



SHÁH 'ABBÁS THE GREAT

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*Frontispiece*

# A LITERARY HISTORY OF PERSIA

VOLUME IV

*Modern Times*

(1500-1924)

BY

EDWARD G. BROWNE



CAMBRIDGE

AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

1959



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I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME TO MY MOTHER  
IN TOKEN OF A GREAT DEBT OF GRATITUDE  
AND LOVE

همان که از چشم نگذاشتی ' مدام در آغوش بر داشتی '  
گرامیترت بودم از جان خویش ' نبودت ز من هیچ کس پیش پیش '  
مرا هوش و جان و روان با تو است ' دلم آشکار و نهان با تو است '

Firdawsī, *Yūsuf u Zulaykhā* (ed. Ethé, p. 240,  
ll. 2421-2 and 2426).

گویند مرا چو زاد مادر ' پستان بدهان گرفتن آموخت '  
شب بر سر کاهواره من ' بیدار نشست و خفتن آموخت '  
لب خند نهاد بر لب من ' بر غنچه گل شگفتن آموخت '  
دستم بگیرت و پا بپا برد ' تا شیوه راه رفتن آموخت '  
یک حرف و دو حرف بر دهانم ' الناظ نهاد و گفتن آموخت '  
پس هستی من ز هستی اوست '

تا هستم و هست دارمش دوست '

Īraj Mīrzā Jalālu'l-Mamālik.

## PREFACE

THIS volume concludes the task which I undertook more than twenty-two years ago, and which represents the labour of a life-time, for ever since I began the study of Persian in the summer of 1880, being then only eighteen years of age, the desire to write a complete Literary History of Persia has increasingly possessed me. The first instalment, "from the earliest times until Firdawsí," carried the history down to the early days of the eleventh century of the Christian era, and was published in 1902; and the continuation, down to the Mongol Invasion in the middle of the thirteenth century, in 1906, both these volumes being published by Mr Fisher Unwin. Fourteen years elapsed ere the third volume, entitled *A History of Persian Literature under Tartar Dominion (A.D. 1265-1502)*, saw the light. The reasons which led me to issue it in a form and under a title differing somewhat from its predecessors are explained on p. viii of the Preface, but essentially it constitutes the third volume of the *Literary History of Persia*, just as this, which deals with the last four centuries (A.D. 1500-1924), and is entitled, as foreshadowed in the same Preface (p. ix), *A History of Persian Literature in Modern Times*, is to be regarded as the fourth and last volume of the work.

Although I cannot regard this present volume as superior to its three predecessors in form or interest, and am fully aware of its defects, I think that it contains more new matter and represents more original research than the others. Owing to the opinion prevalent not only in Europe, but to a considerable extent in Turkey and India also, that poetry is the only department of Persian literature which merits much attention, and that little poetry worth reading has been produced since the time of Jámí, the literature of the last four centuries has been very much neglected, and

the sources of which I have made use are almost exclusively Persian, and, until the nineteenth century is reached, when printing and lithography were gradually introduced into Persia, chiefly manuscript. In the formation of my Persian library I have always had regard to the requirements of my work rather than to mere beauty of illumination, illustration, or hand-writing, and I have been singularly fortunate in acquiring the very interesting collection of the late Sir Albert Houtum Schindler and a number of the rare and precious manuscripts collected by the late Hájji 'Abdu'l-Majíd Belshah. To Mr A. G. Ellis I am indebted for the

a visit from the learned Shaykh Kázim ad-Dujaylí, an Arabic-speaking Shí'a of 'Iráq who has recently joined the teaching staff of the London School of Oriental Studies, and I enquired of him what, in his opinion, were the best Arabic books on Shí'a doctrine. He at once named the five following works, none of which I had previously heard of, much less seen, though all have been printed or lithographed in Persia :

(1) *Kashfu'l-Ghitá fi Akhbári Áli'l-Muṣṭafá*, by Shaykh Ja'far al-Kabír.

(2) *Kitábu'l-Qawáim* by al-Qummí

as well as to Dr E. Barrett, the head of that Department.

I wish that I could have profited more by the counsel of my Persian friends, especially Mírzá Muḥammad Khán of Qazwín and Hájji Mírzá Yaḥyá of Dawlatábád, during the progress of this work, but to my old acquaintance Ḥusayn Dánish Bey of the Ottoman Public Debt, a notable man of letters both in Persian and Turkish, I am indebted for many valuable and illuminating observations. Another old friend, Sayyid Ḥasan Taqí-záda, fortunately chanced to visit this country after an absence of some fourteen years while the last sheets of this book were passing through the Press, and he most kindly read through the proofs and favoured me with numerous observations and corrections which will be noticed under the *Errata and Addenda*. From well-read and intelligent Persians the European student of their language can learn many things not to be found in books, at any rate in books to which he has access, while their taste and judgement, even if at times he cannot wholly agree with them, are almost always suggestive and deserving of consideration. Only a few days ago I received

by their sympathy and interest have encouraged me in my book, or who by their skilful craftsmanship have given it form and substance. The writing of it has been a pleasure, and the completing of it is a source of thankfulness and satisfaction. Even its errors and imperfections will, I trust, by provoking criticism and stimulating research, serve to advance and extend our knowledge of the subject, and if, as I hope, I have been single-minded in this aim, I shall prefer the reasoned criticism of competent scholars to the indiscriminating praise of over-zealous friends, even as Sa'dí says :—

كُفَيْتَ أَذَىٰ يَا مَنْ تَعَدُّ مَحَاسِنِي ۚ  
عَلَانِيَتِي هَذَا وَلَمْ تَدْرِ بَاطِنِي

"Thou who recountest my virtues, thou dost me harm in sooth :  
Such is my outward seeming, but thou hast not known the truth."

EDWARD G. BROWNE.

June 12, 1924.

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## ERRATA AND ADDENDA

(The letters *T.z.* in brackets at the end of a note indicate that the correction was suggested by Taqí-záda.)

p. 170, l. 14. "*Read* معابر ('ways,' 'passages') for مقابر ('Tombs'), which gives no good sense." [*T.z.*] The washing of the feet before praying is a Sunní practice; the Shí'a confine themselves to mere stroking of the foot (*masḥ*) with the damp hand. The closing of

ended to name Taqá-yi-Darbandí, entitled 'the Promoter of mourning for the Holy Family' (*Murawwij-i-'Azá-dári-yi-Ahl-i-Bayt*)."  
[*T.z.*]

p. 220, last paragraph. "Mention should be made of the poems of Şafí-'Alí Sháh, and of his versified Persian commentary on the *Qur'án*." [*T.z.*] (I can find no mention of him in the *Majma'u'l-Fusahá*, the *Riyádu'l-'Arifín*, the *Bustánu's-Siyáhat*, or any of the Catalogues at my disposal.)

p. 221, "Rúdagí," and p. 299, "Rúdakí" should be identical in spelling, and I believe that the latter form is the more correct.

p. 222. "Mention should be made of V. Zhukovski's collection of Persian *Taşnifs*, with Russian translations, published at St Petersburg in 1902. Berezine also published nine *Taşnifs* with English

<sup>1</sup> It is, however, ascribed, as I have ascribed it, to Isma'íl Khán Sarbáz by Edwards in his *Catalogue of Persian Books in the British Museum*, col. 302-3. The life of Mullá Áqá-yi-Darbandí, who died at an advanced age sometime before A.D. 1873, is given in the *Qişaşu'l-*

translations set to music and adapted to the piano." [T.z.] (I find that I possess the former work, which is entitled ОБРАЗЦЫ ПЕРСДСАГО НАРОДНАГО ТВОРЧЕСТВА, but I cannot identify the latter.)

- p. 338. "Two half-verses (*misrâ*) have been accidentally omitted after l. 7. The two verses should run thus" [T.z.] :—

عكس تو فتاده است در آئینه عالم

ز آن روی همه ز نقحبه گشته است پدیدار

ز نقحبه محالست ز تو دست بدارم

تا آنکه بز نقحبه گی خود کنی اقرار

- p. 355, l. 1. There is some difference of opinion as to the proper vocalization of the place-name which I have written "Tanukábun." Taqf-záda thinks it should be "Tunukábun," while Riđá-qulí Khán in his *Anjuman-árá-yi-Náşiri* gives it as "Tanakábun."

- pp. 369-370. "The titles '*Muḥaqqiq-i-Ardabílí*' and '*Muqaddas-i-Ardabílí*' both belong to Mullá Aḥmad, so that the first line on p. 370 should read "The same *mujtahid* of Ardabíl, also entitled *Muḥaqqiq*," etc.

- p. 370, last line. "Hájji Mírzá Ḥasan-i-Shírází and Hájji Mírzá Ḥasan-i-Ashtiyání are not to be mentioned in the same breath. The former was to the latter as a king is to a petty local governor." [T.z.]

- p. 373. "Áqá Jamál-i-Khwánsárí was the author of the well-known book on the superstitions of Persian women entitled *Kitáb-i-Kulthúm Nana*. His father, Áqá Ḥusayn-i-Khwánsárí, was called *Ustádu'l-Kull fí'l-Kull* ('the Master of All in All'), and, besides many *facetiae*, wrote glosses on the *Shahíd-i-thání's* commentary on the *Lum'a*." [T.z.]

