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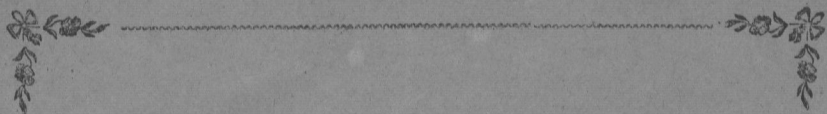
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THE

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

OF

MAHOMET.

*by W. Muir Esq. H.C.*

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



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## THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF MAHOMET.



[FROM THE CALCUTTA REVIEW, NO. XLIV.]

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. *Sirat Wäckidi, Arabic MS.*
4. *Sirat Tabari, Ditto Ditto.*
5. *Sirat Hishâmi, Ditto Ditto.*

In previous papers we have traced the history of Mecca, and of the ancestors of Mahomet, from the earliest times of which we have any account, down to the famous *year of the elephant* (570 A. D.) which marks the deliverance of the sacred city from the invading army of Abraha, the Abyssinian Viceroy of Yemen. Before proceeding farther, we propose to take a survey of the valley of Mecca, and the country immediately surrounding it.

Within the great mountain range which skirts the Red Sea, and about equi-distant, by the caravan track, from Yemen and the Gulph of Akaba, lies the holy valley. The traveller from the sea-shore, after a journey of fifty or sixty miles, reaches it by an almost imperceptible ascent, chiefly through sandy plains, and defiles hemmed in by low hills of gneiss and quartz, which rise in some places to the height of 400 or 500 feet.\* Passing Mecca, and pursuing his eastward course, he would proceed, with the same gentle rise, and between hills partly composed of granite, through the valley of Minâ, and in five or six hours reach the sacred eminence of Arafat. From thence the mountains begin to ascend to a great height, till about eighty miles from the sea, the granite peaks of Jebel Kora crown the range, and Tâif comes in sight, thirty miles farther eastward. Between Jebel Kora and Tâif, the country is fertile and lovely. Rivulets every here and there descend from the hills, and the plains are clothed with verdure, and adorned by large shady trees. Tâif is famous for its fruits: the grapes are of a "very large size and delicious flavour;" and there is no want of variety to tempt the appetite; for figs, peaches and pomegranates, apricots, quinces, apples and almonds, grow in abundance and perfection. Far different is

\* *Burkhardt's Arabia*, pp. 58—62. The journey was performed in nineteen hours on a camel. Burkhardt, however, rode it upon an ass in thirteen hours. He estimates the distance at sixteen or seventeen hours walk, or about fifty-five miles from Jeddâ. For the characters of the rocks, see *Burkhardt*, p. 62 and *Ali Bey*, Vol. II., p. 118.

it with the frowning rocks and barren valleys, which for many a mile surround Mecca. Stunted brushwood and thorny acacias occasionally relieve the eye, and furnish scanty repast to the hardy camel; but the general features are only rugged rocks and sandy or stony glens, from which the peasant in vain looks for the grateful returns of tillage. Even at the present day, when the riches of Asia have for twelve centuries poured into the city, and a regular supply of water is secured by a canal of masonry from the mountains East of Arafat, Mecca can hardly boast a garden or a cultivated field, and only here and there a tree.\*

In the vicinity of Mecca the hills are formed of quartz and gneiss: but eastward strata of granite appear, and within one or two miles of the city, lofty and rugged peaks (as the Jabal Nûr or *Hirâ*),† begin to shoot upwards in grand and commanding masses. The valley of Mecca is a little more than a mile and a half in length: the general direction is from north to south;

\* Burkhardt (p. 127) noticed a few acres to the North of the town "irrigated by means of a well, and producing vegetables." Some trees also grow in the extreme southern quarter, where Burkhardt first took up his abode:—"I had here," he says, "the advantage of several large trees growing before my windows, the verdure of which, among the barren and sun-burnt rocks of Mecca, was to me more exhilarating than the finest landscape could have been under different circumstances." (p. 101.) But of the town generally, he says:—"it is completely barren and destitute of trees." (p. 103;) and "no trees or gardens cheer the eye." (p. 104.) So Ali Bey:—"I never saw but one flower the whole of my stay at Mecca, which was upon the way to Arafat." (*Vol. II.*, p. 99.) "It (Mecca) is situated at the bottom of a sandy valley surrounded on all sides by naked mountains, without brook, river, or any running water, without trees, plants, or any species of vegetation." (*Vol. II.*, p. 112.) Again;—"the aridity of the country is such that there is hardly a plant to be seen near the city, or upon the neighbouring mountains . . . . We may not expect to find at Mecca any thing like a meadow, or still less a garden . . . . They do not sow any grain, for the too ungrateful soil would not produce any plant to the cultivator. The soil refuses to yield even spontaneous productions, of which it is so liberal elsewhere. In short, there are but three or four trees upon the spot, where formerly stood the house of Abu Taleb, the uncle of the prophet; and six or eight others scattered here and there. These trees are prickly, and produce a small fruit similar to the jujube, which is called nebbak by the Arabs." (*Vol. II.*, p. 110.)

And of its environs, Burkhardt writes;—"As soon as we pass these extreme precincts of Mecca, the desert presents itself; for neither gardens, trees, nor pleasure-houses, line the avenues to the town, which is surrounded on every side by barren sandy valleys, and equally barren hills. A stranger placed on the great road to Tâif, just beyond the turn of the hill in the immediate neighbourhood of the sheriff's garden house, would think himself as far removed from human society, as if he were in the midst of the Nubian desert." (p. 131) This, however, he ascribes to indolence and apathy, seeing that water "can be easily obtained at about thirty feet below the surface." But there must, nevertheless, be some natural defect in the gravelly and sandy soil of Mecca, else the munificence of the Moslem rulers, and the notorious avarice of its inhabitants, would long ere this have planted trees and gardens to produce a profit, or to beautify the town.

