lies some 300 miles to the north of Mecca: the journey is

* In Hishāmi it is added;—"And the heat and lice will soon enough force thy mother to break her vow." (p. 160.)

† *Wāckidi*, p. 232½; *Hishāmi*, p. 160. Both Ayāsh and Hishām afterwards rejoined Mahomet. From one account it would appear that Ayāsh as well as Hishām, relapsed into idolatry. Omar stated that until Sura XXXIX., v. 53., was revealed, it was thought that no apostate could be saved. When that passage appeared, he wrote it out for Ayāsh, and sent it to him at Mecca; which when Ayāsh had read he took courage, and forthwith quitted Mecca on his camel for Medĭna.—*Hishāmi*, p. 161.

There is another tradition, at variance with the above. Mahomet, when at Medĭna, said one day, "who will bring me Ayāsh and Hishām from Mecca?" And forthwith Walīd, son of Mughĭra, set out; and he traced them to their place of confinement, and assisted them with a stone and his sword to break off their fetters, and released them and carried them off to Mahomet. (*Ibidem.*) But notwithstanding the details in this version, it is evidently a fiction to justify Ayāsh and Hishām from the charge of apostacy, by making it appear that they were imprisoned at Mecca.

‡ Abu Salma was the first that set out. He reached Medĭna on the 10th Muharram (end of April) (*Wāckidi*, p. 225½.) His wife Omm Salma (afterwards married by Mahomet,) tells a piteous story, that they started for Medĭna a year before the second covenant of Acaba. Being attacked on the way, her husband escaped to Medĭna, but she and her infant Salma were kept in durance by her family, the Bani Mughĭra. Her infant was taken from her, and she "wept for a year," after which they were all happily re-united at Medĭna. She ends by saying;—"there was no family that endured such hardships in the cause of Islam, as that of Abu Salma." (*Hishāmi*, p. 159.) We see here, 1st, the desire of magnifying suffering for Islam: and 2ndly, the vain-glorious wish of appearing to be the earliest emigrants. For we know from *Wāckidi*, that Abu Salma did not emigrate till two months before Mahomet, and several days after the second covenant of Acaba.

The next that emigrated was Amir ibn Rabia with his wife Laila. (*Wāckidi*, p. 43½; *Hishāmi*, p. 159.) Then Abdallah ibn Jahsh, and his wife, a daughter of Abu Sofĭān.

accomplished by the pilgrim caravans "in eleven days, and if pressed for time, in ten."* Within two months nearly all the followers of Mahomet, excepting a few detained in confinement, or unable to escape from slavery, had migrated with their families to their new abode. They numbered between one and two hundred souls.† They were received with the most cordial hospitality by their brethren at Medina, who vied with one another for the honour of having them quartered at their houses, and of supplying them with such things as they had need of.‡

The Coreish were paralysed by a movement so suddenly planned, and put into such immediate and extensive execution. They looked on in amazement, as families silently disappeared, and house after house was abandoned. One or two quarters of the city were entirely deserted, and the doors of the dwelling houses deliberately locked.§ There was here a determination and sacrifice hardly calculated upon. But even if the Coreish had foreseen, and resolved to oppose, the emigration, it is difficult to perceive what measures they could have adopted. The multitude of independent clans and separate branches, effectually prevented unity of action. Here and there a slave or helpless dependent might be intimidated or held back; but in all other cases there was no right to interfere with private judgment or with family counsels; and the least show of violence might rouse a host of champions, who would forget their antipathy to Islam, in revenging the insulted honour of their tribe.

* *Burkhardt*, p. 316.

† We have no exact enumeration of the numbers that emigrated at first with Mahomet. At the battle of Badr, nineteen months after the emigration, there were present 314 men, of whom eighty-three were emigrants from Mecca. A few of these may have joined Mahomet after he reached Medina; and we shall probably not err far in making the whole number that emigrated *at first*, including women and children, about 150. At Badr almost every one of the emigrants, who could, was present. For the numbers see *Wäckidi*, p. 295½.