- p. 378, ll. 19 *et seqq.* "Many similar catechisms (with such titles as *Risála-i-'amaliyya*, *Mas'ila*, *Nukhba*, and the like) have been composed in the last century, and as many as a hundred may have been printed. One of the best known is the *Jámi'u'sh-Shattát* of Mírzá Abu'l-Qásim ibnu'l-Ḥusayn ar-Riđawí al-Qummí, author of the *Kitáb-i-Qawántn*." [T.z.] Concerning the last-named writer, see Edwards's *Catalogue of Persian printed books*, cols. 60 and 61.

- p. 393, ll. 8-9. "Alí Awsaṭ succeeded his father Ḥusayn as Imám, not 'Alí Akbar, who, together with the infant 'Alí Aşghar, perished at Karbálá." [T.z.]

- p. 407, l. 14. "The *Jámi'-i-'Abbásí* was completed in 20 chapters, and has been printed repeatedly, but the first five chapters are often published separately for the instruction of children in elementary religious duties." [T.z.] According to Edwards (*op. cit.*, cols. 407-8) chapters vi-xx were subsequently added to Shaykh-i-Bahá'í's unfinished work by Niẓám b. Ḥusayn-i-Sáwají.

- p. 407, fourth line from the end, and p. 435, l. 5. "The *Abwábü'l-Janán* was not by Mullá Muḥsin-i-Fayḍ, but, so far as I remember, by Mullá Ḥusayn *Wá'iz-i-Káshifí*, the author of the well-known *Anwár-i-Suḥaylí*." [T.z.] The real author appears to have been Muḥammad b. Faṭḥu'lláh Rafí'u'd-Dín, called '*Wá'iz-i-Qazwíní*' ('the Preacher of Qazwín'). See Edwards, *op. cit.*, cols. 405-6.

- p. 410. "Sayyid Muḥammad Báqir of Rasht was only a third- or fourth-rate theologian, and Mullá Aḥmad-i-Niráqí (p. 411) only of the second class. Much more important, though omitted here, are :—

- (i) Áqá-yi-Bihbihání, the founder of the Uşúlí and Mujtahidí School, who flourished at the end of twelfth century of the *hijra*.
- (ii) Shaykh Ja'far-i-'Arab (also called *al-Kabír*, 'the Great'), who was contemporary with Faṭḥ-'Alí Sháh.
- (iii) Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasan, author of the *Jawdhirü'l-Kalám*, a large work in six volumes on Shí'a Jurisprudence (see p. ix *supra*).
- (iv) Shaykh Murtađá al-Ansárí, the founder of present-day Shí'a Law, and the Master of all the *mujtahids* of the last seventy years with the exception of—
- (v) Shaykh Hádí of Ṭíhrán, who was also of the first class."

- p. 430. "Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥşá'í was not an admirer and follower but a great enemy of Mullá Şadrá. Of modern Persian philosophers mention should have been made of Mírzá Abu'l-Ḥasan-i-Jilwa, who died only some twenty years ago." [T.z.] I met him in Ṭíhrán in the winter of 1887-8. See my *Year amongst the Persians*, p. 149.

- p. 435. "One of the best of Mullá Muḥsin's works is the *Kalimát-i-Maknúna* ('Hidden Words'), of which mention should have been made here." [T.z.]

- p. 441. "Dr Muḥammad of Kirmánsháh, called *Kufwí*, who died in 1326/1908, specialized in cardiac diseases, and first called attention



to a peculiar murmur (called in French '*empiolement*') characteristic of embolism, on which he published a monograph in French<sup>1</sup>. He also wrote several medical treatises on the Diseases of Women and Children in Persian." [T.z.]

- p. 454, l. 1. "For *I'timádu'd-Dawla* read *I'timádu's-Saltana*." [T.z.]
- p. 468. "Newspapers existed in Persia before A.D. 1851, in the reign of Muḥammad Sháh (A.D. 1835-1848) and even in the later days of his predecessor Fath-'Alí Sháh. See the *Káwa* newspaper *passim*, especially No. 6 of the New Series (*Dawra-i-Jadíd*)." [T.z.] The article in question appeared in the issue of June 8, 1921, pp. 14-16. It mentions a rather vague report of a Persian newspaper published at Dihlí in A.D. 1798, and a much more definite report of one published in Ṭíhrán in 1253/1837-8.
- p. 486, end. "The articles to which reference is here made were not by Mírzá Muḥammad Khán but by myself, writing under the pen-name of *Muḥaṣṣil* ('Student')." [T.z.]<sup>2</sup>
- p. 488. "To say 'Mírzá Kázim-záda,' 'Sayyid Jamál-záda,' 'Taqi-záda Khán' and the like is as contrary to Persian usage as to say in English 'Sir Grey' for 'Sir Edward Grey' and the like. Such titles as 'Mírza,' 'Sayyid' and Ḥájji can only be prefixed, as 'Khán,' 'Beg' and the like can only be suffixed, to personal names, such as Ḥasan, 'Alí and Muḥammad, not to patronymics." [T.z.]<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have been unable to find any trace of this alleged discovery or of the French term connoting it (which I think should be *empilement*), though I have consulted two eminent physicians on the subject.

<sup>2</sup> Taqí-záda's letter was received in time to correct the two passages to which the two concluding notes refer, but I have allowed them to stand because the first specifies the true authorship of the articles in question, while the second lays down a rule of which I had hitherto been unaware.

## PART I.

### AN OUTLINE OF PERSIAN HISTORY DURING THE LAST FOUR CENTURIES

## CHAPTER I.

### SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE ŞAFAWÍ DYNASTY.

The rise of the Şafawí dynasty in Persia at the beginning of the sixteenth century of the Christian era was an event of the greatest historical importance, not only to Persia herself and her immediate neighbours, but to Europe generally. It marks not only the restoration of the Persian Empire and the re-creation of the Persian nationality after an eclipse of more than eight centuries and a half, but the entrance of Persia into the comity of nations and the genesis of political relations which still to a considerable extent hold good. Mr R. G. Watson in the brief retrospect with which he opens his excellent *History of Persia from the beginning of the Nineteenth Century to the year 1858*<sup>1</sup> shows a true appreciation of the facts when he takes this period as his starting-point, for in truth it marks the transition from mediaeval to comparatively modern times. The Arab conquest in the middle of the seventh century after Christ overthrew the Zoroastrian religion and the Sásánian Empire, and reduced Persia to the position of a mere province of the Caliphate, until the Caliphate itself was destroyed by the Mongols or Tartars in the middle of the thirteenth century. Both before and after this momentous event there were, it is true, independent or quasi-independent dynasties ruling in Persia, but these were generally of Turkish or Tartar origin, like the Ghaznawís, Saljúqs, Khwárazmsháhs, and Houses of Chingíz and Tímúr; or, if Persian like the Buwayhids, exercised control over a portion only of the old Persian Empire. To the

Historical im-  
portance of the  
Şafawí dynasty.

<sup>1</sup> London: Smith and Elder, 1866.

#### 4 CONSIDERATIONS ON THE ŞAFAWÍ DYNASTY [PT I

Şafawí dynasty belongs the credit of making Persia "a nation once again," self-contained, centripetal, powerful and respected, within borders practically identical in the time of Sháh 'Abbás the Great (A.D. 1587-1628) with those of the Sásánian Empire. It was then that Işfahán, whither he transferred the seat of government from Qazwín, became, as the Persian saying runs, "Half the world" (*Nisf-i-Jahán*), or "Medio mundo" as Don Juan of Persia has it, abounding in splendid buildings and skilful craftsmen, frequented by merchants from distant lands, and visited by diplomatic missions, not only from India, Transoxiana and Turkey, but from almost every European state from Russia to Spain and Portugal.

Yet, in spite of its importance and the abundant materials available, no good complete history<sup>1</sup> of the Şafawí dynasty has yet been written. The outlines given by Sir John Malcolm and Sir Clements Markham in their histories of Persia are inadequate in scope and inaccurate in detail, and are based on very limited materials, and those not by any means the most authentic. The abundance and variety of the materials, the inaccessibility of many important sources of information, and the polyglot character of the documents concerned constitute serious obstacles to one who aspires to treat adequately of this period. The four most im-

Lack of a satisfactory complete history of the dynasty.

portant contemporary Persian records of its earlier portion, down to the death of Sháh 'Abbás the Great, are the *Şafwatú's-Şafá*, containing the biography of Shaykh Şafiyu'd-Dín, that celebrated saint of the thirteenth century from whom the dynasty derives its name; the *Nasab-náma-i-Silsila-i-Şafawíyya* on the genealogy of the family, with valuable biographical details of its earlier representatives not to be found elsewhere; the

<sup>1</sup> Of Krusinski's and Hanway's admirable accounts of the later Şafawí period I shall speak in chap. iii.