† Burkhardt, p. 175, and note.



but at the upper or northern extremity, where the way leads to Arafat and Táif, it bends to the eastward; and the southern or lower end, where the roads branch off to Yemen, Jeddah, and Syria,\* there is a still more decided bend to the westward. At the latter curve the valley opens out to a breadth of about half a mile, and it is in the spacious amphitheatre thus shut in by rocks and mountains, that the kaaba, and the main portions of the city, both ancient and modern, were founded. The surrounding rocks rise precipitously two or three hundred feet above the valley, and on the Eastern side they reach a height of five hundred feet. It is here that the craggy defiles of *Abu Cobeis*, the most lofty of all the hills encircling the valley, overhang the quarter of the town in which Abd al Muttalib and his family lived. About three furlongs to the north-east of the kaaba, the spot of Mahomet's birth is still pointed out to the pious pilgrim as the *Sheb Maulúd*; and hard by is the *Sheb Ali*, (or quarter in which Ali resided,) built, like the other, on the declivity of the rock.†

Though within the tropics, Mecca has not the usual tropical showers. The rainy season begins about December; the clouds do not discharge their precious freight with continuousness or regularity; but sometimes the rain descends with such excessive violence as to swamp the little valley with the floods from Arafat. Even in the summer, rain is not unfrequent. The seasons are thus very uncertain, and the horrors of a continued drought are occasionally experienced. The heat, especially in the months of autumn, is very oppressive.‡ The surrounding ridges intercept the zephyrs that would otherwise reach the close and sultry valley; the sun beats with violence on the bare and gravelly soil, and reflects an intense and distressing glare. The native of Mecca, acclimated to the narrow valley, may regard with complacency its inhospitable atmosphere.§

\* The high road to Medina and Syria takes this southerly circuit. A direct road has been made through a dip in the mountain to the north-west of the city. This is facilitated by steps cut out of the rock:—a modern work, ascribed to one of the Barmeicide family. (See *Burkhardt*, p. 129.)

† The above description is taken from Burkhardt and Ali Bey, chiefly from the former.

‡ Burkhardt says it is most severe from August to October. He mentions a suffocating hot wind in September. (p. 240) Ali Bey says, "It may be imagined how great must be the heat in summer, when in the month of January, with the windows open, I could scarcely endure the sheet of the bed upon me, and the butter, at the same period, was always liquid like water." (*Vol. II.*, p. 112.)

§ Some years after the Hegira, the refugees began to long for their native Mecca, and some touching verses are preserved, expressive of their fond affection for its sterile soil, and the springs in its vicinity.

but the traveller, even in the depth of winter, complains of a stifling closeness and suffocating warmth.

Such is the spot, barren and unpromising though it be, on which the Arabs look with a fond and superstitious reverence, as the cradle of their destiny, and the arena of the remote events which gave birth to their Faith. Here Hagar alighted with Ishmael, and paced with troubled steps the space between the little hill of Safâ, (a spur of Abu Cobeis,) and the eminence of Marwâ, which, on the opposite side of the valley, is an offshoot of the lower range of Keyckâân. Herè the Jorhomites established themselves upon the falling fortunes of the ancestors of the Coreish; and from hence they were expelled by the Khozâa, the new invaders from the south. It was in this pent-up vale that Cossay nourished his ambitious plans, and in the granite defiles of the neighbouring Minâ, asserted them by a bloody encounter with the Bani Sûfa: and here he established the Coreish in supremacy. It was hard by the kaaba that his descendants, the Bani Abd al Dâr, and Bani Abd Menâf, were drawn up in battle array to fight for the sovereign prerogative. It was here that Hâshim exhibited his glorious liberality, and on this spot that Abd al Muttalib toiled with his single son till he discovered the ancient well Zamzam. Thousands of such associations crowd upon the mind of the weary pilgrim, as the minarets of the kaaba rise before his longing eyes; and in the long vista of ages, reaching even to Adam, his imagination pictures multitudes of pious devotees from all quarters and in every age, flocking to this little valley, to make their seven circuits of the holy house, to kiss the mysterious stone, and drink of the sacred water. Well then, may the Arab regard the fane, and its surrounding rocks, with awe and admiration.

At the period of the retreat from Mecca of Abraha,\* with his Abyssinian army, Abd al Muttalib (as we have seen in a previous article, now above seventy years of age, enjoyed the rank and consideration of the foremost chief of Mecca. Some little time previous to this event, he had taken his youngest son, ABDALLAH,† (born 545, A. D.) then about four and twenty years of age, to the house of Wuheib, a distant kinsman of

\* By Caussin de Perceval's calculations, this event occurred in June 570 A. D.

† Abdallah, *servant of God*, (corresponding with the Hebrew *Abdiel*), was a name common among the ante-Mahometan Arabs. (*Conf. C. de Perceval, Vol. I., p. 126, Vol. II., p. 286, 434, and 436*) Mahomet's nurse, Halima, was the daughter of a person called Abdallah, and had a son of the same name: (*Vide Wâckidi, p. 283.*)

the Coreishite stock, (being descended from Zohra, brother of the famous Cossay :) and there affianced him to AMINA, the daughter of Wahb, brother of Wuheib, under whose guardianship she lived. At the same time Abd al Muttalib, notwithstanding his advanced age, bethought him of a matrimonial alliance on his own account, and married Hâlah, daughter of Wuheib and cousin to Amina. The famous Hamza was the first fruit of this marriage.\*

As was customary, when the marriage was consummated at the home of the bride, Abdallah remained with her there for three days.† Not long after, he set out, during the pregnancy of his wife, on a mercantile expedition to Ghazza (Gaza,) in the south of Syria. On his way back he sickened at Medina, and was there left behind by the caravan, with his father's maternal relatives of the Bani Najâr.‡ Abd al Muttalib, learning of Abdallah's sickness from his comrades, despatched his son Hârîth to take care of him: but on reaching Medina, he found that his brother had died about a month after the departure of the caravan, and was buried in the house of Nâbigha, in the quarter of the Bani Adî.§ And his father and brethren grieved sore for him. Abdallah was five and twenty years of age at his death, and Amina had not yet been delivered.|| He left behind him five camels fed on wild shrubs,¶ a flock of goats, and a slave girl called *Omm*

\* Hamza is said to have been four years older than Mahomet. (*Vide Wâkidi, p. 20, margin.*) This would either imply that Abdallah was married at least four years to Amina before Mahomet's birth, which is not likely, and is opposed to the tradition of Amina's early conception: or that Abd al Muttalib married Hâlah at least four years before his son married Amina, which is also opposed to tradition.

† We reject the absurd story (of which there are many versions inconsistent with each other;) of a woman offering her embraces, without success, to Abdallah, while on his way to Wuheib's house, but declining his advances on his return thence, because the prophetic light had departed from his forehead. It falls under the Canon II. D. Some make this woman to be a sister of the Christian Waraca, who having heard from her brother tidings of the coming prophet, recognized in Abdallah the prophetic light, and coveted to be the mother of the prophet! This fable perhaps gave rise to the later legend that many Meccan damsels died of envy the night of Abdallah's marriage. (*See Calcutta Review, No. XXXIV., p. 430.*)

‡ It will be remembered that Abd al Muttalib's mother (Hâshim's wife,) belonged to Medina, and to this tribe.

