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THE
LIFE
OF
MAHOMET FROM HIS YOUTH,
TO
HIS FORTIETH YEAR.

By W^m Muir Esq. B.C.S.

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

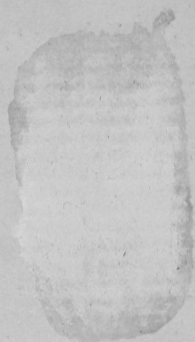


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THE LIFE OF MAHOMET FROM HIS YOUTH,
TO HIS FORTIETH YEAR.

[FROM THE CALCUTTA REVIEW, NO. XLV.]

1. *Essai sur L'Histoire des Arabes.* Par. A. P. Caussin de Perceval. Paris, 1847. Vol. I.
2. *Life of Mohammad.* By A. Sprenger, M. D. Allahabad, 1851.
3. *Sîrat Wâckidi.* Arab. M.S.
4. *Sîrat Tabari.* Arab. M.S.
5. *Sîrat Hishâmi.* Arab. M.S.

In a previous article, we have traced the boyhood of Mahomet down to the journey into Syria, which, in his twelfth year, (582, A. D.) he made under the guardianship of his uncle, Abu Tâlib. The next incident in his life possessed a wider and more stirring interest.

Between the years 580 and 590, A. D., the vale of Mecca and the surrounding country were rendered unquiet and insecure by one of those bloody feuds, so frequently excited by the fiery pride, and prolonged by the revengeful temper, of the nation.

In Dhul Cáada, the sacred month preceding the days of pilgrimage, an annual fair was held at Ocâtz, where within an easy three days' journey of Mecca, the shady palm and grateful fountain solaced the merchant and the traveller, after their toilsome journey.*

Goods were bartered, vain glorious contests (those characteristic exhibitions of Bedouin chivalry) were held, and verses recited by the bards of the various tribes. The successful poems produced at these national gatherings, were treated with distinguished honor; they were adorned with golden letters, and so styled *Mudhahabât*, and were sometimes suspended in the Kaaba, and thence called *Möallacât*; and the SABAA MOALLACAT (or seven suspended pieces,) still survive from a period anterior even to Mahomet, a wonderful specimen of artless Arab eloquence. The beauty of the language, and the wild richness of the imagery, are acknowledged by all, but the subject of the poet was limited, and the beaten track seldom deviated from. The charms of his mistress, the solitude of her deserted haunts, the noble qualities of his camel, his own generosity and prowess, the superiority of his tribe

* Ocâtz lay between Táif and Nakhla. There were two other fairs, but of less note, held near Mecca, one at Majna, in the vicinity of Marr al Tzahrân, the other at Dzul Majâj, behind Arafat. (*M. Caussin de Perceval, Vol. I, p. 296.*)

over all others;—these were the themes which, with little variation of treatment, and without the exercise of imagination in the contrivance of any general plot or design, occupied the Arab muse;—and some of which only added fuel to the besetting vices of the people, vain-glory, envy, pride, and revenge.

At the fair of Ocâtz, a rivalrous spirit, about the period of our story, had been engendered between the Coreish and the Bani Hawâzin, a numerous tribe of kindred descent,* which dwelt (and still dwells) in the country between Mecca and Tâif. An arrogant poet, vaunting the glories of his tribe, was struck by an indignant Hawâzinite; and a maid of Hawâzin descent was rudely treated by some Coreishite youths; an importunate creditor was insolently repulsed;† on each occasion the sword was unsheathed, and blood began to flow, until the leaders interfered to calm the excited people. Such was the origin of the FIJAR, or Sacrilegious War, so called because it occurred within the sacred term, and was eventually carried into the sacred territory.

These incidents suggested the expediency of requiring all who frequented the fair to surrender, for the time, their arms, and deposit them with Abdallah ibn Jodâân, a Coreishite chief, descended from Taym, an uncle of Cussei. By this precaution, peace was preserved for several years, when a wanton murder supplied a more serious cause of offence.

Nomân V., Prince of Hîra, despatched to the fair of Ocâtz a caravan richly laden with perfumes and musk. It proceeded under the escort of Orwâ, an Hawâzinite. Birrâdh, an ally of the Coreish, was annoyed at being supplanted in the convoy of the merchandise, and watching his opportunity, fell upon Orwâ, encamped by a fountain near Fadac,‡ and having slain him, fled with the booty to conceal himself in

* They sprang through Cays Aylân, from Modhar and Maad, who were the ancestors of the Coreish.

† The circumstances form a curious illustration of Arab manners. The Hawâzin creditor seated himself in a conspicuous place with a monkey by his side, and said, "*who will give me another such ape, and I will give him in exchange my claim on such a one,*"—naming his creditor with the full pedigree of his Kinânaite descent. This he kept continually vociferating, to the intense annoyance of the Kinâna tribe, one of whom drew his sword and cut off the monkey's head. In an instant the Hawâzin and Kinâna tribes were embroiled in bitter strife. The Bani Kinâna, it will be remembered, form the collective descendants of one of the ancestors of the Coreish, removed a few steps *above* the point at which the Coreishite branch shoots oft. Both the poet here mentioned, and the murderer Birrâdh, who, we shall see below, kindled the war, belonged to the Bani Kinâna. The war therefore embraced a wider range than merely the Coreishite family.

‡ The spot was called Awârah, in the valley of Tayman, north of Medina.



Kheibar. On his way thither he met a poet of the Coreish, called Bishr, whom he charged to proceed with expedition to the fair then being held at Ocâtz, and communicate the intelligence to Harb (who was the confederate or *halif* of Birrâdh,) and the other Coreishite chiefs. The message was conveyed, and Abdallah ibn Jodâân, thus privately informed of the murder, immediately resorted to all their arms,* and feigning urgent business at Mecca, set off thither at once with all his tribe. As the sun went down, the news began to spread at Ocâtz, and reached the ears of Abu Berâ, the chief of the Hawâzin, who forthwith perceiving the cause of the precipitate departure of the Coreish, rallied his people around him, and proceeded in hot pursuit. But the Coreish had already entered the sacred limits, and the Hawâzin contented themselves with challenging their enemy to a rencounter at the same period of the following year. The challenge was accepted, and both parties prepared for the struggle. Several battles were fought with various success, and hostilities, more or less formal, were prolonged for four years, when Otba, the son of Rabia (the nephew of Harb,) proposed a truce. The dead were numbered up, and as twenty had been killed on the side of the Hawâzin more than of the Coreish, the latter consented to pay the price of their blood, and for this purpose delivered hostages, one of whom was Abu Sofîân, the son of Harb.

In some of these engagements, the whole of the Coreish and their allies were engaged. Each tribe was commanded by a chief of its own; and Abdallah guided the general movements. The descendants of Abd Shams and Nowfal were headed by Harb, the son of Omeya, and took a distinguished part in the warfare.

The children of Hâshim were present also, under the command of Zobeir, the eldest surviving son of Abd al Muttalib; but they occupied no prominent position. In one of the battles, Mahomet attended upon his uncles; but though now near twenty years of age, he had not acquired the love of arms. According to some authorities, his efforts were confined to gathering up the arrows discharged by the enemy, and handing them to his uncles. Others assign to him a somewhat more active share in the warfare; but it is allowed by all that he never spoke of it with much enthusiasm. "I remember," said the prophet, "being present with my uncles in the sacri-

* Harb is said to have urged Abdallah to give up only the Coreishite, and to withhold the Hawâzin arms, so that they might fall upon the latter unprepared. Abdallah rejected the proposal as perfidious. But it looks very like an Abbasside tradition to vilify the Omeyyads. Harb was the son of Omeya.

‘legious war, and I discharged arrows at the enemy; nor do I regret having done so.’* Physical courage, indeed, and martial daring, were virtues which did not distinguish the prophet at any period of his career.

The struggles for pre-eminence, and the contests of eloquence at the annual fair, possessed for the youthful Mahomet a more engrossing interest than the combat of arms. At such spectacles, while his national enthusiasm had ample scope, he, no doubt, burned with strong desire after personal distinction, and trained his fertile genius into learning from the highest efforts there displayed by the great masters of those arts, the mystery of poetry and the power of rhetoric. But another and still nobler lesson might be taught in the course at Ocâtz. The Christianity, as well as the chivalry of Arabia, had there its representatives; and, if we may believe tradition, Mahomet, while a boy, heard Coss, the bishop of Najrân, preach a purer creed than that of Mecca, in accents of deep reason and fervid faith, which carried conviction to his soul. The venerable Coss was but one amongst many at that fair, who, enlightened haply by a less Catholic spirit, or darkened by more of prejudice and superstition, yet professed to believe in the same revelation from above, and preached, it may be, the same good tidings. There, too, were Jews, serious and earnest men, surpassing the Christians in number, and appealing to their own book also. Mahomet was more familiar with them, for,

* *Vide Wäckidi, pp. 23½ and 24*, where will also be found an account of the origin and progress of the war, with the names of the leaders of the several tribes. The statement in Hishâmi is briefer. (p. 38.) Caussin de Perceval enters with great detail into the war, devoting to it no less than twenty-two pages, (*Vol. I, p. 296, et seq.*) He makes the engagement in which Mahomet was present to be the first, that, viz., in which the Coreish retreated on receiving tidings of Orwâ’s murder: but there does not appear to have been any *fighting* on this occasion; and Wäckidi distinctly ascribes Mahomet’s presence to an engagement in the *following* year. Wäckidi speaks only of one battle, in which the Coreish at first gave way, but were subsequently victorious. The engagement is spoken of (p. 24,) as occurring in the month of Shawwâl, that, viz., *preceding* the sacred months: but this is said, probably, in order to shelter the youthful Mahomet from the sacrilegious charge of fighting within the sacred term. C. de Perceval, drawing upon the poetical remains in the Kitâb al Aghâni, details a succession of battles: he also makes Mahomet to have been but fourteen years of age on the occasion, and adds, that, had he been older, he would have occupied a more important part than that of picking up his uncle’s arrows. But the testimony of Wäckidi, Hishâmi, and Tabari (p. 77.) is distinctly and unanimously in favor of the age of *twenty* years: and Wäckidi, as we have seen in the text, states that he actually took part in the archery.