#### CH. I] CHIEF CONTEMPORARY HISTORIES

5

*Ahsanu't-Tawárikh*, completed in A.D. 1577, only about a year after the death of Sháh Tahmásp, whose reign together with that of his father and predecessor Sháh Isma'íl, the founder of the dynasty, it records; and the *Tá'rikh-i-'Álam-árá-yi-'Abbásí*, an immense monograph on the reign of Sháh 'Abbás the Great. Not one of these has been published<sup>1</sup>, much less translated, and all except the last are very rare even in manuscript. Of the *Nasab-náma* and the *'Álam-árá* I am fortunate enough to possess copies which formerly belonged to the late Sir Albert Houtum-Schindler, while the incomparable generosity of Mr A. G. Ellis placed at my disposal manuscripts of the two other histories mentioned

Untrustworthiness of later Persian compilations.

above. And though the authors of later general histories in Persian, such as Ridá-qulí Khán in his supplement to Mírkhwánd's *Rawdatu's-Şafá*, have made use of some of these works, they too often not merely abridge but grievously distort the passages they cite.

Of such wanton distortion the following is a good instance. In July, A.D. 1599, Sháh 'Abbás the Great sent to Europe a mission accredited to the Courts of Russia Poland, Germany, France, Spain, England and Scotland, and to the Pope of Rome and the Seniory of Venice. This mission included Husayn 'Alí Beg<sup>2</sup> as Persian Envoy, with four Persian gentlemen or "knights" (*caballeros*, as they are called in Don Juan of Persia's narrative), fifteen Persian servants, the celebrated Sir Anthony Sherley with fifteen English attendants, two Portuguese friars, and five interpreters.

A flagrant example of perverted history.

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written I have received through a Persian correspondent a copy of the excellent lithographed edition of the *Şafwatú's-Şafá* published at Bombay in 1329/1911.

<sup>2</sup> Don Juan calls him (f. 120<sup>b</sup>) "Uzen Aly Bech," but Antonio di Govea has "Ussein Alibeg," which shows clearly that the first part of the name is *Husayn*, not *Úzún*, as I had at first supposed.

Travelling by way of the Caspian Sea and the Volga, they first visited Moscow, where they remained for five or six months; thence through Germany to Italy, where they were not permitted to go to Venice for fear of offending an Ottoman envoy who happened to be there at the time, but were well received at Rome, where they arrived in April, 1601, and remained for two months. Thence they proceeded by ship from Genoa to the south of France and so to Spain, where three of the four "Persian knights" adopted the Catholic faith and took the names of Don Philippe, Don Diego and Don Juan of Persia.

Sir Anthony Sherley, whose relations with his Persian colleague had from the first been very strained, separated himself from the mission at Rome, but up to that point the independent accounts written by himself and some of his companions<sup>1</sup> enable us to check Don Juan's narrative. Don Juan, however, having apostasized from Islám, dared not return to Persia to meet the fate of a renegade, so that for the tragic sequel we must turn to the Persian historians. In the *'Alam-árá-yi-'Abbásí* under the year 1022/1613-4<sup>2</sup> we find an account of the arrival at Isfahán of ambassadors from the King of Spain, accompanied by several Christian priests and a Persian envoy returning from Europe<sup>3</sup>. The latter, who had incurred the Sháh's displeasure, was incontinently put to death in the most cruel manner, without being permitted any opportunity for explanation or apology; and the Sháh then explained to the Spaniards that he had dealt thus with him because of sundry treasonable and disrespectful acts of

<sup>1</sup> See especially *The Sherley Brothers...by one of the same House* (Chiswick, 1828), pp. 22-35.

<sup>2</sup> F. 230 of my MS. marked H. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Although the envoy is here named Dengiz Beg Shámlú with the title of *Yüz-báshí* (Captain), not Husayn 'Alí Beg, as in Don Juan's narrative (f. 120<sup>b</sup>), there can, I think, be little doubt as to their identity.

which he had been guilty during his mission, such as opening letters sealed with the royal seal and making known their contents; wearing mourning on the occasion of the Queen of Spain's death; and selling the credentials to the Pope with which he had been provided to a merchant who should impersonate him and derive what profit he could from the transaction. "But," the Sháh concluded, "the chief of his faults and the chief reason for his punishment was that he behaved so ill towards the attendants who accompanied him, and vexed them so much, *that several of them adopted the Christian faith and remained in Europe in order to escape from his tyranny*, so that zeal for Islám required his punishment, and thus he received his deserts."

Turning now to Riđá-qulí Khán's supplement to the *Rawdatu's-Şafá*, a general history of Persia compiled about A.D. 1858, we find an account of the same event obviously copied, with very slight modifications, from the *'Alam-árá-yi-'Abbásí*, but with one important and most wanton alteration, for Sháh 'Abbás is there represented as saying that the chief of his ambassador's faults was *that several persons were disposed to embrace Islám and come to Persia, but the Persian envoy treated them so ill that they repented of their intention, returned to the Christian faith, and remained in that country*. For this deliberate falsification of history I can only account by supposing that Riđá-qulí Khán did not wish to encourage the idea that a Persian Muslim could possibly become a Christian; but the moral I wish to draw is that the later Persian historians must be used with great caution, and that every statement should, where possible, be traced to contemporary records.

Before leaving this subject, I must refer to an erroneous conjecture of Sir John Malcolm's arising from an inadequate use of the Persian sources. In the year 1002/1593-4, being the seventh year of Sháh 'Abbás's reign, Jalál, the Chief Astrologer, foretold dis-

An error of Sir John Malcolm's.

aster to the occupant of the Throne, and advised that the Sháh should abdicate for a few days and substitute for himself some person worthy of death on whom the prediction of the stars might be fulfilled. This was accordingly done, and a man named Yúsuff was made king for three days, at the conclusion of which he was put to death, and Sháh 'Abbás resumed the Throne. Sir John Malcolm<sup>1</sup> says that this Yúsuff, "whom Persian authors take care to tell us was an unbeliever," was "probably a Christian," but this is an error; he belonged to a heterodox Muslim sect called *Nuqtawiyya* ("People of the Point") who believed in metempsychosis and other heretical doctrines, and of whose appearance and destruction a full account is given by the '*Álam-árá-yi-'Abbásí*'<sup>2</sup> and reproduced in the *Rawdatu's-Şafá*. It is therefore essential, if a true history of the Şafawís is to be written, that we should go back to the original sources, and, as a preliminary, that these sources, at present existing only in manuscript, should be published.

The Persian histories, however, are only part of the material available for such a work: the numerous and in some cases excellent Turkish chronicles, published and unpublished, dealing with this period, and especially with the Turco-Persian wars which continued almost without intermission during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, constitute an indispensable supplement and corrective. Almost more im-

portant is Firídún Bey's great collection of Turkish State Papers entitled *Munsha'át-i-Saldán*, compiled some time before 991/1583 and published at Constantinople in two volumes<sup>3</sup> in 1274/1858.

<sup>1</sup> *History of Persia* (London, 1815), vol. i, p. 527.

<sup>2</sup> Ff. 46<sup>b</sup>-47<sup>b</sup> of my MS. H. 14.

<sup>3</sup> When this was written, I possessed only the first volume, which contains 626 pp. and comes down to the year 966/1558. By the kindness of my friend Húsayn Dánish Bey I have since acquired the second volume also.

The diplomatic correspondence contained in this valuable and insufficiently-appreciated book is arranged chronologically and is partly in Turkish, partly in Arabic, and partly in Persian. From the time of Tímúr onwards much of it is concerned with contemporary Persian affairs, and of the last half of the first volume a large portion consists of letters interchanged between the Sulţáns Báyazíd II (A.D. 1482-1512), Salím I (A.D. 1512-1520), and Sulaymán I (A.D. 1520-1566) on the one hand, and Sháh Isma'íl (A.D. 1500-1524) and his son and successor Sháh Tahmásp (A.D. 1524-1576) on the other. There are also valuable journals of certain campaigns, such as that which culminated in the Battle of Cháldirán, so disastrous to the Persians, on August 23, 1514, wherein the movements of the Ottoman army and the incidents of their outward and homeward marches are chronicled day by day. Other State Papers, both Persian and Turkish, which exist only in manuscript, have hitherto remained practically unexplored<sup>1</sup>.

A third class of materials of which it is impossible to overestimate the importance consists of the writings of Europeans who visited Persia during this period on diplomatic, missionary or commercial business. Thanks to the liberal attitude of Sháh 'Abbás the Great towards Christians, the number of these in his and the succeeding reigns was very large. The best general account of them and their works with which I have met is that given by the late M. Charles Schefer, in the Introduction (pp. i-cxv) to his edition of *l'Estat de la Perse en 1660*<sup>2</sup> by le Père Raphaél du Mans, Superior of the Capuchin Mission at Işfahán, a man singularly qualified by

Contemporary  
European  
narratives.

<sup>1</sup> Some other very interesting State Papers from the *Dastúru'l-Inshá* of Şarí 'Abdu'lláh Efendi (d. 1079/1668) have also been published and annotated by the late M. Ch. Schefer in his *Chrestomathie Persane* (Paris, 1885), vol. ii, pp. 218-259 and 231-234.