§ The Bani Adî were the family to which Solmâ, Abd al Muttalib's mother, belonged.

|| This account is from Wâkidi, (*p. 18*); he mentions other accounts, such as that Abdallah went to Medina to purchase dates; that he died eighteen months (others say seven months,) after Mahomet's birth: but he gives the preference to the version transcribed in the text.

¶ خمس اجمال او ارك تمنني تاكن اراك (*Wâkidi, p. 18.*); that is to say, camels not reared and fed at home, and therefore of an inferior kind.

*Ayman* (and also *Baraka*), who tended the infant born by his widow. This little property, and the house in which he dwelt, were all the inheritance Mahomet received from his father; but, little as it was, the simple habits of the Arab required no more, and instead of being evidence of poverty, the possession of the female slave is rather an indication of prosperity and comfort.\*

Passing over, as fabulous and unworthy of credit, the marvellous incidents related of the gestation of the prophet, and his first appearance in the world, † it suffices to state that the widow Amina gave birth to her infant in the autumn of the year 570 A. D. It is a vain attempt to fix, with certainty, the precise date of the birth, for the materials we possess are too vague and discrepant to be subjected to so close and stringent a calculation. We may be content to know that the event occurred about fifty-five days after the attack of Abraha, ‡ and may accept, as an approximation, the date of M. Caussin de Perceval (in whose calculations we have already expressed our general concurrence,) viz., the 20th of August, 570 A. D.§

\* See *Sprenger*, p. 81. The house was sold by a son of Abu Tâlib, to one of the Coreish, for twenty dinars. (*Tubari*.)

† Specimens of these are given in No. XXXIV., Article VI. of this *Review*, p. 404 *et seq.* The stories there narrated are however modern; but the most ancient biographies likewise contain many absurd tales. They say that at the moment of the birth, a light proceeded from Amina, which rendered visible the palaces and streets of Bostra, and the necks of the camels there. (*Wâckidi*, p. 18½—*Hishâmi*, p. 30.) This evidently originated in the mistaken application of some metaphorical saying, such as, that, "the light of Islam to proceed hereafter from the infant now born, has illuminated Syria and Persia." It is remarkable that the "honest," but credulous *Wâckidi* leaves *Hishâmi* far behind in his relation of these miracles. Thus his traditions make Mahomet as soon as born to support himself on his hands, seize a handful of earth, and raise up his head to heaven. He was born clean, and circumcised, whereat Abd al Muttalib greatly marvelled. So of Amina, it is said, that she felt no weight or inconvenience from the embryo: that heavenly messengers came to her, and saluted her as the mother elect of him who was to be the prophet and lord of his people: that she was desired by them to call the child *Ahmed*; that, alarmed by these visions, she, at the advice of her female acquaintance, hung pieces of iron as charms on her arms and neck, &c. (*Wâckidi*, p. 18) *Sprenger* infers from these traditions, that the mother had a weak and nervous temperament, which descended to her son. But we discard the traditions themselves as utterly untrustworthy, both on account of the *period*, and the *subject matter* of which they treat. (See *Canons I. A.*, and *II. D.*, in *Article I.*, No. XXXVII. of this *Review*.)

One tradition makes Amina say, "I have had children, but never was the embryo of one heavier than that of Mahomet." *Wâckidi* (p. 18) rejects this tradition, because he says Amina never had any child except Mahomet; but its very existence is a good illustration of the recklessness of Mahometan traditionists.

‡ Vide *Wâckidi*, p. 18½.

§ We know accurately the date of Mahomet's death, but we cannot calculate backwards with certainty, even to the *year* of his birth, because his life is variously stated as extending from sixty-three to sixty-five years: and, besides this, there

No sooner had Amina given birth to the infant, than she sent to tell Abd al Muttalib. And the messenger carrying the good tidings of a grandson, reached the chief while he sat in the sacred enclosure of the kaaba, in the midst of his sons and the principal men of his tribe: and he was glad, and arose, and they that were with him. And he went to Amina, and she told him all that had come to pass. So he took the young child in his arms, and went to the kaaba. And as he stood beside the holy house, he gave thanks to God. Now the child was called MOHAMMAD.\*

is a doubt whether the year meant is a lunar, or a luni-solar one. See note on p. 49. *Calcutta Review*, No. XLI.

The Arab historians give various dates, as the fortieth year of Kesra's reign, or the 880th of the Seleucid Dynasty, which answered to 570 A. D.: others the forty-first, the forty-second or the forty-third of Kesra's reign, or the 881st, 882nd, and 883rd of Alexander. M. de Sacy fixes the date as the 20th of April A. D. 571; on the principle that the lunar year was always in force at Mecca. But he adds,—"En vain chercheroit-on à déterminer l'époque de la naissance de Mahomet d'une manière qui ne laissât subsister aucune incertitude." (See the question discussed, p. 43 et seq. *Memoire des Arabes avant Mahomet*, Tome XLVIII. *Mem. Acad. Inscris et Belles Lettres*.)

Herr v. Hammer fixes the birth in 569 A. D.; and Sprenger notes two dates as possible, viz, 13th April, 571, and 13th May, 567 A. D. (*Life*, p. 74.)

The common date given by Mahometan writers is the 12th of Rabi I; but other authorities give the 2d, and others again the 10th of that month. (*Wäckidi*, p. 18½.) It is scarcely possible to believe that the date could, under ordinary circumstances, in Meccan society as then constituted, have been remembered with scrupulous accuracy.

There are two circumstances affecting the traditions on this head which have not attracted sufficient notice. The first is that *Monday* was regarded as a remarkable day in Mahomet's history, on which all the great events of his life occurred. Thus an old tradition:—"the prophet was born on a *Monday*; he elevated the black stone on a *Monday*; he assumed his prophetic office on a *Monday*; he fled from Mecca on a *Monday*; he reached Medina on a *Monday*; he expired on a *Monday*." (*Tabari*, p. 214—*Wäckidi*, p. 37—*Hishâmi*, p. 173, *marg. gloss.*) Nay, Wäckidi makes him to have been *conceived* on a *Monday*! (p. 18.) This conceit no doubt originated in Mahomet's death, and one or two of the salient incidents of his mature life, really falling on a *Monday*; and hence the same day was superstitiously extended backwards to unknown dates. When *Monday* was once fixed upon as the day of his birth, it led to calculations thereon (See *Sprenger*, p. 75., *note*) and that to variety of date.