‡ *Hishâmi*, p. 163,—*Wäckidi*, p. 43½.

§ "The Bani Ghanam ibn Dûdân," says Wäckidi, "emigrated entirely to Medina, men and women, and left their houses locked: not a soul was left in the quarters of the Bani Ghanam, Abul Bokier, and Matzûn."—pp. 196 and 256½,—*Hishâmi*, p. 160.

"Otba, Abbas, and Abu Jahl passed by the dwelling place of the Bani Jahsh, and the door was locked, and the house deserted. And Abu Jahl sighed heavily, and said, 'every house, even if its peace be lengthened, at the last a bitter wind will reach it. The house of the Bani Jahsh is left without an inhabitant!' Then he added; 'this is the work of my good-for-nothing nephew, who hath dispersed our assemblies, ruined our affairs, and made a separation amongst us.'"—*Hishâmi*, p. 160.

At last Mahomet and Abu Bakr, with their families, including Ali, now a youth of above twenty years of age, were the only believers left (excepting those unwillingly detained) at Mecca. Daily Abu Bakr pressed the prophet to depart; and he was ambitious of being his companion in the flight. But Mahomet told him that "his time was not come:—the Lord had not yet given him the command to emigrate." Perhaps he was deferring his departure until he could receive assurance from Medîna, that the arrangements for his reception were secure, and his adherents there not only ready, but able, in the face of the rest of the people, to execute their engagement for his defence.* Or, there may have been the more generous desire to see all his followers safely out of Mecca, before he himself fled for refuge to Medîna. Is it possible that he may have waited with some indefinite hope that a divine interposition, as with the prophets of old, might subdue the hostile city, in which peradventure even ten righteous men could not now be found?

Meanwhile Abu Bakr made preparations for the journey. In anticipation, he had already purchased, for 800 dirhems, two swift camels, which were now tied up and well fed in the yard of his house. A guide, accustomed to the devious tracks and by-ways of the Medîna route, was hired, and the camels committed to his custody.†

The Coreish were perplexed at the course Mahomet was taking. They had expected him to emigrate with his people; and perhaps half rejoiced at the prospect of being rid of their enemy. By remaining almost solitary behind, he seemed, by his very loneliness, to challenge and defy their attack.

* During the two months elapsing between the second covenant at Acaba and Mahomet's emigration, communications, as might have been expected, were kept up between Mecca and Medîna. Thus, it is stated by Wâckidi, that after the foremost emigrants had reached Medîna, a part of the Medîna converts who had been at the Acaba covenant, returned to Mecca, where no doubt farther arrangements were concerted between them and Mahomet. It is added that these Medîna converts had thus the merit of being both *Emigrants* (*muhâjirîn*.) and *Adjutors* (*ansâr*.)

† The guide was Abdallah ibn Arcad; or as Wâckidi has it, Abdallah ibn Oreicat. He was of the Bani Duil, a tribe descended from Kinâna; and thus affiliated with the Coreish. His mother was pure Coreish.

He was still an idolater; and Wâckidi, *anticipating the era when war was waged against all idolaters*, adds,—“but Mahomet and Abu Bakr had given him quarter,—or pledge of protection:”— *مننا* } as if he required their protection at that stage! The expression is significant of the way in which subsequent principles and events insensibly threw *back* their light and colour upon the tissue of tradition.—*Wâckidi*, p. 212,—*Hishâmi*, p. 167.