<sup>2</sup> Leroux, Paris, 1890, pp. cxv + 465.

which even yet cannot be regarded in all cases as definitely solved. These problems group themselves under the headings of Nationality, Religion, Art and Literature, and in this order we shall now proceed to consider them.

## NATIONALITY.

various forms of nationalism with which we are familiar at the present day. Language and race, which are the key-notes of the latter, played a very small part in it compared with religion. At no time was the mutual hatred of Turk and Persian more violent and bitter than during the eight years (A.D. 1512-1520) when Sultán Salím "the Grim," and Sháh Isma'íl, the founder of the Şafawí power, were the respective protagonists of the two nations. The despatches of this period, recorded by Firídún Bey, pass from the realm of diplomacy to that of vulgar abuse, and "rascally Red-heads" (*Awbâsh-i-Qizil-bâsh*) is the politest expression wherewith the Turkish Sultán refers to his Persian foes. The cause of this intense hatred, equally adequate and obvious, will be discussed under the heading of "Religion," but it did not extend to race or language. When America entered the late War it was stated in the newspapers that in certain towns the people, to give vent to their hatred of everything German, collected all the German books they could find and burned them. No Turk or Persian of the sixteenth century would have given expression to his feelings of hostility in so puerile a fashion. On the contrary, it is a remarkable fact that while Sultán Salím and Sháh Isma'íl both possessed considerable poetic talent, the former wrote almost exclusively in Persian, and the latter, under the pen-

name of Khaṭá'íl, almost exclusively in Turkish<sup>1</sup>. Ottoman hatred was directed against the heretical *Qizil-bâsh* as mis-believers, not as Persians (*Írání*), while the Persian language (*Fârsí*) continued to hold its position as the polite idiom of literature and diplomacy. And though the ancient conflict between *Írán* and *Túrân* was familiar to all, it was

to the Turkish protagonist Afrásiyáb:

.. اما بعد، این خطاب مستطاب از جناب خلافت مآب ما که  
قاتل الكفرة و المشركين قانع اعداء الدين مرغمر انوف الفراءين  
معفر تيجان الخواقين سلطان الغزاة و المجاهدين فریدون فر  
سکندر در کیخسرو عدل و داد دارای عالی نژاد سلطان سلیمشاه  
بن سلطان بایزید بن سلطان محمد خانیم بسوی تو که فرمان  
ده عجم سهسالار اعظم سردار معظم ضحاک روزگار داراب گیر و دار  
افراسیاب عهد امیر اسمعیل نامداری سمت صدور یافت ...

[After the doxology] "But to proceed. This excellent address hath been issued on our part, we who are the Refuge of the Caliphate<sup>2</sup>, the slayer of the infidels and polytheists,

<sup>1</sup> See E. J. W. Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. ii, p. 261, for a brief account of Salím's Persian *Díwân*, of which a most sumptuous edition, based on numerous MSS., by the late Dr Paul Horn, was printed in Berlin as a gift to the late Sultán 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd from the ex-Emperor of Germany in 1904. A number of Sháh Isma'íl's Turkish poems are given in my MS. of the *Silsilatu'n-Nasab-i-Şafawíyya*. See *J.R.A.S.* for July, 1921, p. 412, where other references are given.

<sup>2</sup> See Firídún Bey, vol. i, p. 381.

<sup>3</sup> An interesting proof that, contrary to the views of Professor Nalino, the position of Caliph was already claimed by Sultán Salím, as it certainly was by his son and successor Sulaymán.

the extirpator of the foes of the Faith, the humbler of the Pharaohs' pride<sup>1</sup>, the tarnisher of the Kháqán's<sup>2</sup> crowns, the King of those who fight and strive for Religion, whose pomp is as that of Firídún, whose Court is as that of Alexander, whose justice and equity is as that of Kay-Khusraw, that Dárá of noble descent, Sultán Salím Sháh, son of Sultán Báyzíd, son of Sultán Muḥammad Khán, to thee, who art the ruler of the Persians, the most mighty general and puissant leader, the Daḥḥák<sup>3</sup> of the time, the Dáráb of the combat, the Afrásiyáb of the age, the famous Amír Isma'íl."

On the other hand I have only found one verse wherein Sháh Isma'íl is definitely identified with the Persian as contrasted with the Shí'a cause. This verse occurs in the *Aḥsanu 't-Tawárikh*<sup>4</sup> and runs:

‘فروزنده تاج و تخت کیان،  
فرازنده اختر کاویان’

“The illuminator of the crown and throne of the Kayánians<sup>5</sup>,  
The upholder of the star of the Káwayán<sup>6</sup>.”

For the rest, the seven tribes who formed the back-bone of the *Qizil-básh* army were, as their names Rúmlú, Shámlú, Mawşillú, etc., sufficiently indicate, almost exclusively Turkish, as were the principal officers of the Şafawí army, whose war-cry, as we learn

Extensive use of  
Turkish under  
the Şafawís.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, “he who rubs in the dust the noses of the Pharaohs,” alluding to Sultán Salím's conquest of Egypt and overthrow of the Mameluke dynasty.

<sup>2</sup> The Kháqán is the title given to the king of Túrán and the Turks. The word is, I believe, Mongol, and is identical with the alternative forms Qá'án and Khán.

<sup>3</sup> Daḥḥák is the Azhi-daháka or Dragon-king of the Avesta, represented in the *Sháh-náma* as an Arab usurper.

<sup>4</sup> Under the year 908/1502-3, f. 47<sup>b</sup> of Mr A. G. Ellis's MS.

<sup>5</sup> The second dynasty of the ancient legendary kings of Persia.

<sup>6</sup> Káwa was the patriotic blacksmith who led the revolt against the foreign usurper Daḥḥák, and whose leather apron became the national standard under the name of *Dirafsh-i-Káwayán*.

from the rare history of Sháh Isma'íl<sup>1</sup>, was not “Long live Persia!” or the like, but, in the Turkish language, “O my spiritual guide and master whose sacrifice I am!”

صدای قربان اولدیغم و صدقه اولدیغم پیروم مرشدم که شیوه و  
شعار فرقه ناجیه قزلباش است در میمنه و میسره کاززار انداختند

More than a century after Isma'íl's death, when the capital had been transferred from the north of Persia to Işfahán, Turkish seems still to have been the language generally spoken at Court<sup>2</sup>. These instances, to which might be added many more, will suffice to show how different was the spirit which animated the Şafawí revival (though it undoubtedly produced that homogeneity which is the basis of national sentiment) from the Nationalism of the modern Pan-Turanians and “Young Persians,” who put the extension and purification from foreign elements of the national language in the foremost place in their programme. At the present time the Turkish nationalists of Angora proclaim their new Caliph in Turkish instead of in the time-honoured Arabic, while Ríđá Khán, the Persian military dictator, strives to introduce in his army a purely Persian military terminology.

#### RELIGION.

Although the Muhammadans, according to their own statements, are divided into seventy-two or seventy-three different sects<sup>3</sup>, in later times at any rate, when certain controversies, such as those connected with Free Will and Predestination and the

Essential nature  
of the Shí'a  
doctrine.

<sup>1</sup> Add. 200, f. 41<sup>a</sup> of the Cambridge University Library. See Sir E. Denison Ross's description of this book in the *J.R.A.S.* for 1896, vol. xxviii, pp. 264-283.

<sup>2</sup> See the second English edition of Olearius (London, 1669), p. 212.

<sup>3</sup> See Shahrístání's *Kitábu'l-Milal*, ed. Cureton, pp. 2-3.

Creation of the *Qur'án*, have sunk into a subordinate position, it may fairly be said that the capital and cardinal division is into the People of the *Sunnat* and the People of the *Shí'a*. Scattered communities of the latter are found in Asia Minor, Syria (where they are called *Mutawallí*, pl. *Matáwila*), India and other Muhammadan lands, but in Persia only is the *Shí'a* doctrine not only that held by the great majority of the people, but also the State Religion. Before considering how it was raised to this position by the *Şafawís* about the year A.D. 1500, we must briefly consider its essential nature, and here we cannot do better than quote *Shahristání*, the learned author of the *Kitábu'l-Milal*, or "Book of Sects," who died in the middle of the twelfth century, and who writes of them<sup>1</sup> as follows:

"THE SHÍ'A.—They are those who took the side of (*Sháya'ú*) 'Alí in particular, declaring him to be *Imám* and *Khalifa* by explicit written deed, public or secret, and believing that the *Imámate* cannot quit his posterity; and that, should it do so, it is only by reason of wrong wrought by another, or prudential renunciation on his own part<sup>2</sup>. They assert that the *Imámate* is not a question of expediency but of principle: it does not depend on popular choice, so that an *Imám* can be set up by their appointment, but is an essential of Religion which it is not permissible for even the Apostle of God to ignore or neglect, and which cannot be transferred or committed to the common people. They are united in their assertion as to the necessity of such explicit designation [of the *Imám* on the part of his predecessor] and the established innocence of the *Imáms* of all sins, small or great, and also

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 108-9.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.* the second *Imám*, al-*Ḥasan*, elder son of 'Alí, ostensibly surrendered his rights "for prudential reasons" (*taqiyya*) to the Umayyad *Mu'áwiya*, but he could not really divest himself of the sacred quality of *Imám*.

in their principles of recognition and repudiation, alike in word, deed and faith, save in cases of 'prudential concealment' (*taqiyya*), in which point, however, some of the *Zaydís* oppose them. As to the actual transmission of the *Imámate*, however, there is much discussion and difference of opinion, and at each such transmission and stage there is an argument, a doctrine and a schism. There are five [principal] divisions, the *Kaysánis*, the *Zaydís*, the *Imámís*, the *Extremists* (*Ghulát*) and the *Isma'ílls*, of whom some incline in their principles to the *Mu'tazila*, some to the *Sunna* and some to *Anthropomorphism* (*tashbíh*)."