Among the chieftains in command of tribes, it is interesting to trace Khuweilid, the father of Khadîja; Ahattâb, the father of Omar: Othmân ibn al Huweirith; Al As ibn Wâil; Omeya ibn Khalaf; Zeid ibn Amr, and other well known names.



as a child, he had seen and heard of them and their synagogue at Medina, and he had learned to respect them as men that feared God. Yet they cast bitter glances at the Christians, and even when Coss addressed them, in language which approved itself to the heart of Mahomet as truth, they scorned his words, and railed at the meek and lowly Saviour of whom he spoke. Notwithstanding this enmity, Mahomet was surprised to hear the Christian preacher admit the authority of the Jewish book as equal to that of his own; and both parties mentioned with veneration the name of Abraham, the admitted builder of the Meccan Temple, and author of its rites and faith. What, if there be truth in all these systems;—divine TRUTH, dimly glimmering through human prejudice, malevolence, and superstition? What a glorious mission, to act the part of a Coss on a wider and yet more Catholic stage, and by taking away the miserable partitions which hid and severed each nation and sect from its neighbour, to make way for the natural illumination of truth and love, emanating from the Great Father of all! Visions and speculations such as these, were, no doubt, raised by association with the Jews and Christians frequenting this great fair; and late in life the Prophet referred with pleasure to the memory of Coss, as having preached there the *Hanefite* or Catholic Faith.*

A confederacy formed at Mecca, for the suppression of violence and injustice, aroused more enthusiasm in the mind of Mahomet than the martial exploit of the sacrilegious war. It was called the "Oath of *Fudhul*," and occurred immediately after the restoration of peace.† The offices of state, and with them the powers of Government, had, as we have seen in a former paper, become divided among the various Coreishite

* See page 67 of a previous Article in this Review, on the "Ante-Mahometan History of Arabia;" also M. C. de Perceval, Vol. I., p. 159; and Sprenger, p. 35.

The only authentic tradition we have met with on the subject, does not prove that Mahomet ever heard Coss. It occurs at page 61½ of Wäckidi, in the account of the deputation to the Prophet at Medina, from the Bani Bakr ibn Wail. One of them addressed Mahomet, "Didst thou know Coss, the son of Sâida?" The prophet replied; "He was not one of you; he was a man of the tribe of Iyâd, who professed the true faith in the days of ignorance, and he visited Ocâtz during the concourse of the people there, and addressed them in words which have been preserved

from him." فقال له رجل منهم هل تعرف قسلا ابن ساعدة فقال رسول الله ليس هو منكم هذا رجل من اياد تحذف في الجاهلية فوافي عكاظ والناس مجتمعون فتكلمهم بكلامه الذي حفظ عنه

† Wäckidi states that it occurred the month after the conclusion of the war, while Mahomet was yet twenty years of age. (p. 24.)

families. There was no one who now exercised an authority such as had been enjoyed by Cossai and Hâshim, or even by Abd al Muttalib. When any of the numerous tribes neglected to punish in its members acts of oppression and wrong, no chief at Mecca was strong enough to stand up the champion of the injured. Thus right was not enforced, and wrong remained unpunished. Some glaring instances of this nature* suggested to the principal Coreish families the expediency of binding themselves by an oath, to secure justice to the helpless. The honor of originating the movement is ascribed to Zobeir, the oldest surviving son of Abd al Muttalib. The descendants of Hâshim, and the families sprung from Zohra and Taym, assembled in the house of Abdallah, son of Jodâân, who prepared for them a feast, and they swore "by the avenging Deity, that they would take the part of the oppressed, and see his claim fulfilled, so long as a drop of water remained in the ocean, or would satisfy it from their own resources."† The league was useful, both as a preventive against unjust aggression, and on some occasions as a means of enforcing restitution. "I would not," Mahomet used in after years to say, "exchange for the choicest camel in all Arabia, the remembrance of being present at the oath which we took in the house of Abdallah, when the Bani Hâshim, Zohra, and Taym, swore that they would stand by the oppressed."‡

The youth of Mahomet passed away without any other incidents of special interest. At one period he was employed, like other lads, in tending the sheep and goats of the Meccans, upon the neighbouring hills and valleys. He used, when at Medina,

* M. C. de Perceval gives two instances. The first in which a stranger, even though under the protection of the Chief Abdallah ibn Jodâân, had his camels slaughtered and devoured before his eyes. The second relates to a man who had, no patron or protector at Mecca; and being denied the price of goods he had sold, repaired to an eminence on the side of the hill Abu Cobeis, near where the Coreish used to assemble for the cool evening breeze, and loudly called for justice. (*Vol. I., p. 330*)

† The expression in the last clause is not very clear, but is probably as we have rendered it. The words are:—*وفي المتأسي في المعاش*

‡ *Wâchidi, p. 24.* It is remarkable that only these three tribes are included in the league. To the Bani Zohra belonged Mahomet's mother; and his friend Abu Bakr to the Bani Taym. That the league was only a partial one is evident from its name; *fudhâl*, meaning, "what is unnecessary or supererogatory," by which appellation it seems to have been called, by the rest of the Coreish, who did not join it. For other, but less likely, derivations, see *M. C. de Perceval, Vol. I. p. 333,* and *Weil, p. 33.* The former gives an alleged instance in which the league was appealed to by Hosein, the son of Ali, against Moâvia or his nephew

to refer to this employment as one that comported with his prophetic office. On one occasion some people passed by with the fruit of the wild shrub *Arah*; and the prophet said, "pick me out from thence the blackest of the berries, for they are sweet;—even such was I wont to gather when I fed the flocks at Ajjâd." The hire which he received for this duty, would help to support him while he lived with his needy uncle, and the occupation itself was one which must have proved congenial with his thoughtful and meditative character.* While he watched the flocks, his attention would be rivetted by the evidences of natural religion spread around: in the dead of the night the bright stars and constellations that glided silently along the deep blue sky, were charged to him with a special message; the loneliness of the desert would arm with a deeper conviction that speech which day everywhere utters unto day, while the still small voice which, to the attentive listener, is never unheard, would rise into grander and more impressive tones, when the clouds darkened, and the rain and tempest swept with forked lightning and far rolling thunder, along the vast solitudes of the Meccan mountains. Thus, we doubt not, grew up, or was strengthened, that deep and earnest faith in the Deity, as an ever-present, all-directing Agent, which, in after days, the prophet was wont to enforce by eloquent and heart-stirring

* See *Wäckidi*, p. 23, *Tabari*, p. 63: *Sprenger*, p. 81: *Weil* p. 33: *Mishcât ul Masâbih*, (*English Translation*) Vol. II. p. 51, and 520. In the last named work, (p. 51) the hire received by Mahomet is specified. In one tradition given by

Wäckidi, Mahomet speaks thus و انا رعيتيها لاهل مكة بالقراريط Some make the word *Al Carârît* here, to be the name of a place, but it is more probable that Mahomet by it meant that he fed the flocks for *Kirats*, or small coins. (*Weil*)

Sprenger says that as this was a very humiliating occupation for a man, his engaging in it proves Mahomet's "unfitness for the common duties of life:" (p. 81). The duty, doubtless, was never regarded in Arabia as a very manly one, and as *Burkhardt* shows, is now committed by the Bedouins to their unmarried girls; yet in Mahomet's time, at least, it was evidently no insult or unprecedented humiliation for the boys of respectable citizens to be thus employed. We read of another Coreishite lad being engaged with Mahomet in tending the flocks. (*Tabari*, p. 63.) *Omar* used to be sent out by his father to feed his sheep and goats, and to bring in forage for his camels. (*Wäckidi*, p. 231.) So *Abu Bakr*, even after his elevation to the Caliphate, is said to have been in the habit not only of milking the goats of the people of the quarter of *Medîna*, where he lived (*al Sunb*), but of taking them occasionally out to pasture. This may be an exaggeration, intended to magnify the simplicity of his life (as a lesson and example to future Caliphs); still the very existence of the tradition proves that the task was regarded in as little dishonorable a light at *Medîna* as at *Mecca*. Probably, it was less disliked by the people of the towns than by those of the desert.

The place *Ajjâd* is probably the rising ground to the south of *Mecca*, now called *Jabal Jyâd*, and the quarter *Haret Jyâd*, built on its declivity; (*Burkhardt*, p. 115; *Ali Bey*, Vol. II, p. 119) Mahomet used to compare himself to *Moses* and *David*, in having been a shepherd.

appeals to the sublime operations of nature, and the beneficent adaptations of Providence.

All our authorities agree in ascribing to Mahomet's youth a correctness of deportment and purity of manners, rare among the people of Mecca. His modesty, they say, was miraculously preserved:—"I was engaged one night," so runs the tradition of a speech of the prophet, "feeding the flocks in company with a lad of the Coreish. And I said to him, if you will look after my flock, I will go into Mecca, and divert myself there, as youths are wont by night to divert themselves."* But no sooner had he reached the precincts of the city, then a marriage feast engaged his attention, and at last he fell asleep. On another night, as he was entering the town with the same intentions, he was arrested by heavenly strains of music, and sitting down, slept till the morning, and thus again escaped temptation. "And after this," added Mahomet, "I no more sought after vice; even until I attained unto the prophetic office." Making every allowance for the fond reverence which paved an easy way for the currency of such stories, it is quite in keeping with the character of Mahomet that he should have shrunk from the coarse and licentious practices of his youthful friends. Endowed with a refined mind and a delicate taste, reserved and meditative, he lived much within himself, and the ponderings of his heart supplied occupation for the leisure hours which were spent by men of a lower stamp in rude sports, or in riotous living. The fair character and honorable bearing of the unobtrusive youth, won, if not the approbation, at least, the respect, of his fellow citizens, and he received the title, by common consent, of AL AMIN, "the Faithful."†

Thus respected and honored, Mahomet lived a quiet and retired life, in the bosom of the family of Abu Tâlib, who was prevented by his limited means from occupying a prominent position in the society of Mecca. At last Abu Tâlib, finding his family increase faster than the ability to provide for them, bethought him of setting his nephew, now of a mature age, to eke out a livelihood for himself. Mahomet was never covetous of wealth, or energetic in the pursuit of riches for their own sake. If left to himself, he would probably have preferred the quiet and repose of his present life, to the bustle and cares of a mercantile trip; and it is likely that he would never

* كما شمر البباب The story is told by Tabari, p. 63.