Secondly; something of the same spirit led to the assumption that the prophet was born in the same month and on the same day of the *month*, as well as of the week on which he died; and thus the popular tradition is that which assigns *Monday*, the 12th of *Rabi I*, as his birth-day. But that such minutæ as the day either of the month or week, were likely to be remembered so long after, especially in the case of an orphan, is inconsistent with Canon I. A. of the Article in No. XXXVII. of this *Review*, above quoted.

\* The above account is given in the simple words of Wäckidi (p. 19.) Though some of the incidents are perhaps of late growth (as the visit to the kaaba,) yet they are introduced because possible. In the original, however, are several palpable fabrications: as, that Amina told Abd al Muttalib of her visions, and the command of the angel that the child should be called *Ahmad*. The prayer of Abd al Muttalib at the kaaba is also apocryphal, being evidently composed in a Mahometan strain.

This name was rare among the Arabs, but not unknown. It is derived from the root *Hamd* [حمد] and signifies "The Praised." Another form of it is AHMAD, which having been erroneously employed as the translation of *The Paraclete* in some Arabic version of the New Testament, became a favorite term with Mahometans, especially in addressing Jews and Christians: for it was (they said,) the title under which their prophet had been predicted.\* Following the established usage of Christendom, we speak of Mohammad as MAHOMET.

It was not the custom for the higher class of women at Mecca to nurse their own children. They procured nurses for them, or gave them out to nurse among the neighbouring Bedouin tribes, where was gained the double advantage of a

\* It may be of some importance to show to the Mahometans, that the name was known and used in Arabia before Mahomet's birth. We have seen that his grandfather was called Sheba al *Hamd*, which is the same word. The precise form of Ahmad was very rare, but we find it in use among the Bani Bakr ibn Wâil, about thirty or forty years before Mahomet. (Vide *C de Perceval*, Vol. II., p. 378.) We have a *Mohammad*, son of Sofîan, of the Tamîm tribe, born before 500 A. D. (*Idem*, p. 297.) We meet also with a Mohammad, of the tribe of Aws, born about 530 A. D. (*Idem*, Table VII.) and among the followers of the prophet killed at Kheibar we find a *Mahmud* ibn Maslama (elsewhere called *Mohammad* ibn Maslama,) whose name could not have had any connexion with that of Mahomet; he was also an Awsite. (*Hishâmî*, p. 341, — *Wâckidi*, p. 121.) Wâckidi, in a chapter devoted to the subject, mentions five of the name before the Prophet; 1 Mohammad ibn Khoâzaya, of the Bani Dzakwan, who went to Abraha, and remained with him in the profession of Christianity: a verse by the brother of this man is quoted, in which the name occurs; 2, Mohammad ibn Saffin, of the Bani Tamîm: 3. Mohammad ibn Joshamî, of the Bani Suwâat: 4, Mohammad al Asiyadî: 5. Mohammad al Föckimî. But with the usual Mahometan credulity, and desire to exhibit anticipations of the prophet, Wâckidi adds that these names were given by such Arabs as had learnt from Jews, Christians, or sooth-sayers, that a prophet was about to arise in Arabia so called, and the parent in the fond hope that his child would turn out to be the expected one, called him by that name! In the second instance this intelligence is said to have been imparted by a Christian Bishop.

The word Ahmad, it appears, occurred by mistake in an Arabic translation of John's Gospel for "the Comforter," *περικλυτος* for *παρακλητος* or was forged as such by some ignorant or designing monk in Mahomet's time. Hence the partiality for this name, which was regarded as the fulfilment of a promise or prophecy.

Wâckidi has a chapter devoted to the titles of the prophet. Among these are *ما شىء عاقب, حاشر خاتم* the last of these means "obliviator," or "blotter out:" and is thus interpreted *حي قان الا محابة سات من ا تبعة* "because God blots out through him the sins of his followers:" or as farther explained, "blot out through him unbelief." (*Wâckidi*, p. 7½)

robust frame, and the pure speech and free manners of the desert.\*

The infant Mahomet, shortly after his birth, was made over to Thueiba, a slave woman of his uncle Abu Lahab, who had lately nursed Hamza.† Though he was suckled by her only for a few days, he retained in after life a lively sense of the connection thus formed. Both Mahomet and Khadija used to express their respect for her, and the former continued to make her presents and gifts of clothes, until the seventh year of the Hegira, when, upon his return from Kheibar, he had tidings of her death; and he asked after her son Masrûh, his foster-brother, but he, too, was dead, and she had left no relatives.‡

After Thueiba had suckled the child for probably not more than a few days,§ a party of the Bani Saád (descended from the Hawazin stock,||) arrived at Mecca with ten women of their tribe, who offered themselves as nurses for the Meccan infants. They were all soon provided with children, excepting Halîma, who at last consented to take the orphan Mahomet; for it was to the father the nurses chiefly looked for a liberal reward, and the charge of the fatherless child had been before declined by the party. The legends of after days have encircled Halîma's

\* Burkhardt states that this practice is common still among the Shereefs of Mecca. At eight days old, the infant is sent away, and excepting a visit at the sixth month, does not return to his parents till eight or ten years of age. The Hodheil, Thakîf, Coreish, and Harb, are mentioned as tribes to which the infants are thus sent; and (which is a singular evidence of the stability of Arab tribes and customs,) to these is added the *Bani Saád*, the very tribe to which the infant Mahomet was made over. (*Burkhardt's Travels*, pp. 229—231.) Weil assigns another reason for this practice, viz., the anxiety of the Meccan mothers to have large families, and to preserve their constitutions. (*Life of Mahomed*, p. 24, note 7.)

† Foster-relationship was regarded by the Arabs as a very near tie, and therefore all those are carefully noted by the biographers who had been nursed *with* Mahomet, (or as Sprenger puts it, "with the same milk.") Ali, when at Medina, proposed to Mahomet that he should marry Hamza's daughter, and praised her beauty to him: but Mahomet refrained, saying that a daughter of his foster-brother was not lawful for him. (*Wâkidi*, p. 20.)

‡ These pleasing traits of Mahomet's character will be found at page 20 of *Wâkidi*. It is added that Khadija sought to purchase her, that she might give her liberty, but Abu Lahab refused. After Mahomet, however, had fled from Mecca, he set her free. The credulous traditionists relate that on this account Abu Lahab experienced a minute remission of his torments in hell.