Put in a briefer, clearer and more concrete form, this means that all the *Shí'a* reject and repudiate the first three of the "Four Orthodox Caliphs" (*al-Khulafá'u'r-Ráshidún*), *Abú Bakr*, 'Umar and 'Uthmán, who were elected, and hold that 'Alí, the cousin of the Prophet *Muḥammad* and the husband of

Why the *Shí'a* doctrine especially appeals to the Persians.

his daughter *Fátima*, should have succeeded him, and had in fact been nominated by him as his successor; and that after 'Alí the succession continued in his family by Divine Right. But even within this family there was no place for election, each *Imám* specifically choosing and nominating his successor, as the Prophet had chosen and nominated 'Alí. Amongst those who agreed in these general principles, however, there was plenty of room for disagreement as to details. Some of the *Shí'a* were content that the *Imám* should be descended from 'Alí, and were therefore ready to recognise *Muḥammad ibnu'l-Ḥanafíyya*, "the son of the *Ḥanafite* woman"; others, including the "Sect of the Seven" or *Isma'ílls* and the "Sect of the Twelve" or *Imámís*, with which last we are chiefly concerned, limited the succession to the children born to 'Alí by his wife *Fátima*, the Prophet's daughter. With the third *Imám* *Ḥusayn*, 'Alí's younger son by *Fátima*, a new factor came into operation, for, according to quite early and respectable historians, such as



al-Ya'qúbí<sup>1</sup>, a daughter of the last Sásánian king of Persia, Yazdigird III, was given to him in marriage and bore him a son named 'Alí and entitled *Zaynu'l-'Abidín*, who was the Fourth Imám, and who combined in himself direct descent from the Prophet through his daughter Fáṭima and from the ancient Royal House of Persia. Small wonder that to him and his descendants the loyal devotion of the Persians was so freely rendered!

Thus we see that the quarrel between Sunní and Shí'a is by no means one of names and personalities only, but of the essentially antagonistic doctrines of Democracy and the Divine Right of Kings. The Arabs are, and always have been, in large measure democratic in their ideas, while the Persians have ever been disposed to see in their Kings divine or semi-divine beings. And if the idea of a humanly-elected head of the State be repugnant, how much more that of an Imám, or Vice-gerent of the Prophet, chosen by popular suffrage? Hence the Imámí and Isma'ílí sects of the Shí'a have always had their stronghold in Persia, though under the Sunní Turkish dynasties of the Ghaznawís and Saljúqs they were kept in a state of subordination<sup>2</sup>. They were more favoured under the Buwayhids and some of the Mongols, notably Gházán and Khudá-banda (Uljáytú), but they first obtained unquestioned supremacy throughout the whole of Persia under the Şafawís.

Who, then, were these Şafawís, when did they so vehemently adopt the Shí'a doctrine, and how did they succeed in establishing their supremacy?

<sup>1</sup> He wrote about the end of the ninth Christian century, and his excellent history, edited by Houtsma, was published at Leyden in two vols. in 1883. See also vol. i of my *Lit. Hist. of Persia*, p. 229 and n. 2 *ad calc.*

<sup>2</sup> Abundant illustrations of this are furnished by such works of the Saljúq period as the *Siyásat-náma* and the *Ráḥatu'ş-Şudúr*.

Şafawí is the adjective formed from Şafí, a notable Şúfí saint, named in full Şafíyyu'd-Dín, who died in Gílán in A.D. 1334 at the age of 85 in the odour of sanctity, and who claimed to be descended in the twentieth degree from Músá Kázim the seventh Imám<sup>1</sup>. That he was really a man of note in his own time is proved beyond doubt by the way in which his contemporary, the great statesman and historian Rashídu'd-Dín Faḍlu'lláh, speaks of him in his letters<sup>2</sup>, and also by the fact that an immense biography of him, the *Şafwatu'ş-Şafá*, was composed shortly after his death, largely from data supplied by his son Şadru'd-Dín, which has been used directly or indirectly by all the historians of the great dynasty whereof he was the ancestor. Sháh Isma'íl, the actual founder of the dynasty, was sixth in descent from him, but I have found no evidence to prove that he himself adopted the violent Shí'a views characteristic of his descendants. The little evidence available points rather the other way, for in a letter written to Isma'íl's son Sháh Tahmásp in A.D. 1529-30 by the Uzbek leaders, they say that, according to what they have heard, Shaykh Şafíyyu'd-Dín was a good Sunní, and express their astonishment that Tahmásp "neither follows the example of His Holiness Murtaḍá 'Alí, nor that of his forefather<sup>3</sup>." Khwájá 'Alí, grandson of Şafíyyu'd-Dín and great-great-grandfather of Sháh Isma'íl, is the first member of the House who shows a strong Shí'a bias<sup>4</sup> and holds converse in his dreams with the Imáms, and his grandson Junayd and his great-grandson Ḥaydar are the first to assert their claims with the sword and to die on the field of battle.

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, then, the Şafawís were simply the hereditary *pírs*, *murshids*, or spiritual

<sup>1</sup> For the full pedigree, see the *J.R.A.S.* for July, 1921, p. 397 and n. 1 *ad calc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 417-18.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of this passage, see p. 43 *infra*.

<sup>4</sup> See the *J.R.A.S.* for July, 1921, pp. 407-8.

directors of an increasingly large and important order of *darwishes* or Şúffis which drew its adherents not only from

Persia but from the Turkish provinces of Asia Minor, where they appear to have carried on an active propaganda<sup>1</sup>. How successful this

promised to become in later days is shown by the dreadful massacre of some forty thousand of the Shí'a perpetrated in his dominions by Sultán Salím "the Grim" as a preliminary to his great campaign against Sháh Isma'íl in A.D. 1514<sup>2</sup>. To these devoted *darwishes* or *murids*, as their war-cry cited above (p. 15) sufficiently shows, the head of the Şafawí House, even after he had ceased to be a Shaykh and had become a Sháh, continued to be regarded as the *pír* or *murshid*. Chardin, Raphaël du Mans<sup>3</sup>, and other reputable authorities have scoffed at the title "Great Sophi,"

by which the Şafawí Sháhs are commonly designated by contemporary European diplomatists and writers, on the ground that the Şúffis were generally poor and humble people and of doubtful orthodoxy, despised and rejected of men, and unlikely to lend their name to the Great King of Persia. But in the Persian histories of the Şafawís, even in the *Silsilatü'n-Nasab* compiled about the time when Raphaël du Mans wrote, and still more in the *Ahsanu't-Tawárikh* and other earlier chronicles, the Şúffis, especially the Şúffis of Rúm (*i.e.* Turkey in Asia), are represented as the cream of the Şafawí army; we read of "self-sacrifice, courage, and whatever else is inseparable from Şúffí-hood"<sup>4</sup> and of unworthy and disloyal acts described as "un-Şúffí-like" (*ná-Şúffí*). What, then, more natural than that he who was regarded not only as the Sháh of Persia

<sup>1</sup> See Gibb's *History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. ii, pp. 227-8 *ad calc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 259, and pp. 71-3 *infra*.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Etat de la Perse en 1660*, ed. Schefer, pp. 16-17.

<sup>4</sup> See *J.R.A.S.* for July, 1921, the Persian words on the illustration facing p. 415.

but as the Shaykh of these devoted *darwishes* or Şúffis, whose courage amazed contemporary Venetian travellers, should be called in Europe "the Great Şúffí" or "Sophi"? At any rate no more probable origin has been suggested for this term, which can scarcely be regarded as a corrupt pronunciation of Şafawí.

It would appear that an idea prevailed in Europe (based, perhaps, on vague recollections of the Magi or Wise Men from the East) that Sophi was derived from σοφός, an opinion which Don Juan of Persia<sup>1</sup> is at pains to refute; for, having described how Sháh Isma'íl immediately after he had conquered Tabríz adopted the title of "*gran Sophi de Persia*," he adds: "*no Sophi por sabio, como algunos mal entendieron, pensando que venia de Sòpos vocablo Griego, sino de Sophi, que es vocablo Persiano, y quiere dezir, lana, ò algodón*" ("Not Sophi in the sense of wise, as some have erroneously supposed, thinking it to come from the Greek word σοφός, but from Sophi, which is a Persian word meaning wool or cotton<sup>2</sup>").