† Hishâmi, p. 38.

spontaneously have contemplated such an expedition. But when proposed by his uncle, his generous soul at once felt the necessity of doing all that was possible to ease the necessities of his uncle, and he cheerfully responded to the call. The story is thus told :—

Abu Tâlib addressed his nephew, now five-and-twenty years of age, in these words :—“ I am, as thou knowest, a man of small substance ; and, truly, the times deal hardly with me. Now here is a caravan of thine own tribe about to start for Syria, and Khadija, daughter of Khuweilid, needeth men of our tribe to send forth with her merchandise. If thou wert to offer thyself, she would readily accept thy services.” Mahomet replied :—“ Be it so, as thou hast said.” Then Abu Tâlib went to Khadija, and enquired whether she wished to hire his nephew ; but he added ; “ We hear that thou hast engaged such an one for two camels, and we should not be satisfied that my nephew’s hire were less than four.” The matron answered, “ Hadst thou askedst this thing for one of a distant and unfriendly tribe, I would have granted it ; how much rather now that thou askest it for a near relative and friend.” So the matter was agreed upon, and Mahomet prepared for the journey ; and when the caravan was about to set out, his uncle commended him to the men of the company. Meisara, a servant of Khadija, likewise travelled with Mahomet, in charge of her property.

The caravan took the usual route to Syria, the same which Mahomet had traversed thirteen years before with his uncle ; and in due time they reached Bostra, a city on the road to Damascus, and about sixty miles to the east of the Jordan. The transactions of that busy mart, where the practised merchants of Syria sought to drive hard bargains with simple Arabs were ill suited to the tastes and the habits of Mahomet ; yet his natural sagacity and ready shrewdness carried him prosperously through the undertaking. He returned from the barter, with the balance of exchange unusually favorable.*

The philosophical mind of Mahomet, arrived at the mature

* The usual profit was to double the value of the stock ; so that in the case of Mahomet, who is said by some to have made *twice* the usual gain, the principal would be quadrupled. But Hishâmi says only that “ he doubled the stock, or nearly so.” A tradition runs thus, that a contention arose between Mahomet and one who wished to take his wares, but who, doubting his word, desired him to swear by Lât and Ozza, the two Meccan goddesses, which Mahomet refused to do. But this again is mentioned as one of the signs by which the Monk knew that he was “ the coming prophet,” and seems of a piece with the other marvellous tales on the occasion. The same story of his refusing to swear by Lât and Ozza, is related of his *first* Journey to Syria as a child.

but still inquisitive period of early manhood, received deep and abiding impressions from all that he saw and heard upon the journey and during his stay at Bostra. Though we reject, as a puerile fabrication, the details of the interview which he held with Nestorius, (a monk who is said to have embraced him as "the coming prophet,")* yet we may be certain that Mahomet lost no opportunity of enquiring into the practices and tenets of the Christianity of Syria, or of conversing with the monks and clergy who fell in his way.†

He probably experienced kindness, perhaps hospitality, from them; for in his book he ever speaks of them with respect, and sometimes with praise;‡ but for their doctrines he had no sympathy. The picture of the faith of Jesus drawn in the Coran, must have been, in some considerable degree, painted from the conceptions now formed. Had he witnessed a purer exhibition of its rites and doctrines, and possessed some experience of its reforming and regenerating influence, we cannot doubt, but that, in the sincerity of his early search after the truth, he would readily have embraced and faithfully adhered to the faith of Jesus. Lamentable, indeed, it is, that the ecclesiastics and monks of Syria exhibited to the earnest enquirer but a little portion of the fair form of Christianity, and that little, how altered and distorted! Instead of the simple majesty of the Gospel, with its great sacrifice, the requisition of repentance, and of faith, and the solemn rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper,—the sacred dogma of the Trinity was protruded upon our traveller with the misguided and offensive zeal of Eutychian and Jacobite partizanship, and the worship of Mary was so strenuously inculcated, and exhibited in so gross a form, as to leave the impression upon the mind of Mahomet that she was, in reality, the third person, and the consort of the Deity! It was by such teaching that Mahomet knew our Saviour as "Jesus, son of Mary" (the only

* The ancient biographies have less of the marvellous in this journey than in the former; yet there is a sufficiency. Nestor, the monk, saw Mahomet sitting under a tree, below which none ever sat but a prophet: he immediately recognized him as such, and was confirmed by the further prophetic symptom of redness in the eyes. Meisara saw two angels, who regularly shaded him during the heat of the day, and so forth.

† Arabic was spoken by the subjects of the Ghassânide dynasty, and there would be little difficulty found by our traveller in effecting an interchange of ideas with those about him. Poets, merchants, and travellers from Medîna, used often at this period, to be the guests of the Ghassân Court.

‡ Thus Sura, v. 91:—*Thou shalt surely find those to be the most inclinable to entertain friendship for the believers who profess Christianity. This cometh to pass because there are priests and monks among them, and because they are not elated with pride.*

term by which he is spoken of in the Coran,) and not as Jesus, the Son of God. We may well weep that this mis-named Catholicism of the Empire, so misled the master mind of the age, and through it, in due course, the half of Asia.

But to return; when Mahomet had disposed of the merchandise of his mistress, and had, according to her command, purchased for her such things as she had need of, he retraced his steps, in company with the caravan, to his native valley.* The mildness of his manners, and his kind attention, had won the heart of Meisara, and as they drew near to Mecca, the grateful servant persuaded Mahomet to go forward from Marr al Tzahrân, and be himself the bearer to his mistress of the tidings of his success. Khadija, surrounded by her maids, was sitting upon an upper story, on the watch for the first glimpse of the caravan, when a camel was seen rapidly to advance from the expected quarter towards her house, and as it approached, she perceived that Mahomet was the rider. He entered, and recounted the prosperous issue of the adventure, and the various goods which by her commission he had purchased for her. She was delighted at her good fortune; but there was a charm in the dark and pensive eye, in the noble features, and in the graceful form of her assiduous agent, as he stood before her, which pleased her even more than her success. The comely widow was forty years of age, she had been twice married, and had borne two sons and a daughter, yet she cast a fond eye upon that thoughtful youth of five-and-twenty; nor, after he had departed, could she dismiss him from her thoughts.†

Khadija was a Coreishite lady, distinguished by birth, as well as by fortune. Her father, Khuweilid, was the grandson of Asad, (whence the family is styled the Bani Asad;) and Asad was the grandson of Cussei. Khuweilid, in the sacrilegious

* Though the *direct* route from Mecca to Bostra would run a great way to the east of the Mediterranean, yet it seems to us not improbable that either in this, or the former journey, Mahomet may have seen the Mediterranean Sea. His references in the Coran to ships gliding majestically on the waters *like mountains*, appear to point to a larger class of vessels than he was likely to see on the Red Sea. The vivid pictures of sea-storms are among some of the finest sketches in the Coran, and evidently drawn from nature: the waves and tempests may have been witnessed from the Arab shore, but the "mountain" ships, more likely refer to the Mediterranean.

† The above account of the journey to Syria is chiefly from Wâckidi. Tabari has a tradition, that Mahomet traded on account of Khadija, in company with another man, to a place called Habasha, a market in the Tehâma, erroneously named by Weil, Hayasha (p. 34.) This, however, is not well supported. Had there been really any such journey, we should have heard a great deal more about it, considering the mature period of Mahomet's life, at which it is said to have occurred.

war, commanded a considerable section of the Coreish, and so did his nephew Othmân, son of Huweirith. Her substance, whether inherited, or acquired through her former marriages, was very considerable; and through hired agents, she had increased it largely by mercantile speculation. To the blessings of affluence, she added the more important endowments of discretion, virtue, and an affectionate heart; and, though now mellowed by a more than middle age, she retained a fair and attractive countenance. The chief men of the Coreish were not insensible to these charms, and many sought her in marriage; but she rejected all their offers, and seemed bent to live on in dignified and independent widowhood. But the tender emotions excited by the visit of Mahomet, soon overpowered such resolutions: her servant Meisara continued to sound, in her not unwilling ears, the praises of his fellow-traveller; and at last her love became so strong and confirmed, that she resolved, in a discreet manner, to make known her passion to its object. A sister, (according to other accounts, a servant,) was the agent deputed to sound his views. "What is it, O Mahomet," said this female, with a cautious adroitness, "what is it which hindereth thee from marriage?" "I have nothing," replied he, "in my hands wherewithal I might marry." "But if haply that difficulty were out of the way, and thou wert invited to espouse a beautiful, wealthy, and noble lady, who would place thee in a position of affluence, wouldest thou not desire to have her?" "And who," answered Mahomet, startled at the novel thought, "may that be?" "Khadîja." "But how can I attain unto her?" "Let that be my care," replied the female. The mind of Mahomet was at once made up, and he answered, "I am ready." The female departed and told Khadîja.