§ So *Wâkidi* (p. 20, Weil, p. 25, note 8) adduces traditions, but apparently not good ones, for a longer period. If the nurses used (as is said,) to come to Mecca twice a year, in spring and in harvest, they must have arrived, in autumn, not long after the date which we have adopted as that of Mahomet's birth.

|| Descended from Khasafa, Cays Aylân, Modhar, and Maádd, and therefore of the same origin as the Coreish.

journey homewards, with a halo of miraculous prosperity, but this it does not lie within the object of our story to relate.\*

The infancy, and part of the childhood of Mahomet, were spent with Halima and her husband,† among the Bani Saád. At two years of age she weaned him, and took him to his mother, who was so delighted with the healthy and robust appearance of her infant, (for he looked like a child of double the age,) that she said, "take him with thee back again to the desert, for I fear the unhealthy air of Mecca." So she returned with him. When another two years were ended, some strange event occurred to the boy which greatly alarmed Halima. It was probably a fit of epilepsy; but the Mahometan legends have invested it with so many marvellous features, that it is difficult to discover the real facts.‡ It seems clear, however, that Halima and her husband were uneasy, and the former desiring to get rid of a charge which Arab superstition regarded as under the influence of an evil spirit, carried the child back to its mother. With some difficulty, Amina obtained from her an account of what had happened, calmed her fears, and entreated her to resume the care of her boy. Halima

\* Thus, Amina said to the nurse that for three nights she had been told in a vision, that one of the family of Abu Dzeuib was destined to nurse her infant; when, to her astonishment, Halima said, *that is my husband's name!* Neither Halima nor her camel had any milk for her own child on their journey to Mecca, but no sooner had she received the infant Mahomet, than she had abundance for both, and so had the camel. Her white donkey could hardly move along to Mecca for weakness, but on their way home it outstripped all the others, so that their fellow travellers marvelled exceedingly. It was a year of famine, yet the Lord so blessed Halima for the little Mahomet's sake, that her cattle always returned fat and with plenty of milk, while those of every other were lean and dry:—and many such other stories. See the legend as given by *Sprenger*, p. 143; *Wäckidi*, p. 20½; and *Hishâmi* (who here indulges more in the marvellous than Wäckidi,) p. 31.

† Wäckidi makes the husband's name Abu Dzeuib, (p. 20½); but some call him Hârith, and name Halima's father Abu Dzeuib.

‡ The following is the account of Wäckidi, who is more concise than the other biographers on the subject.

"When he had reached four years of age, he was one morning playing with his (foster) brother and sister among the cattle, close by the encampment. And there came to him two angels, who cut open his body and drew forth from thence the black drop, and cast it from them, and washed his inside with water of snow, which they had in a gold platter. Then they weighed him against a thousand of his people, and he out-weighed them all together: and the one of them said unto the other, "let him go, for verily if thou wert to weigh him against the whole of his people, he would out-weigh them all." His (foster) brother seeing this, ran screaming to his mother, who with her husband hastened to the spot and found the lad pale and affrighted." (*Wäckidi*, p. 204.)



loved her foster-child, and was not unwillingly persuaded to take him once more to her encampment. There she kept him for about a year longer, and never suffered him to go far out of her sight. But her apprehensions were renewed by fresh symptoms of an unusual nature, and she set out to restore the boy to his mother, when he was about five years of age.\* As she reached the upper quarter of Mecca, the little Mahomet strayed from her, and she could not find him. Abd al Muttalib, to whom in this difficulty she repaired, sent one of his

Hishâmi, and other later writers add that her husband concluded he had "had a fit," (ا صيب) and advised her to take him home to his mother. Arrived at Mecca, she confessed after some hesitation what had occurred. "Ah!" exclaimed Amina, "didst thou fear that a devil had possessed him?" - عليه الشيطان - she proceeded to say that such could never be the case with a child whose birth had been preceded and followed by so many prodigies, recounting them in detail. Then she added, "leave him with me, and depart in peace, and heaven direct thee!" From this Sprenger rightly concludes (p. 78,) that according to Hishâmi the child did not return with Halîma: but Wâchidi explicitly states the reverse.

This legend is closely connected with Sura XCIV. v. I. "Have we not opened thy breast?" - *i. e.*, given thee relief. These words were afterwards construed literally, into an actual opening, or splitting up, of his chest; and, coupled with other sayings of Mahomet as to his being cleansed from the taint of sin, were wrought up into the story given above.

It is possible, also, that Mahomet may have himself given a more developed nucleus for the legend, desiring thereby to enhance the superstitious attachment of his people, and conveniently referring the occasion of the cleansing and its romantic accompaniments to this early fit. But we can not, with any approach to certainty, determine whether any, and if so, what part, of the legend, owes its paternity to Mahomet directly; or whether it has been entirely fabricated upon the verse of the Coran referred to, and other metaphorical assertions of cleansing construed literally.

\* When Halîma took back the child to Mecca after its first attack, she told Amina that nothing but the sheerest necessity would make her part with it: -

انا لا تره الا عاي جاه ع انفنا (Wâchidi p. 20½). She then took him back with her, and kept him close in sight. She was, however, again startled (as the legend goes,) by observing a cloud attendant upon the child, sheltering him from the sun, moving as he moved, and stopping when he stopped. This alarmed her: -

فافز عها ذلك ايضا من امره If there be any thing in the tradition, it probably implies a renewal of symptoms of the former nature.

It appears extremely probable that these legends originated in some species of fact. One can hardly conceive their fabrication out of nothing, even admitting that the 94th Sura, and other metaphorical expressions may have led to the marvellous additions.

We have given in the text what appears to us the probable narrative, but it must be confessed that the ground on which we here stand is vague and uncertain.

family to the search, who discovered him wandering in Upper Mecca, and restored him to his mother.\*

If we are right in regarding the attacks which alarmed Halîma as fits of a nervous or epileptic nature, they exhibit in the constitution of Mahomet the normal marks of those excited states, and ecstatic swoons, which perhaps suggested to his own mind the idea of inspiration, as by his followers they undoubtedly were taken to be evidence of it. It is probable that, in other respects, the constitution of Mahomet was rendered more robust, and his character more free and independent, by his five years' residence among the Bani Saád. At any rate his speech was thus formed upon one of the purest models of the beautiful language of the Peninsula; and it was his pride in after days to say, "Verily, I am the most perfect Arab amongst you; for I come of the Coreish, and my tongue is that of the Bani Saád."† When his success came to depend in great measure upon his eloquence, a pure language, and an elegant dialect, were advantages of essential moment.