The rapid rise to power of Isma'íl is one of the most remarkable events in Persian history, especially in view of his forlorn and threatened childhood. His father, Shaykh Haydar, was killed in A.D. 1490 when he was only about three years of age<sup>3</sup>, and he and his two brothers, of whom the elder, Sultán 'Alí, also fell in battle about A.D. 1495, were in constant danger from the Turkmán rulers of the "White Sheep" dynasty, and had many hair-breadth escapes in which they owed their lives to the devoted loyalty of their faithful Şúffis. Only seven of these accompanied Isma'íl when, at the age of thirteen, he set out from Láhiján for Ardabíl to win a kingdom or perish in the attempt, but at every

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Valladolid, 1604, f. 50<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Krusinski agrees with this view. See p. 68 of the English version (London, 1728).

<sup>3</sup> He was born on Rajab 5, 892 (June 27, 1487).

stage he received reinforcements, so that at Tárúm his army numbered fifteen hundred men, and by the time he reached Arzinján on his way to attack Farrukh-Yasár, king of Shírwán, it had increased to seven thousand. Within a year he had taken Tabríz, been crowned king of Persia, and, despite the attempts of his counsellors to dissuade him, imposed the Shí'a doctrine on his subjects. He was warned that two-thirds of the people of Tabríz were Sunnís, and that the introduction into the prayers and professions of Faith of the distinctively Shí'a clauses, and more especially the cursing of the first three Caliphs, Abú Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmán, might lead to trouble. "God and the Immaculate Imáms are with me," he replied, "and I fear no one. By God's help, if the people utter one word of protest, I will draw the sword and leave not one of them alive<sup>1</sup>." He was as good as his word, and when the above-mentioned anathema was uttered all men were commanded, on pain of death, to exclaim, "May it (*i.e.* the curse) be more, not less!" (*Bísh bád, kam ma-bád!*).

Ruthless and bloodthirsty as he showed himself, Sháh Isma'íl, as depicted by contemporary Venetian travellers, had many attractive characteristics. At the age of thirteen he was, according to Caterino Zeno, "of noble presence and a truly royal bearing, ... nor did the virtues of his mind disaccord with the beauty of his person, as he had an elevated genius, and such a lofty idea of things as seemed incredible at such a tender age." Angiolello describes him as "very much beloved...for his beauty and pleasing manners"; and, when grown to man's estate, as "fair, handsome, and very pleasing; not very tall, but of a light and well-framed figure; rather stout than slight, with broad shoulders. His hair is reddish; he only wears moustachios, and uses his left hand instead of his right. He is as brave as a game-cock, and stronger than

<sup>1</sup> The original text is quoted on p. 53 *infra*, *ad calc.*

any of his lords; in the archery contests, out of the ten apples that are knocked down, he knocks down seven." The anonymous merchant, after describing Isma'íl's doings in Tabríz, adds "from the time of Nero to the present, I doubt whether so bloodthirsty a tyrant has ever existed," yet adds a little further on that at Caesarea "he caused proclamation to be made that everyone who brought provisions for sale should be liberally paid, and forbade his men, under pain of death, to take even as much as a handful of straw without paying for it, as it was a friendly city." He further describes him as "amiable as a girl, left-handed by nature, as lively as a fawn, and stronger than any of his lords," and says that "this Sophi is loved and revered by his people as a god, and especially by his soldiers, many of whom enter into battle without armour, expecting their master Ismael to watch over them in the fight."

The closest historical parallel to the Şafawí movement is, I think, afforded by the propaganda in favour of the 'Abbásids carried on by Abú Muslim in Persia with so great a success in the first half of the eighth century of our era. Both were consciously religious and only unconsciously, though none the less truly, racial; the chief difference was that the later movement had to confront in the person of the Ottoman Sultán Salím a far more energetic and formidable antagonist than the earlier in the Umayyad Caliph Marwán, and hence its more limited success; for while the 'Abbásid cause triumphed throughout almost the whole of the Eastern lands of Islám, the Şafawí triumph was limited to Persia, though without doubt at one time it threatened Turkey as well. Fear is the great incentive to cruelty, and it was chiefly fear which caused Sultán Salím to massacre in cold blood some forty thousand of his Shí'a subjects. Fear, however, was not the only motive of this ferocity; with it were mingled anger

Sháh Isma'íl enforces the Shí'a doctrine at Tabríz.

Character of Sháh Isma'íl.

Parallel between Şafawí and 'Abbásid propaganda.

Why the Turco-Persian quarrel became so embittered at this time.

and disappointment. For Sultán Salím was what is now called a Pan-Islamist, and his ambition was to be not merely the Sovereign of the greatest and most powerful Muhammadan State, but the supreme head of the whole Muslim world. His conquest of Egypt and the Holy Cities of Mecca and Madína in A.D. 1517, and his assumption of the title of Caliph, which, whether by threats or promises, or a combination of the two, he induced the last titular 'Abbásid Caliph to surrender to him, might well have given him this position but for Sháh Isma'íl and the barrier of heterodoxy which he had erected between the Turks, Egyptians and other Sunnis to the West and their fellow-believers to the East in Transoxiana, Afghánistán, Balúchistán and India. The Persians not only refused to recognise Sultán Salím as Caliph, but repudiated the whole theory of the Caliphate. The Turkish victory over the Persians at Cháldirán in August, 1514, failed of its results owing to the refusal of the Ottoman troops to push home their advantage, and thus robbed the succeeding Egyptian campaign of its full measure of success, and left a lasting soreness which served greatly to weaken the political power of Islám and to impose a check on Turkish ambitions whereby, as we have seen, Europe greatly profited. Between A.D. 1508, when it was taken by the Persians, and A.D. 1638, when it was finally recovered by the Turks, Baghdád, once the metropolis of Islám, changed hands many times as the tide of these bitter and interminable wars ebbed and flowed, until the increasing weakness and effeminacy of the later Şafawí kings left Turkey in undisputed possession of Mesopotamia.

#### ART AND LITERATURE.

One of the most curious and, at first sight, inexplicable

Remarkable lack  
of great poets  
under the  
Şafawís.

phenomena of the Şafawí period is the extraordinary dearth of notable poets in Persia during the two centuries of its duration. Architecture,

miniature-painting and other arts flourished exceedingly; the public buildings with which Sháh 'Abbás adorned his realms, and especially his capital Işfahán, have not ceased to command the admiration of all who beheld them from his time until the present day; and Bihzád and the other artists who flourished at the Tímúrid court of Herát found worthy successors in Riḏá-yi-'Abbásí and his colleagues. Yet, though poets innumerable are mentioned in the *Tuhfa-i-Sámt*<sup>1</sup> and other contemporary biographies and histories, there is hardly one (if we exclude Jámí, Hátífí, Hilálí and other poets of Khurásán, who were really the survivors of the school of Herát) worthy to be placed in the first class. During the seventy stormy years of Tímúr's life there were at least eight or ten poets besides the great Háfiz, who outshone them all, whose names no writer on Persian literature could ignore; while during the two hundred and twenty years of Şafawí rule there was in Persia, so far as I have been able to ascertain, hardly one of conspicuous merit or originality. I say "in Persia" advisedly, for a brilliant group of poets from Persia, of whom 'Urff of Shíráz (d. A.D. 1590) and Şá'ib of Işfahán (d. A.D. 1670) are perhaps the most notable, adorned the court of the "Great Moghuls" in India, and these were in many cases not settlers or the sons of emigrants, but men who went from Persia to India to make their fortunes and returned home when their fortunes were made. This shows that it was not so much lack of talent as lack of patronage which makes the list of distinctively Şafawí poets so meagre. The phenomenon is noticed by Riḏá-qulí Khán in the preface to his great anthology of Persian poets entitled *Majma'u-l-Fuṣahá*<sup>2</sup>, composed in the middle of the last century, as well

<sup>1</sup> This biography of contemporary poets by Prince Sâm Mírzá, the son of Sháh Isma'íl, is another work which urgently needs publication.

<sup>2</sup> Lithographed at Tíhrán in two large volumes in 1295/1878.

as by European scholars like the late Dr Ethé, who have written on Persian poetry; with this difference, that the European writers commonly speak of Jámí as the last great Persian poet, and consider that during the four centuries which have elapsed since his death Persia has produced no poet of eminence, while Riḍá-qulí Khán, rightly as I think, places certain modern poets of the Qájár period, notably such men as Qá'ání, Furúghí and Yaghmá, in the first rank.

That no great poet should have arisen in Persia in days otherwise so spacious and so splendid as those of the Şafawís

seemed to me so remarkable that I wrote to my learned and scholarly friend Mírzá Muḥammad Khán of Qazwín, to whose industry and acumen students of Persian owe so much, to ask him, first, whether he accepted this statement as a fact, and secondly, if he did, how he explained it. In reply, in a letter dated May 24, 1911, he wrote as follows:

“There is at any rate no doubt that during the Şafawí period literature and poetry in Persia had sunk to a very

low ebb, and that not one single poet of the first rank can be reckoned as representing this epoch.