No sooner was she apprized of his willingness to marry her, than Khadîja despatched a messenger to Mahomet, or his uncle, appointing a time when they should meet. Meanwhile as she dreaded the refusal of her father, she provided for him a feast; and when he had well drunk and was merry, she slaughtered a cow, and casting over her father perfume of saffron or ambergris, dressed him in marriage raiment. While thus under the effects of wine, the old man united his daughter to Mahomet, in the presence of his uncle Hamza. But when he recovered his senses, he began to look around him with wonder, and to enquire what all these symptoms of a nuptial feast, the slaughtered cow, the perfumes, and the marriage garment, could mean. So soon as he was made aware of what had happened,—for they told him "the nuptial dress was put upon thee



by Mahomet, thy son-in-law," he fell into a violent passion, and declared that he had never consented to give away to that insignificant youth, a daughter who was courted by the great men of the Coreish. The party of Mahomet replied indignantly that the alliance had not originated in any wish of theirs, but was the act of no other than his own daughter. Weapons were drawn on both sides, and blood might have been shed, when the old man became pacified, and a reconciliation ensued.*

Notwithstanding this stormy and inauspicious commencement, the connubial state proved, both to Mahomet and Khadija, one of unusual tranquillity and happiness. Upon the former it conferred a faithful and affectionate companion, and in spite of her age, a not unfruitful wife. Khadija fully appreciated the noble mind and commanding talents, which a reserved and contemplative habit veiled from others, but could not conceal from her. She conducted as before the duties of her establishment, and left him to enjoy his leisure hours undisturbed and free from care. Her house was thenceforward his home,† and her bosom

* It is not without much hesitation that we have followed Sprenger and Weil in adopting this version of the marriage. It has a strongly improbable air; but its very improbability gives ground for believing that it has not been fabricated. It is also highly disparaging to the position of Mahomet, at a period of his life, when it is the object of his followers to show that he was respected and honored. Its credibility is therefore sustained by the *Canon III. c.* which we have laid down in the paper on the "Original sources for the biography of Mahomet." There was no object in vilifying Khuweilid or the Bani Asad; and even if it is possible to suppose the story to have been fabricated by Mahomet's enemies before the conquest of Mecca, it would (if resting on no better foundation,) have fallen out of currency afterwards. We can perceive therefore no option but to receive it as a fact, which later traditionists have endeavoured to discredit, under the impression that it was a foul spot on their prophet's character, that Khadija, the pattern of wives, should have effected her marriage with Mahomet by making her father drunk (*See Canon II. L.*) Wâckidi gives the story twice in a differing form and from different traditions (the variety of source thus giving it a wider and less doubtful foundation;) but he adds that the whole story is a mistake, as Khuweilid, the father of Khadija, had died previously, and even before the sacrilegious war. (p. 25.) Yet we have seen above that his name is given as one of the *commanders* in that war. Tabari quotes the tradition from Wâckidi, word for word, together with his refutation (p. 67.) Both add that not her *father*, but her *uncle*, Amr ibn Asad, betrothed her. Yet other traditions, containing no allusion to his drunkenness, speak of her *father* as having given her away (*Tabari*, p. 65;) and Hishâmi's account, which is fused from a variety of traditions by Ibn Ishâc, while containing no reference to the drunken fray, states Khuweilid as the person who betrothed her. We are therefore driven to the conclusion that the tradition of Khuweilid's previous death has been invented to throw discredit on the story of his drunkenness. Wine shops were common in Mecca before Islâm; but drunkenness, though occasionally mentioned, does not seem to have been a general or common failing. Hishâmi adds to his statement that Mahomet gave his wife a marriage present of twenty young she-camels.

† The house is specified by Tabari as one currently known in his time by Khadija's name. It was purchased by Moâvia, and though made use of as a mosque, was preserved unaltered. A little closet at its door used to be shown in those days, little more than a yard square, in which Mahomet used to crouch down under a large stone, to protect himself against the missiles of Abu Lahab, and Adi the Thackifte.



the safe receptacle of those doubts and longings after spiritual light, which now began to agitate his mind.

Within the next ten or fifteen years, Khadija bore to Mahomet two sons and four daughters. The first-born was named Cäsım, and after him (according to Arab custom,) Mahomet received the appellation of AB UL CASIM, or "the father of Cäsım." This son died at the age of two years. Meanwhile, his eldest daughter, Zeinab, was born; and after her, at intervals of one or two years, three other daughters, Rockeya, Fâtima, and Omm Kolthûm. Last of all was born his second son, who is variously named as Abd Menâf, Abdallah, Tayib, and Tâhir; but he, too, died in infancy. Salma, the maid of Safia, Mahomet's aunt, officiated as mid-wife on these occasions; and Khadija is said to have sacrificed at the birth of each boy two kids, and one at the birth of every girl. All her children she nursed herself.*

* Wäckidi states that there was an interval of *only one year* between each child. (p. 25.) This, if taken with precision, would make the second son to be born when Mahomet was about thirty-one years of age, that is about nine or ten years before his assumption of the prophetic office. But the expression used by Wäckidi is somewhat vague, and tradition says that the second son, or last child, was born *after* the commencement of Islam, that is after Mahomet had declared himself inspired, or forty years of age. (Wäckidi. p. 179.) Sprenger does not believe this, but holds that the youngest child must have been born at a much earlier period; *first* on account of the age (fifty-three or fifty-five years,) at which Khadija must have arrived when Mahomet assumed the prophetic office, and, *secondly*, because he considers the name of *Abd Menâf* (the servant of the idol Menâf,) to have an idolatrous significance, which Mahomet would not have admitted at the time referred to. He therefore holds that the Moslems being ashamed of the name, subsequently called the deceased child Abdallah, Tayib, or Tahir, and to take away the very suspicion of its ever having been called by an idolatrous name, assert that it was born *after* the commencement of Islam. (Sprenger, p. 83.) We agree with Sprenger as to the original name of the boy, and the cause of the substitution of others for it more palatable to Mahometan ideas. But we are not certain as to the date of its birth. If an interval of about a year and a half elapsed between the birth of each child (the more likely as Khadija herself nursed her children,) the last would be born when Mahomet was thirty-four or thirty-five, and Khadija forty-nine or fifty years of age.

All authorities agree that Cäsım was the eldest of the family, and Zeinab the next, but the succession of the other children is variously reported. That in the text is the one commonly received, and is given by Wäckidi (p. 25.) But Wäckidi in another place (p. 179.) makes Abdallah follow Zeinab, and then Rockeya, Fâtima and Omm Kolthûm. Tabari gives another, and Hishâmi a third order of sequence. The latter specifies two sons, besides Cäsım, viz., Tayib and Tâhir, both of whom, it is added, died before Islam. (p. 40) Tabari also speaks of them as *two*. (p. 65.) But this, as Sprenger has shown (p. 83,) is evidently a mistake. The

first tradition in Wäckidi is capable of both constructions; لا في الاسلام عبد الممكه

في الطاهر و الطيب و الطاهر اسمي i. e., "afterwards was born, in Islam, Abdallah, called Tayib, and Tâhir." The tradition in this shape, evidently gave rise to the error of supposing that Tahir, one of the surnames of Abdallah, was a separate son. At page 179 Wäckidi states the true case in unmistakable language;

و عبد الله و هو الطيب وهو الطاهر سمي بذلك لأنه و لا في الاسلام

Many years after, Mahomet used to look back to this period of his life with fond remembrance; and he dwelt so much upon the mutual love of Khadîja and himself, that the envious Ayesha declared herself to be more jealous of this rival, whom she had never seen, than of all his other wives who contested with her the present affection of the prophet.*

No description of Mahomet at this period has been attempted by the traditionists. But from the copious accounts of his person in later life, we may venture an outline of his appearance in the prime of manhood. He was slightly above the middle size; his figure, though spare, was handsome and commanding; the chest broad and open; the bones and framework of his body large; and the joints well knit together.† His neck was long and finely moulded.‡ The head was unusually large, and gave space for a broad and noble forehead; the hair, thick, jet black, and slightly curling, fell down over his ears. The eyebrows were arched and joined.¶ The countenance thin, but ruddy; and the large, intensely black, and piercing eyes, received lustre from their long dark eye-lashes. His nose was high and slightly aquiline, but fine, and at the end attenuated; the teeth were far apart; a long black bushy beard, reaching to his breast, added manliness and presence. The expression was pensive and contemplative; the face beamed with intelligence, though something of the sensuous could be discerned in it. The skin of his body was clear and soft; the only hair that met the eye, was a fine thin line which ran down from the neck toward the navel. His broad back leaned slightly forward as he walked; and his step was hasty, yet sharp and decided, like that of one rapidly descending a declivity.§

i. e., "and Abdallah, the same is Tayib, the same is Tâhir, so called because he was born after the rise of Islam:—the two words signifying "sweet" and "pure."

M. C de Perceval and Dr. Weil have both been misled here; the former (*Vol I*, p. 329,) making two sons, Tayib and Tâhir; the latter no less than six, mistaking *Tayib, Tâhir, Abd Menâf, Abdallah, Mutayib, and Mutahhir*,—(all appellations of the younger son,) as the names of as many different children! (p. 39.)

* *Mishcât, Vol. II, p. 790.*

† The hollows of his hands and feet were more than usually filled and level: which is a feature the Orientals set much by.

‡ "His neck rose like that of an antelope." (*Wâchidi, p. 81½*)

¶ But some say they were apart and not knit together. (*Wâchidi, p. 81½*.)

§ *Wâchidi, p. 79, &c.* This at Medina degenerated into a stoop. Some say he walked like a man ascending a hill; others as if he was wrenching his foot from a stone.

There was something unsettled in his blood-shot eye, which refused to rest upon its object. When he turned towards you, it was never partially, but with the whole body. Taciturn and reserved,* he was yet in company distinguished by a graceful urbanity, and when it pleased him to unband, his speech was not only pregnant, but humorous and sometimes pungent. At such seasons he entered with zest into the diversion of the moment, and would now and then laugh immoderately;† but he rather listened to the conversation than joined in it.

He was subject to impulse and passion, but on occasions of necessity, he could, by a strong effort of the will, hold himself under a thorough control. When much excited, the vein between his eyebrows would mantle, and violently swell across his ample forehead. Yet he was cautious, and in action fearful of personal danger.