Mahomet ever retained a grateful impression of the kindness he had experienced as a child among the Bani Saád. Halîma visited him at Mecca after his marriage with Khadija; "and it was" (the tradition runs) "a year of drought, in which much cattle perished; and Mahomet spake to Khadija, and she gave to Halîma a camel accustomed to carry a litter, and forty sheep; so she returned to her people." Upon another occasion he spread out his mantle (a token of special respect,) for her to sit upon, and placed his hand upon her in a familiar and affectionate manner.‡ Many years after, when, on

\* *Wâchidi*, p. 20½ and 21. Hishâmi makes the person who found him to be the famous Waraca: but *Wâchidi* represents Abd al Muttalib as sending one of his grandsons to the search. The latter also gives some verses purporting to be Abd al Muttalib's prayer to the deity at the kaaba to restore the child; but they are apocryphal.

† انا عربكم انا من قريش ولساني ولسان بني سعد ابن بكر  
*Wâchidi*, p. 21.—See *Hishâmi*, p. 34. Sprenger translates the opening verb: "I speak best Arabic," (p. 77); but it has probably a more extensive signification.

‡ ادخل يرة في ثيابها وضعها عاي مد رها وقضي حاجتها  
*Wâchidi*, p. 21. It is added that Abu Bakr and Omar treated her with equal honor, omitting, however, the actions of familiar affection referred to in the extract just quoted. But to what period this refers is not apparent; she could hardly have survived to their caliphate: indeed, we understand her to have been dead before the taking of Mecca and siege of Táif.

the expedition against Táif, he attacked the Bani Hawâzin, and took a multitude of them captive, they found a ready access to his heart by reminding him of the days when he was nursed among them.\* About the same time a woman called Shîma (by others Judâma) was brought in with some other prisoners to the camp, and when they threatened her with their swords, she declared that she was the prophet's foster sister. Mahomet enquired how he should know the truth of this, and she replied:—"Thou gavest me this bite upon my back, once upon a time, when I carried thee on my hip." The prophet recognized the mark, spread his mantle over her, and made her to sit down by him. He gave her the option of remaining in honor and dignity with him, or of returning with a present to her people, and she preferred the latter.†

The sixth year of his life (575-6 A. D.) Mahomet spent at Mecca under the care of his mother. When it was nearly at an end, she planned a visit to Medina, where she longed to show her boy to the maternal relatives of his father. So she departed with her slave girl Omm Ayman (Baraka,) who tended her child; and they rode upon two camels ‡ Arrived at Medina, she alighted at the house of Nâbigha, where her husband had died and was buried. The visit was of sufficient duration to imprint the scene and the society upon the memory of the juvenile Mahomet. He used often to call to recollection things that had happened on this occasion; and seven and forty years afterwards, when he entered Medina as a refugee, he recognized the lofty quarters of the Bani Adî:—"In this house," said he, "I used to sport with Aynasa, a little girl of Medina; and with my cousins, I used to put to flight the birds that alighted upon its roof." And as he gazed upon the house, he added;—"here it was my mother lodged with me; and in

\* *Wâkidi*, pp. 21 and 131—*Hishâmi*, p. 379. The deputation from the Hawâzin, contained Mahomet's foster uncle Abu Burkan. Pointing to the enclosure in which the captives of their tribe were pent up, they said:—"there are three (foster) fathers and (foster) mothers of thine, and those who have fondled thee in their bosom, and we have suckled thee from our breasts. Verily we have seen thee a suckling, and never a better suckling than thou, and a weaned child, and never a better weaned child than thou; and we have seen thee a youth," &c., &c. *Wâkidi*, p. 21.

† *Wâkidi*, p. 20‡—*Hishâmi*, p. 379. It is added, "the Bani Saád say, he also gave her a male and a female slave; and that she united them in marriage, but they left no issue."

‡ The number of the party is not stated; but there would be one, if not two camel drivers, and perhaps a guide besides.

' this very house is the tomb of my father ; and it was there in  
' that well (or pond,) of the Bani Adî, that I learnt to swim.'

After the sojourn of about a month, Amina bethought her of returning to Mecca, and set out in the same manner as she had come. But when she had reached, about half way, a spot called Abwâ, she sickened and died, and there she was buried. The little orphan was carried upon the camels to Mecca, by his nurse Baraka (Omm Ayman,) who, although then quite a girl, seems to have been a faithful nurse, and continued to be the child's constant attendant.

The early loss of his mother, around whom his constant heart and impressible affections had entwined themselves, no doubt imparted to the youthful Mahomet something of that pensive and meditative character, by which he was afterwards distinguished. In his seventh year he could appreciate the bereavement, and feel the desolation of his orphan state. In the Coran he has alluded touchingly to the subject. While reassuring his heart of the divine favour, he recounts the mercies of the Almighty ; and amongst them, this is the first ;—“ *Did he not find thee an orphan, and furnished thee with a refuge ?*” (*Sura XCIII., 6.*) On his pilgrimage from Medina to Hodeibia, he visited his mother's tomb, and he lifted up his voice and wept, and his followers likewise wept around him ; and when he was asked regarding it, he said ;—“ the tender memory of my mother came over me, and I wept.”\*

The charge of the orphan was now undertaken (576 A. D.) by his grandfather Abd al Muttalib, who had by this time reached the patriarchal age of four-score years ; and by whom he was treated with a singular fondness. A rug used to be spread under the shadow of the kaaba, where the aged chief reclined in shelter from the heat of the sun ; and around his

\* The whole of this account is from *Wâckidi* (p. 214) ; where is added the following tradition :—“ After the conquest of Mecca, Mahomet sat down by his mother's tomb, and the people sat around him, and he had the appearance of one holding a conversation with another. Then he got up, weeping ; and Omar said, “ *Oh thou to whom I could sacrifice both my father and my mother ! Why dost thou weep ?*” He replied : “ *This is the tomb of my mother : the Lord hath permitted me to visit it, and I asked leave to implore pardon for her, and it was not granted : so I called her to remembrance ; and the tender recollection of her overcame me, and I wept.*” And he was never seen to weep more bitterly than he did then.” But *Wâckidi's* Secretary says this tradition is a mistake ; for it supposes the tomb of Mahomet's mother to be in Mecca, whereas it is at Abwâ. The prohibition, however, against praying for his mother's salvation, is given in other traditions, and it forms a singular instance of the sternness and exclusive severity of the dogmas of Mahomet's faith.

carpet, but at a respectful distance, sat his sons. The little Mahomet used to run up close to the patriarch, and unceremoniously take possession of his rug, and when his sons would drive him off, Abd al Muttalib would say, "Let my little son alone," and stroke him on the back, and delight to watch his childish prattle.\*

He was still under the care of his nurse Baraka; but he would ever and anon quit her, and run into the apartment of his grandfather, even when he was alone or asleep.