What might his motive be for this strange procedure? The chief men assembled to discuss their position. Should they imprison him?—his followers would come to his rescue. Should they forcibly expel him?—he might agitate his cause among the tribes of Arabia, and readily lure adherents by the prospect of the supremacy at Mecca. Should they assassinate him?—the Bani Hâshim would exact an unrelenting penalty for the blood of their kinsman. But representatives from all their tribes, including even that of Hâshim, might plunge each his sword into the prophet: would the Hâshimites dare to wage a mortal feud with the whole body of the Coreish thus implicated in the murder? Even then there would remain his followers at Medîna, whose revenge of their master's blood would surely be ruthless and desperate. Assassination by an unknown hand on the road to Medîna, might prove the safest course: but there the chances of escape would preponderate. At last they resolved that a deputation should proceed to the house of Mahomet. What was the decision as to their future course of action, what was the object even of the present deputation, it is impossible, amid the hostile and marvellous tales of tradition, to determine. There is small reason to believe that it was assassination, adopted, as the biographers assert, at the instigation of Abu Jahl, supported by the devil, who, in the person of an old man from Najd, shrouded in a mantle, joined the council. Mahomet himself, speaking in the Coran of the designs of his enemies, refers to them in these indecisive terms:—

And call to mind when the unbelievers plotted against thee, that they might detain thee, or slay thee, or expel thee. Yea, they plotted: but God plotted likewise. And God is the best of plotters.—Sura VIII., v. 29.

Assuredly had assassination been resolved upon for immediate execution, as represented by tradition, it would have been indicated by more than these alternative expressions. It would unquestionably have been dwelt upon at length, both in the Coran, and by tradition, and produced as a justification (for such indeed it would have been) of subsequent hostilities.*

* The following is the general narrative of tradition, given with some variations by Wâkidi and Hishâmi,—Tabari following mainly the latter.

The Coreish, irritated by hearing of the warm reception the converts experienced at Medîna, held a council to discuss the matter. The devil, in the shape of an old man, shrouded in a cloak, stood at the door, saying that he was a Sheikh from Najd, who had heard of their weighty consultation, and had come, if haply he might help them to a right decision. So they invited him to enter.

One proposed to imprison, another to expel, Mahomet. The old man from

Whatever the object of the visit, Mahomet received previous notice, and anticipated danger by stealing at once from his house. There he left Ali; around whom, that the suspicions of his neighbours might not be aroused, he threw his own red Hadhramaut mantle,* and desired him to occupy his bed. He went straight to the house of Abu Bakr, and after a short consultation, matured the plans for immediate flight. Abu Bakr shed tears of joy when it was fixed that the hour for emigration had at last arrived, and that he was to

Najd warmly opposed both suggestions. Then said Abu Jahl; "Let us choose one courageous man from every family of the Coreish, and place in their hands sharp swords, and let them slay him with the stroke of one man; so his blood will be divided amongst all families, and the relatives of Mahomet will not know how to revenge it." The old man of Najd applauded the scheme, saying,—“May God reward this man; this is the right advice, and none other.” And they separated, having agreed thereto.

Gabriel forthwith apprised Mahomet of the design, who arose and made Ali to lie down upon his bed. The murderous party came at dusk, and lay in wait about the house. Mahomet went forth, and casting a handful of dust at them, recited from the 1st to the 10th verses of Sura XXXIV., ending with the words; *and we have covered them, so that they shall not see.* He departed without their knowing what had passed; and they continued to watch, some say till morning, thinking that the figure on the bed was Mahomet. As light dawned they found out their mistake, and saw that it was Ali. Others say they watched till one passed, and told them that Mahomet had left, when they arose in confusion and shook the dust from their heads which Mahomet had cast upon them.

The whole story of the council and the attempt on Mahomet's life is so mingled with what is marvellous and unlikely, as to render it almost impossible to disentangle the truth, or even a consistent and probable story, from the spurious details. Indeed there is some reason for suspecting with Sprenger "the whole story of the Council, and the resolution of assassinating him, to be apocryphal." (p. 208.) Parts of the story are evidently fabricated to illustrate or support the verse of the Coran above quoted, and the other regarding the counter-plot of God, (*Sura VII. v. 29*;)—and to cover the opponents of Mahomet with infamy.