Mahomet was to his friends generous and considerate, and by his well-timed favor and attention, he knew how to rivet the heart to his service. He regarded his enemies with a vindictive and unrelenting hatred, while they continued their opposition; yet a foe who tendered timely submission, he was rarely known to pursue. His commanding mien inspired the stranger with an undefined awe; but, on closer intimacy, apprehension and fear gave place to confidence and love.‡

Behind the quiet and unobtrusive exterior of Mahomet, there lay hid a high resolve, a singleness and unity of purpose, a strength and fixedness of will, a sublime determination which was destined to achieve a marvellous work. Khadīja was the first to perceive this, and with a childlike confidence she surrendered to him her will and her faith. One after another gave in their allegiance to the master spirit, till in the end he bowed towards himself the heart of all Arabia, as the heart of one man; but we anticipate.

The first incident which interrupted the even tenor of the married life of Mahomet was connected with the rebuilding of the Kaaba, about the year 605, A. D. One of those violent floods

* "Mahomet was sorrowful in temperament; continually meditating; he had no rest; he never spoke except from necessity; he used to be long silent; he opened and ended his speech from the corners of his mouth; he expressed himself in pregnant sentences, using neither too few, nor too many words." (*Wāchidi*, p. 814.)

† When laughing immoderately, he showed his teeth and gums, and was sometimes so convulsed, that he had to hold his sides. (*Wāchidi*.)

‡ The personal description and traits of character are chiefly gathered from *Wāchidi*, p. 79, et seq.; and *Hishami*, p. 129. Tirmidzi also gives a full account of Mahomet's person.



which sometimes sweep down the valley of Minâ, having shattered the holy house, it was filled with ominous rents, and they feared lest it should fall.* The treasures it contained were also insecure, from the absence of any roof, and a party of thieves having clambered over had robbed some of the precious relics. These were recovered, but it was resolved that a similar danger should, for the future, be avoided by raising the walls, and covering them over. While the Coreish deliberated how this should be done, a Grecian ship was driven by stress of weather upon the shore of the Red Sea, near to Shûeiba (the ancient harbour of Mecca :) and the news of the misfortune reaching the Coreish, Walîd, the son of Moghîra (of the Bani Makhzûm) accompanied by a body of the Coreish, proceeded to the wreck, and having purchased the timber of the broken ship, engaged her captain, a Greek, by name Bacûm, skilled in architecture, to assist in the reconstruction of the Kaaba. The several tribes of the Coreish were divided into four bodies, and to each was assigned the charge of one side.† With such a mysterious reverence was the Kaaba regarded, that great apprehensions were entertained as to the commencement of the work: at last Walîd seized a pick-axe, and invoking the Deity in a deprecatory prayer, detached and threw down a portion of the wall. All then retired and waited till the following morning, when finding that no mischief had befallen the adventurous chief, they joined in the demolition. They continued to dig till they reached a hard foundation of green stones set close together like teeth, which resisted the stroke of the pick-axe;‡

* Such torrents have frequently committed similar ravages. Thus, in 1627, A. D., the flood destroyed three sides of the sacred building. (*Burkhardt. p. 136.*) Omar is said to have built a mole across the valley above Mecca, to protect the Kaaba from these floods. The remains of the dyke, Burkhardt says, were visible till the fourteenth century. (*Idem, p. 126.*)

† This independent portioning shows how divided and isolated the several branches of the Coreish were at this time. One side was assigned to the Bani Abd Menâf (including descendants of Hâshim, Abd Shams, Naufal and Abd al Muttalib.) and the Bani Zohara; a second to the Bani Asad and Abd al Dâr; a third to the Bani Taym and Makhzûm; and the fourth to the Bani Salm, Jumh Adi, and Amr ibn Lowey. There was, in fact, no acknowledged head, as the coming incident proves.

‡ This green bed is called the "foundation of Abraham," and the tradition adds, that when one struck his pick-axe into the stones, the whole of Mecca shook. (*Hishâmi, p. 42; Tâbari p. 76.*)

It is also stated that an inscription was discovered in one of the corner foundations, written in Syriac, which no one could decypher, until a Jew made it out as follows:—*I am God, the Lord of Becca* (an ancient name of Mecca;) *I created it on the day on which I created the heavens and the earth, and formed the sun and the moon; and I have surrounded it with seven angels of the true faith; it shall not pass away until the two hills thereof pass away. Blessed be the inhabitants thereof*

and from thence they began to build upwards. Stones were selected or hewn from the neighbouring hills, and carried by the citizens upon their heads to the sacred enclosure.

Mahomet, with the other Coreish, assisted in the work;* and it proceeded harmoniously until the structure rose three or four feet above the surface. At that stage it became necessary to build the Black Stone into the eastern corner, with its surface so exposed as to be readily kissed by the pilgrims upon foot. This mysterious stone, we learn from modern travellers, is semi-circular, and measures about six inches in height, and eight in breadth; it is of a reddish-black colour, and bears marks in its undulating surface, notwithstanding the polish imparted by a myriad kisses, of a volcanic origin.†

in water and in milk. (*Hishâmi*, p. 42.) He adds, "There is a tradition that about forty years before the mission of Mahomet, a stone was found in the Kaaba, inscribed with these words:—*He that soweth good, shall reap that which is to be enjoyed; and he that soweth evil, shall reap repentance. Ye do evil, and (expect to) obtain good: Ah! that would be to gather grapes of thorns.*" (*Ibid.*)

The first of these traditions is very remarkable. It quite accords with our theory, developed in a previous Article, that the Ishmaelites, acquainted with Syria, and then left an inscription of the tenor referred to. At all events, the very existence of the tradition, whether true or not, shows the popular opinion on the subject, and the popular opinion was founded on *probable* legend.

* A miraculous tale is here added. The people loosened their under garments, and cast them over their heads as a protection in carrying the stones. Mahomet did so too, when a voice from heaven was heard warning him not to expose his person: immediately he covered himself, and after that the nakedness of the prophet was never again seen by any human being. (*Wäckidi*, p. 27.) One may conclude of what authority such stories are, when it is added that Hishâmi tells the same tale, in almost identical words, of Mahomet as a *child* playing with other boys. (p. 38.)

† Ali Bey has given a plate with a front view and section of the stone. It possesses so peculiar an interest, that both his description and that of Burckhardt are here inserted:—

"The Black Stone, Hhajera el Assouâd, or Heavenly Stone, is raised forty-two inches above the surface" (*i. e.*, the level of the ground,) and is bordered all round with a large plate of silver, about a foot broad. The part of the stone that is not covered by the silver at the angle, is almost a semi-circle, six inches in height, by eight inches six lines in diameter at its base.

"We believe that this miraculous stone was a transparent hyacinth, brought from heaven to Abraham by the angel Gabriel, as a pledge of his divinity; and being touched by an impure woman, became black and opaque.

"This stone is a fragment of volcanic basalt, which is sprinkled throughout its circumference with small pointed coloured crystals, and varied with red felspath, upon a dark black ground like coal, except one of its protuberances, which is a little reddish. The continual kisses and touchings of the faithful have worn the surface uneven, so that it now has a muscular appearance. It has nearly fifteen muscles, and one deep hollow.

"Upon comparing the borders of the stone that are covered and secured by the silver, with the uncovered part, I found the latter had lost nearly twelve lines

The virtue of the whole building depended upon this little stone, and each family of the Coreish began to advance pretensions to the exclusive honor of placing it in its future receptacle. The contention became hot; and it was feared that fighting and bloodshed would ensue. The building was for four or five days suspended, when the Coreish again assembled at the Kaaba amicably to decide the difficulty. Then Abu Omeya,* being the oldest citizen, arose and said; "O Coreish, hearken unto me: my advice is that the man who shall first chance to enter in at this gate of the Bani Sheyba, be chosen to decide amongst you, or himself to place the stone."† The

of its thickness; from whence we may infer, that if the stone was smooth and even in the time of the prophet, (?) it has lost a line during each succeeding age," (*i. e.*, century.) (*Ali Bey, Vol. II., p. 76.*)

"At the north east corner of the Kaaba, near the door, is the famous 'Black Stone;' it forms a part of the sharp angle of the building, at four or five feet above the ground. It is an irregular oval, about seven inches in diameter, with an undulated surface, composed of about a dozen smaller stones of different sizes and shapes, well joined together with a small quantity of cement, and perfectly smoothed: it looks as if the whole had been broken into many pieces by a violent blow, and then united again. It is very difficult to determine accurately the quality of this stone, which has been worn to its present surface by the millions of touches and kisses it has received. It appears to me like a lava, containing several small extraneous particles, of a whitish and a yellowish substance. Its color is now a deep reddish brown, approaching to black; it is surrounded on all sides by a border, composed of a substance which I took to be a close cement of pitch and gravel, of a similar, but not quite the same brownish color. This border serves to support its detached pieces; it is two or three inches in breadth, and rises a little above the surface of the stone. Both the border and the stone itself are encircled by a silver band, broader below than above, and on the two sides, with a considerable swelling below, as if a part of the stone were hidden under it. The lower part of the border is studded with silver nails.

"In the south east corner of the Kaaba, or as the Arabs call it Roken el Yamâny, there is another stone, about five feet from the ground; it is one foot and a half in length, and two inches in breadth, placed upright, and of the common Mecca stone. This the people walking round the Kaaba touch only with the right hand; they do not kiss it." (*Burkhardt, pp. 137, 138.*)

The last mentioned stone, or the *Rukn Yamani*, so called from its south east position towards Yemen, is frequently mentioned in the annals of Mahomet, but was never regarded with the same reverence as the Black Stone.

The Black Stone was carried off by the sacrilegious Carmats, and retained by them at Hajar, in the east of Arabia, from A. H. 317 to 339, and then restored. (*Weil's Caliphs, Vol. II. p. 612; Burkhardt, p. 167.*) It was struck with a club by an emissary of the Egyptian fanatic Hakim, A. H. 413; after which the chips and dust were carefully restored, and the fractures cemented. (*Burkhardt, ibid.*)

On the worship of stones, in addition to the authorities quoted in a former article, see *Gibbon, chap. L., note c.*

* *Hishami, p. 43; Tabari, p. 76.* He was of the Bani Makhzûm: and brother of Walîd, who was the father of the famous Khâlid.