The guardianship of Abd al Muttalib lasted but two years, for he died eight years after the attack of Abraha, at the age of fourscore years and two: (578 A. D.) The orphan child bitterly felt the loss of his indulgent grandfather; as he followed the bier to the cemetery of Hajûn, he was observed to be weeping; and when he grew up, he retained a distinct remembrance of his death.† The gentle, warm, and confiding heart of Mahomet was thus again rudely wounded, and the fresh bereavement would be rendered the more poignant by the dependent position in which it left him. The nobility of his grandfather's descent, the deference with which his voice was listened to throughout the little vale of Mecca, and the splendid liberality displayed by him in discharging the annual offices of feeding the pilgrims and giving them drink, while they were witnessed with satisfaction by the thoughtful child, left, after they had passed away, a proud remembrance, and formed the seed perhaps of many an ambitious thought, and many a day-dream of power and domination.

The death of Abd al Muttalib left his family (*i. e.* the progeny of Abd Menâf,) without any powerful head, and enabled the

\* *Hishâmi*, p. 35.—*Wâkidi*, p. 22. Many incidents are added to the narrative, taken evidently from the point of view of later years. Thus Abd al Muttalib says "Let him alone for he has a great destiny, and will be the inheritor of a kingdom":—  
انه ليونس مكا Wâkidi adds the injunction the nurse Baraka used to receive from him, *not to let him fall into the hands of the Jews and Christians, who were looking out for him, and would injure him!*

† *Wâkidi*, p. 22, where it is said that Mahomet was eight years of age, when his grandfather died aged eighty-eight years. Others make Abd al Muttalib to have been 110, and some even 120 years old at his death. Caussin de Perceval has shown the futility of these traditions, which would make the patriarch to have begotten Hamza when above 100 years old. (*Vol. I p. 290, note 4.*)

other branch, descended by Omeya from Abd Shams (*i. e.*, the Omejad stem,) to gain an ascendancy. Of the latter family the chief at this time was Harb, the father of Abu Sofîân, to whom belonged the "leadership" in war, and who possessed a numerous and powerful body of relations.

Of Abd al Muttalib's sons, Harith the eldest was now dead, and the chief of those who survived were Zobeir\* and Abu Tâlib (both by the same mother as Abdallah the father of Mahomet,) Abu Lahab, Abbâs, and Hamza. The two last were very young. Zobeir was the oldest, and to him Abd al Muttalib bequeathed his dignity and offices.† Zobeir, again, left them to Abu Tâlib, who finding himself too poor to discharge the expensive and onerous task of providing for the pilgrims, waived the honor in favor of his younger brother Abbâs. But the family of Hâshim had fallen from its high estate; for we find that Abbâs was able to retain only the *Sickaya* (or giving of drink), while the *Rifâda*, (or furnishing of food,) passed into the rival branch, descended from Noufal, son of Abd Menâf.‡ Abbâs was rich, and his influential post, involving the constant charge of the well Zam-zam, was retained by him till the introduction of Islam, and then confirmed to his family by the prophet; but he was not a man of strong character, and never attained to any commanding position at Mecca. Abu Tâlib, on the other hand, possessed many noble qualities, and enforced a greater respect; but whether from his poverty, or other cause, he too remained in the back ground. It was thus that in the oscillations of phylarchal government, the prestige of the house of Hâshim waned and disappeared; while a rival branch had risen into importance. This phase of the political state of Mecca began with the death of Abd al Muttalib, and continued until the conquest of Mecca by Mahomet himself.

\* Wâkidi, p. 17.

† Wâkidi, *ibidem*, and p. 15½. Zobeir evidently held a high rank at Mecca, but how long he survived is not apparent. Wâkidi says of him;

وكان شاعرا وشريفا والله اوصي عبدالمطرب

‡ Hishâmi (p. 35.) specifies that Abbâs inherited the *Sickaya*; and the subsequent history gives proof that he held nothing more. The authority for stating that the branch of Noufal possessed the *Rifâda*, is given by M. C. de Perceval as derived from D'Ohsson. We have not traced it to any early Arabic writer. Abbâs, no doubt, did not inherit the *Sickaya* till Zobeir's death, when he would be old enough to manage it. M. C. de Perceval makes him succeed to it immediately after Abd al Muttalib's death; but this is opposed to tradition as well as probability, for he was then only twelve years of age.

To Abu Tâlib, the dying Abd al Muttalib consigned the guardianship of his orphan grandchild; and faithfully and kindly did he discharge the trust.\* His fondness for the lad equalled that of Abd al Muttalib himself: he made him sleep by his bed, eat by his side, and go with him when he walked abroad: and this tender treatment was continued until Mahomet emerged from the helplessness of childhood.†

It was during this period that Abu Tâlib, accompanied by Mahomet, undertook a mercantile journey to Syria. At first he intended to leave the lad behind him, for he had reached twelve years of age, and was able to take care of himself. But when the caravan was now ready, and Abu Tâlib prepared to mount his camel, his nephew was overcome by the prospect of so long a separation, and clung by his protector. Abu Tâlib was moved, and carried the boy along with him. The expedition extended to Bostra and perhaps farther. The journey lasted for several months, and afforded to the young Mahomet opportunities of observation, which were not lost upon him. He passed near to Petra, Jerash, Ammon, and other ruinous sites of former mercantile grandeur; and their sight, no doubt, deeply imprinted upon his reflective mind the instability of earthly greatness. The legends of the valley of Hejer, with its lonely deserted habitations hewn out of the rock, and the tale of divine vengeance against the cities of the plain, over which now rolled the billows of the Dead Sea, would excite apprehension and awe, while their strange and startling details would win and charm the childish heart, ever yearning after the marvellous. On this visit, too, he came into contact with the national profession of Christianity in Syria, and passed through several Jewish settlements. The former he never before had witnessed, for he could as yet have been acquainted only with occasional and isolated specimens of the Christian faith. Now he

\* *Wâchidi*, p. 22. The disposition, however, to magnify the prophet is manifest here, as in the case of Abd al Muttalib: and there is added this marvellous incident connected with Abu Tâlib's scanty means, that the family always rose from their frugal meal hungry and unsatisfied if Mahomet were not present, but if he were there, they were not only satisfied, but had victuals to spare. So, too, the other children used to run about with fowl eyes and dishevelled hair, whereas the little Mahomet's head was always sleek and his eyes clean. There thus appears so continuous a tendency to glorify the nascent prophet, that it becomes hard to decide what, amidst these statements, to accept as facts and what to reject. Vide *Canons I. C. and II. D. in No. XXXVII. above quoted.*