The reasons given in the text make it in the last degree improbable that *assassination* was ever attempted or even resolved. The tale of the assassins surrounding the house for so long a period in the face of Mahomet's family and kinsmen, even apart from the miraculous details, is absurd. If intent on murder, they would at once have rushed on Ali, and finding their mistake, have set off for Abu Bakr's house, (*vide Sprenger, ibidem.*) The clear intimation in Wäckidi that Mahomet left for the house of Abu Bakr *in the middle of the day*, is also opposed to the whole story.

Mahomet's sudden flight, and long concealment in the cave, were probably supposed by his followers, to have been caused by the apprehension of immediate violence. This supposition would require illustrative grounds: and hence the fiction. It seems to us however that it was not violence at Mecca, *but assassination by the way*, which he most feared, and which led to his concealment in the cave, and thus to the securing of a free and safe road.

Upon the whole, *the council itself*, is not unlikely or improbable: and we have therefore given it a place in the text, endeavouring to adapt it as well as possible to the other incidents that are clearly proved.

* Wäckidi, p. 434. Hishâmi calls it *green*, (p. 165.)

be the companion of the prophet's journey.* After a few hasty preparations (among which Abu Bakr did not forget to secure his remaining wealth,) they both crept in the shade of evening from a back window, escaped unobserved through the southern suburbs of the city, and ascending the lofty mountain Thaur (about an hour and a half distant in that direction,) took refuge in a cave near its summit.† Here they rested in security, for the attention of their adversaries would in any case be fixed upon the country north of Mecca on the route to Medîna, whither they knew that Mahomet would proceed.

Eight or nine years after, Mahomet thus alludes in the Coran to the position of himself and his friend in the cave of Thaur:—

If ye will not assist the Prophet, verily God assisted him when the unbelievers cast him forth, in company with a second only,‡ when they

* Ayesha, in a somewhat loose tradition quoted by Hishâmi, relates as follows: Mahomet regularly visited her father's house either in the morning or the evening: that day however, he came at mid-day. Being seated on Abu Bakr's carpet, Mahomet desired that he and Abu Bakr might be left alone. The latter replied that the presence of his two daughters only did not signify, and besought that he would at once tell him what he had to say. Then follows the conversation in which Mahomet tells him that the time had now come for emigrating, and that Abu Bakr was to be his fellow traveller;—whereat Abu Bakr wept for joy. Ayesha adds:—"I never knew before that any body could weep for joy, till I saw Abu Bakr weeping that day." (*Hishâmi*, p. 166.) There is of course a tendency in all Ayesha's traditions to magnify her father's share in the matter.

Tabari gives a tradition to the effect that Abu Bakr proceeded to the house of Mahomet. Ali, whom he found there alone, told him that Mahomet had gone to the cave in Mount Thaur, and that if he wanted him, he should follow him thither. So he hurried in that direction, and made upon Mahomet by the way. And as he approached, the prophet hearing the footsteps thought that it was the Coreish in pursuit, and he quickened his pace and ran, and burst the thong of his shoe, and struck his foot against a rock, so that it bled much. Then Abu Bakr called aloud, and the prophet recognized his voice, and they went both together; and blood flowed from Mahomet's leg, till they reached the cave at break of day, (p. 187.)

Notwithstanding the apparent freshness and circumstantiality of these details, the story is no doubt spurious. It looks like an Alyite or Abbasside fabrication to detract from the honour of Abu Bakr's being selected by the prophet as the companion of his flight, by representing it as an accidental, and not previously planned, arrangement.

† Hishâmi describes it as "a hill in Lower Mecca:" جبل با سفلى مكة

—i. e., adjoining the lower or southern quarter.

The following is from Burkhardt. "JEBEL THOR. About an hour and a half south of Mecca, to the left of the road to the village of Hosseynye, is a lofty mountain of this name, higher it is said than Djebel Nour. On the summit of it is a cavern, in which Mohammad and his friend Abu Bekr took refuge from the Mekkaws before he fled to Medîna." (p. 176.) But he did not visit the spot. Nor does Ali Bey appear to have done so either.