† Wäckidi says "to place the stone," Hishâmi and Tabari "to decide the dispute between them." The gate is called "that of the Bani Sheyba" in Wäckidi.

proposal was confirmed by acclamation, and they awaited the issue. Mahomet, who happened to be absent on the occasion, was almost immediately observed approaching, and he was the first to enter the gate. They exclaimed, "Here comes the Faithful arbiter (*al Amin*;) we are content to abide by whatever he may decide!" Calm and possessed, Mahomet received the commission, and with his usual sagacity at once resolved upon an expedient which should give offence to none. Taking off his mantle, and spreading it upon the ground, he placed the stone thereon, and said, "now let one from each of your four divisions come forward, and raise a corner of the mantle." And they did so, simultaneously lifting the stone, which Mahomet, then, with his own hand, guided to its proper place.* The judgment raised the character of Mahomet for wisdom and discretion; while the singular and apparently providential call sank deep into his own heart. Religious awe not unfrequently with him degenerated into superstition; and there was here a mysterious singling out of himself to be a judge among his fellows in a sacred act, which might well have wrought upon a less imaginative and enthusiastic spirit than that of Mahomet.

When the stone had been thus deposited in its proper place, the Coreish built on without interruption; and when the wall had risen to a considerable height, they roofed it in, with fifteen rafters resting upon six pillars. The Kaaba thus rebuilt was surrounded by a small enclosure, probably of not more than fifty yards in diameter. To the west stood the Hall of Coun-

(p. 27.) Probably, because it was built by Abd al Muttalib. Burkhardt (p. 152.) quotes Azraki and Colobi to the effect that the Bâb al Salam is the modern name of the Bâb bani Sheyba. There are, however, two places called by that name, one a grand entrance in the piazza; the other an isolated archway, about seventy feet on the north east side of the Kaaba, and a little beyond the Macâm Ibrahim. The latter is most likely the gate intended, as the piazza is entirely modern; and it is not improbable that the ancient limits of the sacred yard extended, with some sort of wall or enclosure, about seventy feet round the Kaaba, so that this would be one of the original gates or entrances.

* Wäckidi adds a foolish legend, that a man from Najd offered Mahomet a stone to fix the corner stone withal; but that Abbâs interfered, and himself presented Mahomet with a stone for that purpose. The man of Najd was incensed, and Mahomet explained to him that only a Coreishite could have any concern whatever in the building of the house. The Najdite then became furious, and abused the Coreishites for choosing so young and insignificant a fellow as Mahomet for the office, and then it turns out that this stranger from Najd was none other than *Iblis*, the devil himself!

We again find this legend of the devil, in the shape of an old man from Najd, appearing at the council of the Coreish, assembled many years afterward, to condemn Mahomet to death.



eil, with its door towards the Kaaba.* On the opposite side was the gate-way of the Bani Sheiba. At a respectful distance around were built the houses of the Coreish. The great idol Hobal was placed in the centre of the holy house; and outside were arranged various other images.† The door for entering the Kaaba was then, as it is now, several feet above the ground, which was attributed by Mahomet to the pride of the Coreish, and a desire to retain in their own hands the power of admission. The building, though now substantial and secure, occupied somewhat less space than its dilapidated and roofless predecessor. The excluded area, called the *Hejer* or *Hatîm*, lay to the north west, and is still without the sacred walls.‡

* *Sprenger*, p. 24, n. 4. Burkhardt also shows that it stood near the present station of the Hanefites, which lies on the west side. This, and the gate of the Bani Sheiba, were probably the limits of the holy yard, and hence we may assume the enclosure in the days of Mahomet to have been of the dimensions given in the text.

† We have no authentic information as to the number of these idols. The popular tradition, (*Burkhardt*, p. 164.) that there were 360, or one for every day in the year, is unfounded. *Lât* and *Ozza* were no doubt pre-eminent. When Mahomet came as a conqueror to Mecca, all the idols were destroyed, or as legend has it, each fell prostrate as he pointed at it. That the image or picture of Jesus and Mary had a place among the other idols, we believe to be apocryphal.

‡ The sill of the door is now six or seven feet above the level of the ground (*Burkhardt*, p. 137; *Ali Bey*, Vol. II, p. 75;) and a moveable wooden staircase is used for ascending. The pavement surrounding the Kaaba is eight inches lower than the rest of the square; (*Burkhardt*, p. 142;) and *Ali Bey* affirms that the square itself is several feet lower than the surrounding streets, as you have to descend by steps into it. Hence he concludes that the floor of the Kaaba (*i. e.*, the sill of its door,) is the *original* level, the earth having been subsequently hollowed out. But this is not consistent with the fact that the door of the Kaaba was, even in Mahomet's time, when there could have been little need for excavation, about as high, probably, as it now is. The following tradition is related from *Ayesha*, in *Wäckidi*. "The prophet said, verily the people have drawn back the foundations of the Kaaba from their original limit; and if it were not that the inhabitants are fresh from idolatry, I would have restored to the building that which was excluded from the area thereof. But in case the people may again after my time have to renew the structure, come and I will show thee what was left out. So he showed a space in the *Hijr* of about seven yards." Then he proceeded:—"And I would have made in it two doors level with the ground, one towards the east, the other towards the west. Dost thou know why this people *raised* the door? It was out of haughtiness, that no one might enter thereat, but whom they chose; and any man they desired not to enter, they suffered him to come up to the door, and then thrust him back, so that he fell." It is added on other authority, that the Coreish used to open the Kaaba on Mondays and Thursdays, and take off their shoes out of reverence for the holy place, when they entered; and that those who were thrust back from the door were sometimes killed by the fall. (*Wäckidi*, p. 27½.) When the Kaaba was reconstructed by *Ibn Zobeir*, A. H. 64, two doors are said to have been opened even with the ground. (*Burkhardt*, pp. 137, 165.) But if so, the ancient form and proportions must subsequently have been reverted to. *Ali Bey* thought that he perceived marks of a second door opposite, and similar to the present one.

The circumstances in which the decision of Mahomet originated, are strikingly illustrative of the entire absence of any paramount authority in Mecca, and of the number of persons among whom the power of Government was at this time divided. Each main branch of the Coreishite stock was independent of every other; and the offices of state and religion created by Cossai, were unheeded, sub-division among hostile families having neutralized their potency. It was a period in which the commanding abilities of a Cossai might have again dispensed with the prestige of place and birth, and asserted dominion by strength of will and inflexibility of purpose. But no such one appeared, and the divided aristocracy of Mecca advanced with a weak and distracted step.

A curious story is related of an attempt about this period to gain the rule at Mecca. The aspirant was Othmân, son of Huweirith, a first cousin of Khadija's father. He was dissatisfied, as the legend goes, with the idolatrous system of Mecca, and travelled to the Court of the Grecian Emperor, where he was honorably entertained, and admitted to Christian baptism. He returned to Mecca, and on the strength of an imperial grant, real or pretended, laid claim to the government of the city. But his claim was rejected, and he fled to Syria, where he found a refuge with the Ghassânide princes. Othmân revenged his expulsion by using his influence at the Court of Ghassân, for the imprisonment of the Coreishite merchants, who chanced to be on the spot. But emissaries

The present *Hijr* or *Macâm Ismail*, lies to the north west of the Kaaba, about the distance pointed out by Mahomet as the limit of the old building. It is now marked by a semi-circular parapet five feet high, facing the Kaaba: the intervening space being termed *Al Hatim* (*Burkhardt*, p. 139.) When Ibn Zobeir rebuilt the Kaaba on an enlarged scale, this is believed to have been enclosed in it, but it was again excluded by Hajâj ibn Yusuf. (*Burkhardt*, p. 139.) The space is however, still regarded as equally holy with the Kaaba itself.

Both Othmân and Ibn Zobeir enlarged the square by purchasing and removing the adjoining houses of the Coreish, and they enclosed it by a wall. Various similar changes and improvements were made by successive Caliphs, till in the third century of the Hegira, the quadrangle with its imposing Colonnade, assumed its present dimensions. (*Burkhardt*, p. 162, *et seq.*)

The Kaaba, as it now stands, is an irregular cube, the sides of which vary from thirty to forty feet in length; the quadrangle corresponding loosely with the direction of its walls. Some say that the name of *Kaaba* was given after its reconstruction by Ibn Zobeir; but it is so constantly referred to by that name in the most ancient traditions, that we cannot believe it to be a modern appellation. It is more probably the ancient idolatrous name, while *Beit-ullah*, or *the house of God*, is the most modern title, and harmonizes with Jewish, or Abrahamic expressions.

from Mecca countermined his authority with the prince by presents, and at last procured his death.*

Notwithstanding the absence of a strong government, Mecca continued to flourish under the generally harmonious combination of the several independent phylarchies. Commerce was prosecuted towards Syria and Irac, with greater vigor than ever; and about the year 606, A. D., we read of a mercantile expedition under Abu Sofîân; which, for the first time, penetrated to the capital of Persia, and reached even the presence of the Chosroes.†

We proceed to notice some incidents in the domestic life of Mahomet:—

The sister of Khadîja was married to Rabî, a descendant of Abd Shams,‡ and had born him a son called Abul As. The son had by this time grown up, and was respected in Mecca for his uprightness and success in merchandise. Khadîja loved her nephew, and looked upon him as her own son; and she prevailed upon Mahomet to celebrate his marriage with their eldest daughter, Zeinab, who had but just reached the age of puberty. The union was one, as is proved by the subsequent history, of real affection, though in the troubled rise of Islam, it was chequered by a temporary severance, and by several romantic passages.§ Somewhat later, the two younger daughters, Ruckeya and Omm kolthûm, were given in marriage to Oṭba and Oteiba, both sons of Abu Lahab, the uncle of Mahomet.|| Fâtima, the youngest, was yet a child.