The chief reason for this, as you yourself have observed, seems to have been that these kings, by reason of their political aims and strong antagonism to the Ottoman Empire, devoted the greater part of their energies to the propagation of the Shí'a doctrine and the encouragement of divines learned in its principles and laws. Now although these divines strove greatly to effect the religious unification of Persia (which resulted in its political unification), and laid the foundations of this present-day Persia, whose inhabitants are, speaking generally, of one faith, one tongue, and one race, yet, on the other hand, from the point of view of literature, poetry, Şúffism and mysticism, and, to use their own expression, everything connected with the ‘Accomplishments’ (as opposed to the

Reasons for  
this dearth  
of poets.

Mírzá Mu-  
hammad Khán's  
views on this  
subject.

‘Legalities’<sup>1</sup>, they not merely fell far short in the promotion thereof, but sought by every means to injure and annoy the representatives of these ‘Accomplishments,’ who were generally not too firmly established in the Religious Law and its derivatives. In regard to the Şúffís particularly they employed every kind of severity and vexation, whether by exile, expulsion, slaughter or reprimand, slaying or burning many of them with their own hands or by their sentence. Now the close connection between poetry and Belles Lettres on the one hand, and Şúffism and Mysticism on the other, at any rate in Persia, is obvious, so that the extinction of one necessarily involves the extinction and destruction of the other. Hence it was that under this dynasty learning, culture, poetry and mysticism completely deserted Persia, and the cloisters, monasteries, retreats and rest-houses [of the *darwishes*] were so utterly destroyed that there is now throughout the whole of Persia no name or sign of such charitable foundations, though formerly, as, for instance, in the time of Ibn Baṭúṭa, such institutions were to be found in every town, hamlet and village, as abundantly appears from the perusal of his Travels, wherein he describes how in every place, small or great, where he halted, he alighted in such buildings, of which at the present day no name or sign exists. Anyone ignorant of the circumstances of the Şafawí period might well wonder whether this Persia and that are the same country, and the creed of its inhabitants the same Islám; and, if so, why practically, with rare exceptions, there exists now not a single monastery throughout the whole of Persia, while in those parts of Turkey, such as Mesopotamia, Kurdistán and Sulaymáníyya, which did not remain under the Şafawí dominion, there are many such buildings just as there were in Ibn Baṭúṭa's days.

“At all events during the Şafawí period in place of great

و بقول خودشان هرچه معلق بكمالات بود (در مقابل شریعات)<sup>1</sup>

poets and philosophers there arose theologians, great indeed, but harsh, dry, fanatical and formal, like the Majlisís, the *Muḥaqqiq-i-thānt*, Shaykh Ḥurr-i-Āmulí and Shaykh-i-Bahá'í, etc."

Most professional poets in the East are primarily panegyrists, and if Riḍá-qulí Khán is correct in his assertion that the Şafawí kings, especially Ṭahmásp and 'Abbás the Great, expressed a wish that laudatory poems should be addressed to the Imáms rather than to themselves, another and a more creditable cause for the diminution of poets in their realms is indicated. More material benefits were to be looked for from the Great Moghuls<sup>1</sup> than from the Imáms, and hence the eyes and feet of the more mercenary poets turned rather to Dihlí than to Karbalá. But to religious poetry commemorating the virtues and sufferings of the Imáms a great impetus was given in Persia, and of these poets Muḥtasham of Káshán (d. A.D. 1588) was the most eminent. But, besides these more formal and classical elegies, it is probable that much of the simpler and often very touching verse, wherein the religious feelings of the Persians find expression during the Muḥarram mourning, dates from this period, when every means was employed to stimulate and develop these sentiments of devotion to the House of 'Alí and detestation of its oppressors. On the other hand the dramatisation of these moving scenes, which now form so remarkable a feature of the Muḥarram mourning (*Ta'ziya*), and are often described by European writers as "Miracle Plays," seems to have taken place at a much later period. That careful writer Olearius spent the month of Muḥarram, A.H. 1047 (May-June, 1637) at Ardabíl, the sanctuary of the Şafawí family,

<sup>1</sup> The liberality of Humáyún towards poets and men of letters is especially noticed under the year of his death (962/1555) in the *Aḥsanu't-Tawárikh*. This and the succeeding topics will be more fully discussed in a subsequent chapter.

and gives a very full description of all that he saw, the mournings, wailings, lamentations and cuttings culminating on the '*Ashúrá*, the tenth day of the month or *Rúz-i-Qatl*, but he makes no mention of any dramatic representations, so that it is pretty certain that none existed at that time. To elucidate this point I addressed enquiries to two well-informed and intelligent Persian friends, Sayyid Taqí-záda and Mírzá Ḥusayn Dánish. The former expressed the opinion that while the solemn recitations known as *Rawḍa-khwánt* (i.e. the reading from the pulpit of the *Rawḍatu'sh-Shuhadá*, or "Garden of the Martyrs," and other similar books) dates from Şafawí times, the *Ta'ziya-gardánt*, *shabth*, or "Passion Play" was of much later date, and perhaps owes something to European influences. The latter also placed the origin of these "Passion Plays" (of which Sir Lewis Pelly's translations give a good idea to the English reader) about the end of the eighteenth or beginning of the nineteenth century, i.e. at the beginning of the Qájár period, and incidentally cited the following interesting verses by Shaykh Riḍá-yi-Kurd in illustration of the view that the Persian dislike of 'Umar is due not less to the fact that he conquered Persia and overthrew the Sásánian dynasty than to his usurpation of the rights of 'Alí and Fátima :

بشكست عُمَرُ پُشْتِ هُزْبِرَانِ اَجْمَرَا  
 بَرِ بَادِ فَنَا دَادِ رِكْ وَ رِشَهٗ جَمْرَا  
 اَيْنِ عَرَبِدَهٗ بَرِ غَصَبِ خِلَافَتِ زِ عَلِي نِيَسْتِ  
 بِا آلِ عَمْرِ كِيَنَهٗ قَدِيرِ اسْتِ عَجْمَرَا

"Umar broke the back of the lions of the thicket:  
 He cast to the winds the thews and sinews of Jamshíd.  
 This quarrel is not about the usurpation of the Caliphate from 'Alí:  
 Persia has an ancient grudge against the House of 'Umar."

In conclusion we must not omit to notice another step taken by the Şafawí kings which added greatly to the

consolidation of Persia and the prevention of a continued outflow of men and money from the country, namely the exaltation and popularisation of Mashhad, Qum and other holy cities of Persia, whereby the tide of pilgrims was to a considerable extent confined within the limits of their Empire, in which, as we have seen, the most sacred shrines of Karbalá, Najaf and Mashhad 'Alf were long included before they finally fell under Turkish dominion<sup>1</sup>.

## POSTSCRIPT.

I am indebted to my friend Mr H. L. Rabino, of H.B.M.'s Consular Service, for the following valuable notes on the celebration of the Muḥarram mourning at Baghdád as early as the fourth Muhammadan (tenth Christian) century. I have only the text of the two passages (one in German and the other in Persian): the reference was probably given in the accompanying letter (December 23, 1922), which has unfortunately been mislaid. I have an impression that they are taken from one of Dorn's articles, probably published in the *Mélanges Asiatiques*. The whole quotation runs as follows:

"Die 'ta'sieh' wurden in Bagdad i. J. 963 von der Buwaihiden *Mu'iss-ed-daula* eingeführt, wie uns Ahmed b. Abu'l-Feth in seinem *Werke احسن القصص الخ* (Inscr. Mus. As. No. 567<sup>a</sup>) berichtet."

بنای تعزیه سید الشهداء در بغداد در سنه ۳۰۲ هجری  
در تاریخ ابن کثیر شامی آورده که معز الدولة احمد بن بویه  
در بغداد در دهه اول محرّم امر کرد تمامی بازارهای بغداد را  
بسته مردم سیاه عزا پوشیدند و بتعزیه سید الشهداء پرداختند  
چون این قاعده در بغداد رسم نبود لهذا علمای اهل سنت آنرا  
بدعتی بزرگ دانستند و چون بر معز الدولة دستی نداشتند چاره

<sup>1</sup> See Krusinski, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-161.

جز تسلیم نتوانستند، بعد از آن هر ساله تا انقراض دولت دیالمه  
شیعیان در ده روز اول محرّم در جمیع بلاد رسم تعزیه بجا می  
آوردند و در بغداد تا اوایل سلطنت طغرل سلجوقی بر قرار بود،

"Institution of the mourning for the Chief of Martyrs  
in Baghdád in A.H. 352 [A.D. 963].