‡ Lit: the second of the two ثانيا الاثنين

two were in the cave alone; when he said to his companion:—*Be not cast down, for verily God is with us.* And God caused to descend tranquillity* upon him, and strengthened him with Hosts which ye saw not, and made the word of the unbelievers to be abased; and the word of the Lord, it is exalted; and God is mighty and wise.†

The “sole companion,” or in Arabic phraseology, *the second of the two*, became one of Abu Bakr’s most honoured titles. Hassân, the contemporary poet of Medîna, thus sings of him:—

And the second of the two in the Glorious Cave, while the Foes were searching around, and they
 * [two had ascended the Mountain;
 And the Prophet of the Lord, they well knew, loved him,—more than all the world; he held no
 † [one equal unto him †]

Whatever may have been the real peril, Mahomet and his companion felt it to be a moment of jeopardy. Glancing upward at a crevice whence the morning light broke into the cave, Abu Bakr whispered;—“What if one of them were to look beneath him; he might see us under his very feet!” “*Think not thus, Abu Bakr!*” said the prophet, “**WE ARE TWO, BUT GOD IS IN THE MIDST, A THIRD.**”§

* The word used is سَكِينَةٌ *sekinah*: borrowed from the “Shekinah” of the Jews. The expression occurs repeatedly in the Coran.

† *Sura IX., v. 42.*

‡ “Mahomet asked Hassân ibn Thâbit, whether he had composed any poetry regarding Abu Bakr; to which the poet answered that he had, and at Mahomet’s request repeated the following lines, (as in the text):—

وَتَأْنِي الْأَثْنِينَ فِي الْغَارِ سَنِيْفٍ الْقَدْ طَافَ الْعَدُوْبَهُ إِذَا صَعِدَ الْجَبَلَا
 * وَكَانَ حَسْبَ الرَّسُولِ إِلَهٌ قَدْ عَلِمُوا مِنَ الْمَرْكَةِ لَمْ يَعْدِلْ بِهِ رَجُلَا

And Mahomet was amused thereat, and laughed so heartily as even to show his back teeth; and he answered;—“Thou hast spoken truly, Oh Hassan! It is just as thou hast said.”—*Wâckidi, p. 212.*

§ فَقَالَ يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ مَا ظَنَنْكَ بِالْأَثْنِينَ إِلَهٌ تَأْتِيهِمْ

Wâckidi, p. 212.

The crowd of miracles that cluster about the cave, are so well known as hardly to need repetition. It will be interesting, however, to note how far they are related by our early authorities.

Wâckidi says that after Mahomet and Abu Bakr entered the cave, a spider came and wove her webs one over another at the mouth of the cave. The Coreish hotly searched in all directions for Mahomet, till they came close up to the entrance of the cave. And when they looked, they said one to another;—*Spiders’ webs are over it from before the birth of Mahomet.* So they turned back, (p. 44.)

Another tradition is that “God commanded a tree and a spider to cover His prophet, and two wild pigeons to perch at the entrance of the cave. Now two men from each branch of the Coreish, armed with swords, issued from Mecca for the search. And they were now close to Mahomet, when the foremost saw the pigeons, and returned to his companions, saying that he was sure from this that nobody was in the cave. And the prophet heard his words, and blessed the wild pigeons, and made them sacred in the Holy Territory.—*Ibidem.*”

The verses (quoted in the text,) in *Sura VIII., v. 29*, about God plotting so as to

Amir ibn Foheirah, the freed-man of Abu Bakr,* who in company with the other shepherds of Mecca, tended his master's flock, stole unobserved every evening with a few goats to the cave, and furnished its inmates with a plentiful supply of milk. Abdallah, the son of Abu Bakr, in the same manner, nightly brought them victuals cooked by his sister Asmâ.† It was his business also to watch closely by day the progress of events, and of opinion, at Mecca, and to report at night the result.