Shortly after the rebuilding of the Kaaba, Mahomet comforted himself for the loss of his son Casim,¶ by adopting Ali, the little son of his guardian and friend, Abu Tâlib. The circumstance is thus described:

It chanced that a season of severe scarcity fell upon the Coreish; and Abu Tâlib, still poor, was put to great shifts for

* He died by poison. The story is not strongly attested, considering the lateness of the incidents related. (See *Sprenger*, p. 34; *M. C. de Perceval*, p. 335; *Hishâmi*, p. 56)

† *M. C. de Perceval*, Vol. I, p. 242.

‡ He was not however of the Omeiad line, but descended through Abd al Ozza. (*M. C. de Perceval*, Vol. III, p. 76.

§ *Hishâmi*, p. 234.

|| *Hishâmi* as above; *Sprenger*, p. 83; *Weil*, p. 39.

¶ Possibly for that of his second son, Abd Menâf or Abdallah also; for we have seen above that the dates of his birth and death are uncertain, and may have happened earlier than we are disposed to place them.

the support of his numerous family. This was not unperceived by Mahomet, who, prompted by his usual kindness and consideration, repaired to his rich uncle Abbás, and said;—"Oh Abbás! thy brother Abu Tâlib has a large family, and thou seest what straits all men are brought to. Let us go to him, and lighten him somewhat of the burden of his family. I will take one son. Do thou take another. And we shall support them." So Abbás consenting, they proposed the thing to Abu Tâlib; and he replied,—“Leave me Ackîl and Tâlib;* and do ye with the others as it pleaseth you.” Thus Mahomet took Ali, and Abbás took Jâfar. And Ali, who was at this time probably not above five or six years of age, remained ever after with Mahomet, and they treated each other with the attachment of parent and child.†

The heart of Mahomet was inclined to ardent and lasting friendships. About the same period he received into his close intimacy another person unconnected by family ties, but of less unequal age. This was Zeid, the son of Hâritha; and as he is frequently alluded to in the after history, and must, by his constant society, have influenced to some extent the course of Mahomet, it is important to trace his previous life. The father of Zeid was of the Bani Odzra, a branch of the Bani Kalb, occupying the region to the south of Syria. His mother belonged to the Bani Mân, a division of the Great Tai family. While journeying on a visit to her home, whither she was carrying the youthful Zeid, her company was waylaid by a band of Arab marauders, and her son made captive, and sold into slavery. Zeid afterwards fell into the hands of Hakîm, the grandson of Khuweilid, who presented him to his aunt Khadija, shortly after her marriage with Mahomet. He was then above twenty years of age; he is described as small of stature, in complexion dark, his nose short and depressed; but an active and useful attendant.‡ Mahomet soon conceived a strong affection for him; and Khadija gratified her husband by presenting him with her slave as a gift.

A party of the Bani Kalb, on a pilgrimage to Mecca, recog-

* Some traditions say only Ackîl. The subsequent history of Tâlib is not clear or satisfactory. It is said that he was obliged against his will to fight on the side of the idolatrous Meccans at Badr, and that he was never heard of after.

† Ali was born about the beginning of the seventh century. M. C. de Perceval fixes the year as 602, A. D., which would make him fifty-nine or sixty when he died, in 661; but tradition says he died aged 63. That, however, is the pattern age, which having been Mahomet's, tradition is inclined to give, where possible, to its heroes. Supposing that to have been his real age, and making allowance for the lunar year, his birth would date in 600 or 601, A. D.

‡ *Wâckidi*, p. 186½; *Sprenger*, p. 160.

nized the youth, and communicated the tidings of his welfare to his disconsolate father,* who immediately set out to fetch him home. Arrived at Mecca, Hâritha offered a large sum for the ransom of his son; but Mahomet summoning Zeid, left it in his option to go or to stay. He chose to stay:—"I will not leave thee," he said, "thou art in the place to me of both father and mother." Charmed by his faithfulness, Mahomet took him straightway to the Black Stone of the Kaaba, and said:—"Bear testimony all ye that are present! Zeid is my son: I shall be his heir, and he shall be mine." His father, contented with the declaration, returned rejoicing home; and the freed-man was thenceforward called "Zeid ibn Mohammad," or *Zeid, the son of Mahomet*. At Mahomet's desire, he married his old attendant, Omm Ayman. Though nearly double his age, she bore him a son called Usâma, the leader in the expedition to Syria, at the time of Mahomet's death.†

Christianity prevailed in the tribes from which, both on the father's and the mother's side, Zeid sprang;‡ and though ravished from his home at probably too early an age for any extensive or thorough knowledge of its doctrines, yet he would, no doubt, carry with him some impression of the teaching, and some fragments of the facts and legends, of Christianity. These would form subjects of conversation between the youth and his adoptive father and friend, whose mind was now feeling in all directions after religious truth. Among the

* See the affecting verses his father is said to have recited when wandering in search of him. (*Wâchidi*, p. 186; *Weil*, p. 325).

† There is difficulty and discrepancy about the age of Zeid. Some say he was a mere child when received by Mahomet; but this is incompatible with his having shortly after married Omm Ayman. Sprenger, we think on insufficient grounds, attributes this to a fear on the part of the traditionists, that Mahomet might have been suspected of gaining Christian knowledge from Zeid, and therefore represented him as too young for that purpose (p. 161.) Others say he was ten years younger than Mahomet. (*Wâchidi*, p. 186½.) Another tradition represents him as fifty-five, when killed at the battle of Mâta, A. H. 8, or 629 A. D. This would make him six years younger than Mahomet, or somewhat above twenty, when he came into his possession. The difference of age between him and Mahomet's nurse was great, as tradition says that the prophet promised him *paradise* for marrying her! (*Wâchidi*, p. 187.)

The likelihood is that he was of a tender age when carried off by the Arabs, for his mother would not probably have taken one above the years of a child with her on a visit to her family:—a period intervened in which the slave changed owners, and in which his father, after long wandering after him, gave up the search: so that he may well have fallen into Khadija's hands about twenty years old.

Some accounts say that Hakîm brought him with a company of slaves from Syria, and that having offered the choice amongst them to his aunt, she selected Zeid. Others, that he bought him at the fair of Ocâtz, expressly for his aunt. But the discrepancy is immaterial.

‡ In a former article (*Ante-Mahometan History of Arabia*), we have shown that both among the Bani Kelb and Bani Tai, Christianity had made progress.



relatives, too, of Khadija, there were persons who possessed a knowledge of Christianity, and perhaps something of its practice. We have already instanced her cousin Othmân, who, after an unsuccessful attempt to gain the rule at Mecca, retired a Christian to the Court at Constantinople. Waraca, another cousin, is said also to have been a convert to Christianity, to have been well acquainted with the religious tenets and sacred Scriptures, both of Jews and Christians, and even to have copied or translated some portions of the Gospels in Hebrew or Arabic.* We shall see hereafter that this person had an acknowledged share in satisfying the mind of Mahomet that his mission was divine.

It was a fond fancy of the traditionists (the origin of which we have traced elsewhere,†) that shortly before the appearance of Mahomet, some enquirers were not only seeking after the true faith,—or as they style it, *the religion of Abraham*,—but, warned by the prophecies of the Jews and Christians, were on the tiptoe of expectation for a coming prophet. Of such enquirers among the Coreish, it is the fashion of Mahometan biographers to specify *four*. Two of these, *Othmân* and *Waraca*, we have already mentioned. The third was *Obeidallah* (by his mother, a grand-son of Abd al Muttalib,) who em-

* Hishâmi says of him: *فاستحکم فی المنصرانیة واتبع المکتب من اهلها* (p. 56.) So Tabari, who, however, adds the Mahometan conceit, that he was on the look out for a prophet about to rise among the race of Ishmael: *وقد كان تنصرو واتبع المکتب حتى ادرك فكان في ما طلب*: “He had embraced Christianity, and studied their books until he had reached (a knowledge of the faith;) and he was one of those who deduced from thence that there was a prophet about to arise for this nation from the children of Ishmael.”

So also as to his knowledge of the Old Testament. (*ibid*, p. 91.) *وقرا المکتب و* There is no good authority for believing him to have previously adopted the Jewish religion. Other traditions make him to have copied from the Gospels in Hebrew, or (according to various readings) in Arabic:—

سپرنگر satisfactorily shows that the expression here used signifies simply *transcription*, not translation, (p. 40, note i)

The traditional tendency would be to magnify Waraca's knowledge of the Scriptures, in order to give more weight to his testimony in favor of Mahomet, and to bear out the fiction that he was *expecting* a prophet. Waraca seems to have died before Mahomet *publicly* assumed the prophetic office, and hence we should not trust too much to the accounts of him. (*Cnf. Canon. B.*; See *M. C. de Perceval, Vol. I., p. 322.*)

† See *Canons II. g. and h. pp. 52, 53*, of article on the *Original Sources of Mahomet's Biography*.



braced Islam, but afterwards, in Abyssinia, went over to Christianity.* The fourth was *Zeid*, the grand-son of Nofail, and cousin of Omar.† Of him tradition says that he condemned the idolatrous sacrifices of the Kaaba, reprobated the burying alive of infant daughters, and "followed the religion of Abraham." But not content with such assertions, the traditionists add, that Zeid possessed distinct knowledge of the coming prophet, and left his salutation to be delivered when he should arise; nay, he described his very appearance, stated that he would be of the family of Abd al Muttalib, and even foretold that he would emigrate to Medina! He died while the Kaaba was rebuilding, and was buried at the foot of Mount Hira.‡

Though we reject, as puerile and unfounded legends, these

* He emigrated to Abyssinia with those who fled from the persecution at Mecca. After embracing Christianity, he met a party of the Mussalmans, and said to them, "now we see, but ye are feeling after sight, and see not." (*Hishami*, p. 56.) He died in Abyssinia, and Mahomet sent for his widow, Omm Habîba, daughter of Abu Sofîân, and married her at Medina.