"It is related in the History of Ibn Kathír the Syrian that Mu'izzu'd-Dawla Aḥmad ibn Buwayh issued orders in Baghdád that during the first ten days of Muḥarram all the bazaars of Baghdád should be closed, and that the people should wear black for mourning and betake themselves to mourning for the Chief of Martyrs [the Imám Ḥusayn]. Since this procedure was not customary in Baghdád, the Sunnī doctors regarded it as a great innovation; but since they had no control over Mu'izzu'd-Dawla, they could do nothing but submit. Thereafter every year until the collapse of the Daylamite [or Buwayhid] dynasty, this custom of mourning was observed by the Shī'ites in all countries during the first ten days of Muḥarram. In Baghdád it continued until the early days of the reign of Ṭughril the Saljúq."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE CREATION OF THE ŞAFAWÍ POWER TO 930/1524. SHÁH ISMA'ÍL AND HIS ANCESTORS.

That Shaykh Şafíyyu'd-Dín, the saintly recluse of Ardabíl from whom the Şafawí kings of Persia derived their descent and their name, was really an important and influential person in his own day, is a fact susceptible of historical proof. He who wins a throne and founds a great dynasty destined to endure for more than two centuries is apt, if he be of lowly origin, to create, or allow to be created, some legend connecting his ancestors with famous kings, statesmen or warriors of old, or otherwise reflecting glory on a House which, till he made it powerful and illustrious, held but a humble place in men's esteem. But Sháh Isma'íl, sixth in descent from Shaykh Şafí (as we shall henceforth call him for brevity), who founded the Şafawí dynasty about the beginning of the sixteenth century of the Christian era, and raised Persia to a position of splendour which she had scarcely held since the overthrow of the ancient and noble House of Sásán by the Arabs in the seventh century, had no occasion to resort to these devices; for whether or no Shaykh Şafí was directly descended from the seventh Imám of the Shí'a, Músá Kázim, and through him from 'Alí ibn Abí Tálíb<sup>1</sup> and Fátima the Prophet's daughter (and his

<sup>1</sup> The full pedigree is given (with only slight variants) in the *Şafawatu's-Şafá, Ahsanu't-Tawárikh, Silsilatu'n-Nasab-i-Şafawiyya* and most other histories of this dynasty, and runs as follows: (1) Şafíyyu'd-Dín Abu'l-Fatḥ Isháq b. (2) Amínu'd-Dín Jibrá'íl b. (3) Şálih b. (4) Qutbu'd-Dín Aḥmad b. (5) Saláhu'd-Dín Rashíd b. (6) Muḥammad Háfiz b. (7) 'Awaḍ al-Khawáşş b. (8) Fírúزشáh-i-Zarrín-kuláh b. (9) Muḥammad b. (10) Sharafsháh b. (11) Muḥammad b.

### CH. II] EVIDENCE OF SHAYKH ŞAFF'S IMPORTANCE 33

claim is probably at least as good as that of any contemporary Sayyid), two facts prove that in his own time (the thirteenth century) he was highly accounted as a saint and spiritual guide.

The first and more important of these two facts is the concern shown by that great Minister Rashídu'd-Dín Faḍlu'lláh for his welfare, and the desire to win his favour and intercession. In the very rare collection of the Minister's letters known as the *Munsha'át-i-Rashidi*<sup>1</sup> there occur two documents affording proof of this. The first is a letter (No. 45 of the collection, ff. 145<sup>b</sup>-149<sup>a</sup> of the MS.) addressed to Shaykh Şafíyyu'd-Dín himself, offering to his monastery (*Khánqáh*) a yearly gift of corn, wine, oil, cattle, sugar, honey and other food-stuffs for the proper entertainment of the notables of Ardabíl on the anniversary of the Prophet's birthday, on condition that prayers should be offered up at the conclusion of the feast for the writer and benefactor. The second (No. 49, ff. 161<sup>a</sup>-169<sup>b</sup>) is addressed by Rashíd to his son Mír Aḥmad, governor of Ardabíl, enjoining on him consideration for all its inhabitants, and especially "to act in such wise that His Holiness the Pole of the Heaven of Truth, the Swimmer in the Oceans of the Law, the Pacer of the Hippodrome of the Path, the Shaykh of Islám and of the Muslims, the Proof of such as attain the Goal, the Exemplar of the Bench of Purity, the Rose-tree of the Garden of Fidelity, *Shaykh Şafíyyu'l-Millat wa'd-Dín* (may

(12) Ḥasan b. (13) Muḥammad b. (14) Ibráhm b. (15) Ja'far b. (16) Muḥammad b. (17) Isma'íl b. (18) Muḥammad b. (19) Sayyid Aḥmad al-A'rábí b. (20) Abú Muḥammad Qásim b. (21) Abu'l-Qásim Ḥamza b. (22) AL-IMÁM MÚSÁ AL-KÁZIM, the seventh Imám and fifth in direct descent from 'Alí and Fátima.

<sup>1</sup> See my article on the *Persian MSS. of the late Sir Albert Houtum-Schindler, K.C.I.E.* in the *J.R.A.S.* for Oct. 1917, pp. 693-4, and my *Persian Literature under Tartar Dominion* (hereinafter sometimes denoted as "*Pers. Lit. iii*"), pp. 80-87.



God Most High perpetuate the blessings of His Holy Exhalations!) may be well pleased with and grateful to thee<sup>1</sup>." These letters, and especially the second, which is filled with the most exaggerated praises of Shaykh Şaffí, sufficiently prove the high repute which he enjoyed amongst his contemporaries<sup>2</sup>.

The second fact germane to our thesis is that comparatively soon after his death a most extensive monograph on his life, character, teachings, doctrines, virtues and miracles was compiled by one of his followers, the *darwish* Tawakkul<sup>3</sup> ibn Isma'íl, commonly called Ibnu'l-Bazzáz, apparently under the inspiration and direction of Shaykh Şadru'd-Dín, who succeeded his father Shaykh Şaffí as head of the Order and held this position for fifty-eight years (A.D. 1334-1392). This rare and important book has never been printed<sup>4</sup>, but is the chief source of all later accounts of the head of the family and dynasty, in most of which it is frequently and explicitly cited. A much later recension of it was made in the reign of Sháh Tahmásp (A.D. 1524-1576) by a certain Abu'l-

و نوعی سازی که جناب قطب فلك حقیقت، و سیاح بحار<sup>1</sup>  
شریعت، مساح مضمار طریقت، شیخ الاسلام و المسلمین، برهان  
الواصلین، قدوه، صفة، صفا، گلبن دوحه و فا، شیخ صفی الملة  
و الدین ادام الله تعالی برکات انفاسه الشریفة از تو راضی و شاکر  
باشد

<sup>1</sup> Shaykh Şaffí died in 735/1334 at the age of 85. Rashídu'd-Dín was put to death in A.D. 1318 at the age of 70 or somewhat over.

<sup>2</sup> Or Túkílí (توكلی) as it is written and pointed in a note in Mr Ellis's manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> Since this was written I have obtained through the kindness of one of my Persian correspondents a copy of an excellent lithographed edition published at Bombay in 1329/1911, of the very existence of which I was ignorant when this chapter was written.

Fath al-Husaynî. I have personal knowledge of only three manuscripts, Add. 11745 of the British Museum<sup>1</sup>; No. 87 of the Pote Collection in the library of King's College, Cambridge<sup>2</sup>; and a fine copy made at Ardabíl in 1030/1621, now belonging to Mr A. G. Ellis, who, with his customary generosity, placed it at my disposal for as long as I required it. This exhaustive work comprises an Introduction, twelve chapters, and a Conclusion, each of which is divided into numerous sections<sup>3</sup>, and its contents are summarized by Rieu with his usual precision. It contains interesting matter, diluted by much that is wearisome save to a devoted disciple, and represents on a more extensive scale the type of hagiography familiar to all Persian students in such books as the *Manáqibul-'Arifin* of Aflákí, available in the English version of Redhouse<sup>4</sup> and the French of Huart<sup>5</sup>. The extracts from it included in most later histories of the family, notably the *Silsilatu'n-Nasab-i-Şafawíyya*<sup>6</sup>, will suffice to satisfy the curiosity of most readers, though a careful perusal and analysis of the original work would undoubtedly yield results of value, most of the anecdotes and sayings being vouched for by Shaykh Şadru'd-Dín. But before further discussing Shaykh Şaffí and his descendants something more must be said about his ancestors.

<sup>1</sup> See Rieu's *Pers. Cat.*, pp. 345-6.

<sup>2</sup> See my *Suppl. Hand-list*, p. 137, No. 837.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. viii comprises no less than 27 sections.

<sup>4</sup> Prefixed to his metrical translation of the First Book of the *Mesnevi* (*Mathnawí*) of Jalálu'd-Dín Rúmí, published in Trübner's Oriental Series in 1881. The *Manáqib*, or "Acts of the Adepts," occupies pp. 3-135.

<sup>5</sup> *Les Saints des Derviches Tourneurs (Études d'Hagiographie Musulmane)*, vol. i (Paris, Leroux), 1918; vol. ii, 1922.

<sup>6</sup> See my account of this rare and interesting work in the *J.R.A.S.* for July, 1921, pp. 395-418. Both Dr Babinger and M. Minorsky have called my attention to the fact that another MS. of this work at St Petersburg was described by Khanikoff in the *Mélanges Asiatiques*, i, pp. 580-583.