Much excitement had prevailed in the city, when it became first known that Mahomet had disappeared. The chief of the Coreish went to his house, and finding Ali there, asked him where his uncle was. "I have no knowledge of him," replied Ali:—"am I his keeper? Ye bade him to quit the city, and he hath quitted."‡ Then they repaired to the house of Abu Bakr, and questioned his daughter Asmâ, but failing to elicit from her any information,§ they despatched scouts in all directions, with the view of gaining a clue to the track and destination of the prophet, if not with less innocent instructions. But the precautions of Mahomet and Abu Bakr rendered the search fruitless. One by one the emissaries returned with no trace of the fugitives; and it was believed that having gained a fair start, they had outstripped pursuit. The people soon reconciled themselves to the fact. They even breathed more freely now that their troubler was gone. The city again was still.

deceive the Meccans, and in Sura IX., v.42, about God assisting the two refugees in the cave, have probably given rise to these tales.

There are some miraculous stories, but of later growth, regarding Abu Bakr putting his hand into the crevices of the cave to remove the snakes that might be lurking there, and being unharmed by their venomous bites.

* See "*Extension of Islam.*" (p. 6.)

† Hishâmi says that Asmâ also used to take them food at night; but that is doubtful. She certainly carried to them the victuals prepared for the journey, on the third day. Hishâmi adds Amir ibn Foheira used to lead his goats over the footsteps of Abdallah in order to obliterate the traces.—*Wâkidi*, pp. 44, 212,—*Hishâmi*, p. 167.

‡ *Wâkidi*, p. 44,—*Tabari*, p. 189. The latter adds:—"Thereupon they chided Ali, and struck him, and carried him forth to the Kaaba, and bound him for a short space, and then let him go." The notice is, however, quite unsupported by any other proof or collateral evidence; and is evidently fabricated to enhance the merits of Ali.

§ Hishâmi has the following.—"Asma relates that after the prophet went forth, a company of the Coreish, with Abu Jahl, came to the house. As they stood at the door, she went forth to them. 'Where is thy father?' said they. 'Truly I know not where he is,' she replied. Upon which, Abu Jahl, who was a bad and impudent man, slapped her on the face with such force, that one of her ear-rings dropped." (p. 168.)

On the third night, the daily tidings brought by Abdallah satisfied the refugees that the search had ceased, and the busy curiosity of the first agitation relaxed. The opportunity was come. They could slip away unobserved now. A longer delay might excite suspicion, and the visits of Abdallah and Amir attract attention to the cave. The roads were clear; they might travel without the apprehension (and it was a fear not unreasonable,) of an arrow or dagger from the way-side assassin.

Abdallah received the commission to have all things in readiness the following evening. The guide wandered with two camels close about the summit of mount Thaur. Asmâ prepared food for the journey, and in the dusk carried it to the cave. In the hurry of the moment, she had forgotten the thong for fastening the wallet. So she tore off her girdle; with one of the pieces she closed the wallet, and with the other fastened it to the camel's gear. From this incident Asmâ was ever after honourably known as "She of the two Shreds."* Abu Bakr did not forget his money, and safely secreted his purse of between five and six thousand dirhems.†

The camels were now ready. Mahomet mounted the swifter of the two, Al Cuswâ, thenceforward his favourite,‡ with the guide; and Abu Bakr having taken his servant, Amir ibn Foheira, behind him on the other,§ they started. Leaving the lower

* ذات النطاقين *Hishâmi*, *Wâckidi*, pp. 44, 212.

p. 168. These little incidents add life and reality to the story. The names, "the Second of the Two," and "She of the Shreds," must have been current generally. They could hardly have been invented for the story, and are therefore corroborative of it.

† *Hishâmi*, p. 168. A curious tradition is given here. Abu Bakr's father, Abu Cuhâfa, now so old that he could not see, came to visit his granddaughters (Asmâ and Ayesha,) after Abu Bakr had departed, and consoled with them on being left without any means. To comfort the old man, Asmâ placed pebbles in a recess, and covering them with a cloth, made him feel them, and believe that it was his son's money, which he had left behind, so the old man went away happy.