† Owing to a debasing Arab custom, which allowed the son to marry, (if it did not give him the right to *inherit*), his father's widows, Zeid was at the same time the cousin and the uncle of Omar. Nofail's widow, Jaida, who had already born to him Khattâb (Omar's father,) was married by his son Amr, and bore to him Zeid, who was thus the uterine brother of Khattâb, and likewise his nephew.

‡ Wâckidi, Tabari and Hishâmi have all copious accounts of Zeid. Hishâmi is the least marvellous, though even he says that after travelling through Mesopotamia and Syria, enquiring of the Rabbis and clergy for "the Faith of Abraham," he came to a monk in Balcâ, who told him the usual story that a Prophet would shortly arise in Arabia, so he hastened back, but was killed on the way. He also states that Zeid was persecuted by his uncle Khattâb, who stationed him at Hira, and would not allow him to enter Mecca, lest any should follow his heresy. (pp. 56—59.) Wâckidi has several traditions attributing many purely Mahometan speeches and practices to him: (pp. 255, 255½) see some of these quoted by Sprenger. (pp. 41—43.) He has also the absurd story of his leaving his salutation for the coming Prophet, which, when delivered by Amr to Mahomet, was returned by the latter, who said he had seen Zeid in Paradise, joyfully drawing along his skirts; (*i. e.*, walking with joyous step.) He used the Kaaba as his Kebla. His place of burial is given by the same authority.

Tabari's traditions so improve upon these narrations, that we cannot resist translating the following, to show their utter worthlessness. "Amir ibn Rabia said, I heard Zeid speak as follows:—*Verily, I look for a prophet from among the sons of Ismael, and from among the children of Abd alMuttalib; and I think that I shall not reach to his day, but, verily, I believe on him, and I attest his truth, and I bear witness that he is a true prophet. But if thou survivest to see him, then repeat to him a salutation from me. Now shall I describe to thee his appearance, that he may not remain hid from thee?* I said, "Do so!" Then follows Zeid's description of Mahomet's person, rejection by the Meccans, emigration to Yathreb and final victory. "*Take heed,*" proceeded the prophetic sage "*that thou art not deceived in him, for I have visited every city in search of the Faith of Abraham, and every one of the Jews and Christians and Magians say that this religion is about to follow, and they seek for the same signs as I have given unto thee, and they say there will no more be any prophet after him.*" "So," continued Amir, "when I was converted, I told the prophet the saying of Zeid, and I recited his salutation: and the prophet returned his salutation, and prayed for mercy upon him; and said, *I have seen him in Paradise, &c.*" (p. 83.) We see how the tradition has grown in its fabricated elements between the times of Wâckidi and Tabari.

anticipations of the prophet, and though the patent tendency to invent them makes it difficult to sever the real from the fictitious in the matter of the four enquirers, yet we cannot hesitate to admit that, not only in their case, but probably in that of many others also, a spirit of enquiry into true religion, the rejection of idolatry, and a perception of the superiority of Judaism and Christianity, did exist. With such enquirers, Mahomet deeply sympathized, and held, no doubt, frequent converse on the dark and gross idolatry of Mecca, and the need of a more spiritual faith.

Mahomet was now approaching his fortieth year. He had gradually become more and more pensive: contemplation and reflection now engaged his whole mind. The debasement of his people, his own uncertainty as to the true religion, the dim and imperfect shadows of Judaism and Christianity exciting doubts, without satisfying them, pressed heavily upon his soul, and he frequently retired to seek relief from meditation in the solitary glens and rocks near Mecca. His favorite spot was a cave among the declivities at the foot of Mount Hira, a lofty conical hill to the north of Mecca.* He would retire thither for days at a time, and his faithful wife is said sometimes to have accompanied him.† The continued solitude, instead of

* Since called *Jebel Nûr*, or Mountain of Light, because Mahomet is said to have received his first revelation there. Ali Bey gives a drawing of it. (*Vol. II.*, p. 64.; *Burkhardt*, p. 175.) A cleft among the rocks about six feet square, is still shown in the vicinity as the cave in which Mahomet meditated. Others make it four yards long and one to three broad. (*Sprenger*, p. 94, n. v.)

† The traditionists say that Mahomet used to spend the month of *Ramadhân* yearly in the cave at Hira. Thus *Hishâmi* :—"Mahomet used to visit Hira for a month every year. Now that was a religious practice which the *Coreish* used to perform in the days of their heathenism. And so it was that Mahomet was wont to spend this month at *Hirâ*, and he used to feed all the poor that resorted to him: and when the period of his visitation at Hira was fulfilled, he would return and encompass the *Kaaba* seven times: and that was in the month of *Ramzân*." (*pp.* 60, 61; *so Tabari*, *pp.* 86—90.) Others add that *Abd al Muttalib* commenced the practice :—"That it was the worship of God, which that patriarch used to begin with the new moon of *Ramadhân*, and continue during the whole of that month" (*Sprenger*, p. 94, n. v.) *Tabari* goes still further :—"It was the habit of those *Coreishites* who aspired to being thought very pious, to spend the month of *Rajab* at Mount Hira, in seclusion and silence. This habit was more particularly observed by the *Hâshimites*. Every family had its separate place on the Mount for this purpose, and some had buildings in which they resided during their seclusion." (As quoted by *Dr. Sprenger* from the Persian version of *Tabari*; but we do not find the passage in the original Arabic copy.)

We doubt the whole of these traditions, and do not believe that the inhabitants of Mecca had any such practice as is attributed to them. It is the tendency of the traditionists to foreshadow the customs and precepts of Islam, as if some of them had existed prior to Mahomet as a part of "the religion of Abraham." (*vide Canon II. h.*) It is very evident that the idea of a fast was first borrowed from the Jews, and that after Mahomet had emigrated to Medina. It was originally kept like that of the Jews, on the 10th of *Moharram*, and afterwards when Maho-

still his anxiety, magnified into sterner and more impressive shapes the solemn realities which perplexed and agitated his soul. Close by was the grave of the aged Zeid, who having spent a life-time in the same enquiries, had now passed into the state of certainty: and might he himself not reach the same assurance without crossing the gate of death?

All around was bleak and rugged. To the east and south, the vision from the cave of Hira is bounded by lofty mountain ranges, but to the north and west, there is an extensive prospect thus described by the traveller:—"The country before us had a dreary aspect, not a single green spot being visible; barren, black, and grey hills, and white sandy valleys, were the only objects in sight."* There was harmony between these wild scenes of external nature, and the troubled chaotic elements at that time forming his view of the spiritual world. By degrees his impulsive and susceptible mind was wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement; and he would give vent to his agitation in wild and rhapsodical language, the counterpart of his mind struggling after the truth. The following fragments, which found their way into the Coran, may perhaps belong to this period:

SURA CIII.

By the declining day, I swear!
Verily, man is in the way of ruin;
Excepting such as possess faith,
And do those things which be right,
And stir up one another to truth and steadfastness.

And again:—

SURA C.

I swear by the rushing (horses) that pant!
By those that strike fire (with their hoofs) flashing!
By those that scour (the enemy's land),
And darken it with dust,
And penetrate thereby the host!

met receded from them, he established a fast of his own in the month of Ramadhân. (See *Tabari*, p. 243: *Cnf. also p. 37 of the "Washat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume auf genommen" of Abraham Geiger.*)

The truth seems to be that Mahomet retired frequently (not periodically,) to Mount Hira, for several days at a time, and stayed so long as his provisions lasted. Then he returned home, and either remained there for a while, or furnishing himself with a fresh supply, retired again to the cave. (*Tabari*, p. 86.)

His wife, anxious and surprised at this strange demeanour, may have sometimes accompanied him to watch his movements, and see that no ill befel him.

* *Burkhardt's Travels*, p. 176; *Cnf Sura XXXV.*, v. 28. "Dost thou not see that * * * in the mountains, there are strata white and red, of various hues, and others are of a deep black; and of men and beasts and cattle there are whose colours are various in like manner, &c."

Verily, man is to his Lord ungrateful;
 And he is himself a witness thereof;
 And, verily, he is keen in the love of (this world's) good.
 Ah! wotteth he not, when that which is in the graves shall be
 scattered abroad,
 And that which is in (men's) hearts shall be brought forth;
 Verily, their Lord shall in that day be informed as to them.

And perhaps:—

SURA XCIX.

When the earth shall tremble with her quaking;
 And the earth shall cast forth her burthens;
 And man shall say, *What aileth her?*
 In that day shall she unfold her tidings,
 Because the Lord shall have inspired her.
 In that day shall mankind advance in ranks, that they may be-
 hold their works.
 And whoever shall have wrought good of the weight of a grain,
 shall behold it.
 And whoever shall have wrought evil of the weight of a grain,
 shall behold it.

Nor was he wanting in prayer for guidance, to the great Being who, he felt, alone could give it. The following petitions, though probably adapted subsequently for public worship, contain perhaps the germ of his daily prayer at this early period.

SURA I.

Praise be to God, the Lord of Creation;
 The All-merciful, the All-compassionate!
 Ruler of the day of reckoning!
 Thee we worship, and Thee we invoke for help.
 Lead us in the straight path;—
 The path of those upon whom thou hast been gracious,
 Not of those that are the objects of wrath, or that are in error.*

How such aspirations developed themselves into the belief that the subject of them was inspired from heaven, is a dark and painful theme, to which in some future paper we may possibly recur.

* Of the four Suras above quoted, which we believe to be the earliest extant composition of Mahomet, the *ciii* and *c*, are generally placed by the Mahometan traditionists early, *i. e.* about the 10th or 12th in order. But the *xcix* is reckoned about 90th, and is generally represented as a Sura revealed at Medina, though some are critical enough to dispute this. The reader will hence perceive how entirely dependent we are on *internal* evidence as fixing the chronological order of the *Coran*.

The 1st Sura is said to have been more than once revealed, which, if it has any definite meaning, may signify, that although one of the earliest pieces, it was afterwards recast to suit the requirements of public worship.



THE LIFE OF ...

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