† The reason given for Mahomet being entrusted to Abu Tâlib, is, that his father Abdallah was brother to Abu Tâlib by the same mother, (*Tabari*, p. 59); but so was Zobeir also.

saw its rites in full performance by the whole people of the land. The national and the social customs founded upon Christianity, the churches with their crosses, images or pictures, and other symbols of the faith; the ringing of bells; the frequent assemblages for worship, the accounts (and, possibly, the glimpse by himself,) of the continually repeated ceremonial, must have effected a deep impression upon him, which would be made all the more practical and lasting by the sight of whole tribes, Arab like himself, converted to the same faith and practising the same observances. However fallen and materialized was the Christianity of that day in Syria, it cannot be doubted that it would strike the thoughtful observer in favorable and wonderful contrast with the gross and unspiritual idolatry of Mecca. Once again, in mature life, Mahomet visited Syria, and whatever reflections of this nature were then excited, would receive an intenser force, and a deeper color, from the bright scenes and charming images which childhood had pictured upon the same ground.\*

\* The account of this journey is given by all the biographers with the many ridiculous details anticipative of Mahomet's prophetic dignity. The following is the gist of them :

The youthful Mahomet, along with the rest of the caravan, alighted at a monastery or hermitage on the road, occupied by a monk called Bahira. The monk perceived by a cloud which hovered over the company, the bending of boughs to shelter one of their number, &c, that it contained the prophet expected shortly to arise. He therefore invited the party to an entertainment; but when they had assembled, he perceived that the object of his search was not amongst them: he enquired where the wanting guest was, and they sent for the lad Mahomet, who, on account of his youth, had been left to watch the encampment. Bahira questioned him and examined his body for the seal of prophecy, which he found upon his back: he then referred to his sacred books, found all the marks to correspond, and declared the boy to be the expected prophet. He proceeded to warn Abu Talib against the Jews, who would at once recognize the child as the coming prophet, and, moved by jealousy, seek to slay him. Abu Talib was alarmed, and forthwith set out for Mecca with his nephew.

The fable is so absurd, that a feeling of contempt and mistrust is excited with respect to the entire traditional collections, which every here and there give place to such tales. A clue to the religious principle which engendered these stories is attempted in the Article of No. XXXVII. of this *Review*, Canon II. G.

Dr. Sprenger thinks that Abu Talib sent back Mahomet under charge of Bahira to Mecca; (*Life*, p. 79) and grounds his deduction on the phrase **طالبا معه**

**ابو** — at p. 224 of Wäckidi. But this expression may equally signify, "Abu Talib took him back *with himself*" to Mecca; and this meaning is undoubtedly the one intended.

The subject has been discussed in the *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. III. p. 454; IV. p. 188; and IV. p. 457; where professors Fleischer and Wustensfeld oppose Dr. Sprenger's view. Dr. Sprenger has written a further paper on the subject in the *Asiatic Society's Journal* for 1853, where he has given the various authorities in original, bearing upon the point. I. Tirmidzi says that Abu Talib sent Mahomet back from Syria by Abu Bakr and Bilal: which (as Sprenger shows,) is absurd, seeing that the former was two years younger than



No farther incident of a special nature is related of Mahomet, until he had advanced from childhood into youth.\*

Mahomet, and the latter then not born. II. *Hishâmi* makes Abu Talib himself return with Mahomet, after concluding his business at Bostra. III. *Wâckidi* gives several traditions; one in which the monk immediately after warning Abu Tâlib to make Mahomet return without loss of time to Mecca, expires: (*Wâckidi*, p. 22½;) and a second, that, viz., quoted above, upon which Dr. Sprenger so much relies. (*Ibid*). But he has omitted a third detailed account of the journey which is given in the same volume, on the authority of Muhammad ibn Omar (i. e. Wâckidi himself;) it is full of marvellous statements, and ends with distinctly saying that Abu Tâlib returned to Mecca with Mahomet. روجع به ابوتاليب This may have escaped Dr. Sprenger's notice, as it occurs under another chapter in Wâckidi, i. e. the "marks of prophetic rank in Mahomet." (p. 28½.) So also (*Tabari*, p. 60.) فخرج به عمه سريعا

Dr. Sprenger goes further. He suspects that the monk not only accompanied Mahomet to Mecca, but remained there with him: and as he finds the name *Bahira* in the list of a deputation from the Abyssinian King to Mahomet at Medina, forty years later, he concludes the two to have been one and the same person; and he thinks that the early Mahometan writers endeavoured to conceal the fact, as one discreditable to their prophet. The conjecture is ingenious, but the basis on which it rests is wholly insufficient. It is besides quite inconsistent with our theory of the rise of traditions, in which *design* is not apparent. Omissions, no doubt, occurred, and stories died out, but on different grounds. (See *Canon II. L. in the article on the Sources for the Biography of Mahomet*, above quoted.)

Some Arabs will have it that this monk was called Jergis (*Georgius*), Christian apologists call him Sergius.

\* Weil (p. 29.) states that in his sixteenth year Mahomet journeyed to Yemen with his uncle Zobeir on a mercantile trip. Dr. Sprenger (p. 79. note 3.) says that there is no good authority for this statement, nor can we find any original authority for it at all. The expression with respect to Abu Talib

وكان لا تسافر سقرا الا كان معه "that he never undertook a journey, unless

Mahomet were with him," might possibly imply that he undertook several; but in the absence of any express instance, it can hardly be pressed to prove that he did. So (*Wâckidi*, p. 29.) it is said that Abu Tâlib never took him again on a journey after this Syrian expedition, fearing lest injury should befall him

(روجع به ابوتاليب فما خرج به سفرا بعد ذلك خوفا عليه)

—but the sentence is a mere pendant to the absurd story of the Jews recognizing in Mahomet the coming prophet, and seeking to lie in wait for his life, and is therefore equally futile with it.

The chief reason which leads us to suppose that this was Mahomet's only mercantile journey (besides that taken for Khadija,) is that had he undertaken any other, we should indubitably have had special notice of it in Wâckidi, Hishâmi, or Tabari.

The first incident of a special nature related to Man...

...of an incident which I shall have to discuss in the next...

The first incident... The second incident... The third incident...

...of an incident which I shall have to discuss in the next...

The first incident... The second incident... The third incident...







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