‡ *Hishâmi* adds that Mahomet refused to get on the camel until he had purchased it, or rather pledged himself to pay the price which Abu Bakr had given for it. —*Hishâmi*, p. 168.

§ A tradition in *Wâckidi* says that Amir rode upon a *third* camel, and that Mahomet getting tired on Al Cuswa, changed to Abu Bakr's camel; the two others changing also. (p. 212.)

This may be explained by the fact, that when the party reached Arj, within a few stages of Medîna, the animals were so fatigued, that they hired an extra camel and servant from the Bani Aslam tribe that inhabited the vicinity. Thus they arrived at Medîna mounted upon *three* camels, which is no doubt the origin of the tradition referred to. —*Hishâmi*, p. 171.

quarter of Mecca* a little to their right, they struck off by a track considerably to the left of the common road to Medîna; and hurrying westward, soon gained the vicinity of the sea-shore nearly opposite Osfân.† The day of the flight was the 4th Rabî I., of the first year of the Hegira, or by the calculations of M. Caussin de Perceval, the 20th June, A. D. 622.‡

In the morning they had reached the Bedouin encampment of a party of the Bani Khuzâa. An Arab lady sat in the door of her tent ready to give food and drink to any travellers that might chance that way. Mahomet and his followers were fatigued and thirsty (for it was the extreme heat of the year; and they gladly refreshed themselves with the milk which she offered them in abundance.§ During the hottest part of the day, they rested at Cudeid; and in the evening, thinking they were now at a safe enough distance from Mecca, they joined the common road. They had not proceeded far when they met one of the Meccan scouts, returning on horseback. Surâca, (for that was his name) seeing that he had no chance of success single-handed against four opponents, offered no opposition; but on the contrary pledged his word, that if permitted to depart in peace, he would not reveal that he had met them.||

* *Hishâmi*, p. 170.—*Tabari*, p. 194. سلك بهما إلى أسفل مكة

† Osfân is a pilgrim station at the present day, on the highway from Mecca to Medîna.

‡ *Hegira*, "emigration." Though applied *par excellence* to the flight of the prophet, it is also applicable to the rest of the emigrants to Medîna, prior to the taking of Mecca: and they are hence called *Muhâjirîn*, *i. e.*, those who have undertaken the *hejira*, or emigration. We have seen that they commenced to emigrate from the 1st of Moharram, *i. e.*, from the 1st month of the *Hegira era*.

The chronology of M. C. de Perceval is supported by the notices of extreme

heat. وذاك في أيام حارة *Hishâmi*, p. 171.

§ Wâckidi here gives miraculous details omitted by *Hishâmi*. The former relates that it was a time of dearth, and the scarcity of fodder had so reduced the flocks, that they gave no milk. Omm Mâbad (the Arab lady, at first told them of her inability in consequence to entertain them. But there was in the corner of her tent a miserable goat, that not only gave no milk, but was so weak as to be disabled from accompanying the flocks to pasture. The prophet spied it, and going up prayed and touched its udders which immediately filled with milk, and all drank to their hearts' content! *Wâckidi*, p. 44.

Her husband, who had been absent, shortly after returned; and on her giving a description of the prophet, he perceived who it had been, and said that he too would have gone with him, if he had been at home.

Omm Mâbad herself is said to have emigrated to Medîna and been converted.—*Ibid.*

|| The marvellous tales and improbabilities connected with the story of Surâca, are so great, that one is almost tempted to omit all mention of him as fictitious. Yet there may probably be this ground of truth, that they did fall in with one of

The party proceeded. The prophet of Arabia was safe.

The first tidings that reached Mecca of the real course taken by Mahomet, were brought two or three days after his flight from the cave, by a traveller from the Khuzâite camp at which he had rested. It was now certain from his passing there, that he was bound for Medîna.*

Ali remained at Mecca three days after the departure of Mahomet, appearing every day in public, for the purpose of restoring the property placed in trust with his uncle by various parties. He met with no opposition or trouble, and leisurely took his departure for Medîna.†

The families of Mahomet and Abu Bakr were equally unmolested. Zeinab continued for a time to dwell at Mecca with her unconverted husband. Rockeya had already emigrated with Othman to Medîna. The other two daughters of Mahomet, Omm Kolthûm and Fâtima, with his wife Sawda, were for some weeks left behind at Mecca.‡ His betrothed Ayesha,

the scouts, or with a Meccan traveller coming the same road,—around which the fiction has grown.

The tale, as given by Hishâmi, is that the Meccans offered a reward of 100 camels to any one who would bring back Mahomet. Surâca had private intimation that a party on three camels had been seen on the Medîna road, and forthwith set out in pursuit. When he had made up on them, his horse stumbled and threw him, then it sank in the earth and stuck fast. Mahomet at his entreaty prayed that it might be loosened, and it was accordingly freed. This happened over again, and then Surâca pledged that he would go back, and turn from their pursuit all the emissaries that were out in quest of Mahomet. He farther begged of Mahomet a writing in remembrance, which Abu Bakr having written "on a bone, or a piece of paper, or a bit of cloth," threw down to him. Surâca picked it up and slipped it unto his quiver. *He kept the whole transaction secret till after the capture of Mecca*, when he produced the writing as an introduction to the favour of Mahomet, and embraced Islam.—*Hishâmi*, p. 169.

The traditions in Wâckidi, though not quite so absurd as the above, are sufficiently marvellous. (p. 44½.)

* Here again we have the marvellous. Asmâ relates that they waited three days without knowing whither the party had gone; when one of the genii, whose voice was heard, but who could not be seen, entered Lower Mecca, passed through the town, and made his exit from Upper Mecca, singing the while verses in praise of Omm Mâbad, the Khozâite lady, for her entertainment of Mahomet and Abu Bakr. From the position of this encampment, the people then knew which way Mahomet had taken. The very verses of the genius are given both by Hishâmi and Wâckidi; and the latter adds couplets by Hassân ibn Thâbit in reply to them.—*Hishâmi*, p. 168,—*Wâckidi*, p. 44,—*Tabari*, p. 197.

† *Wâckidi*, p. 182,—*Hishâmi*, p. 167, 172,—*Tabari*, p. 200.

‡ Omm Kolthûm had been married to one of the sons of Abu Lahab, but was now living in her father's house. Zeinab's husband, Abul As, was still an

with the rest of Abu Bakr's family, and other females, likewise remained.*

Mahomet and Abu Bakr would no doubt look to their respective clans to protect their families from insult. But no insult or annoyance of any kind was offered by the Coreish: nor was the slightest attempt made to detain them; although it was not unreasonable that they should have been detained as hostages against any hostile incursion from Medina. These facts lead us to doubt the intense hatred and bitter cruelty, which the strong colouring of tradition is ever ready to attribute to the Coreish.†

unbeliever. It is said that he kept her back in Mecca in confinement. But subsequent events show that she was strongly attached to him. The story of their both joining Mahomet at Mecca, some time afterwards, is romantic and affecting.—*Wâkidi*, p. 46,—*Hishâmi*, p. 234.

* When Zeid was sent back from Medina to bring away Mahomet's family, he carried with him also his own wife Omm Ayman (i. e., Mahomet's old nurse, Baraka, and his son Osâma, then a boy.

Abdallah brought away the family of his father Abu Bakr, and Ayesha among the rest.—*Wâkidi*, p. 46.

† In accordance with this view, is the fact that the first aggressions after the Hegira, were solely on the part of Mahomet and his followers. It was not until several of their caravans had been waylaid and plundered, and blood had thus been shed, that the people of Mecca were forced in self-defence to resort to arms.

① Fl 896

ULB Halle
001 157 906

3/1



