

Bankipore Library, and, encouraged by Sir E. Denison Ross, prepared the text for publication at the expense of the Asiatic Society of Bengal¹.

Mention must also be made of another Arabic work on Shí'a poets entitled *Nasimatu's-Sahar ft-man tashayya'a wa sha'ar* ("the Morning Breeze, on those who held the Shí'a faith and composed poetry"), compiled by Yúsusuf ibn Yaḥyá al-Yamaní aṣ-Ṣan'ání, a rare book, hitherto, so far as I know, unpublished, of which I am fortunate enough to possess a manuscript of the second half, containing the letters ط to ع². Only poets who wrote in Arabic are noticed.

Of these books the *Rawḍātu'l-Jannát* is the most scholarly and comprehensive, but those who read Persian only will derive much instruction and some amusement from the *Majálisu'l-Mu'mintn*, *Nujúmu's-Samá*, and *Qišaṣu'l-'Ulamá*. The older "Books of the Men," such as the works of at-Ṭúsí and an-Najáshí, are generally very jejune, and suited for reference rather than reading. As it is with the theologians of the Ṣafawí and subsequent periods that we are chiefly concerned here, a very few words about the older 'ulamá of the Shí'a will suffice, though with their names, titles and approximate dates the student should be familiar. The most important of these earlier divines are "the three Muḥammads³," al-Kulayní (Muḥammad ibn Ya'qúb, d. 329/941), Ibn Bábawayhi (Muḥammad ibn 'Alí ibn Músá, d. 381/991-2), and the already-mentioned Ṭúsí (Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan, d. 460/

The founders of Shí'a theology: the "three Muḥammads" and the "four Books."

Comparison of these works.

An anthology of Shí'a poets.

¹ It was printed at the Baptist Mission Press at Calcutta in 1330/1912, and comprises 607 pp.

² For description of another copy see Ahlwardt's *Berlin Arabic Catalogue*, vol. vi, pp. 502-3, No. 7423.

³ See the *Qišaṣu'l-'Ulamá*, p. 221 of the Lucknow edition, s.v. Muḥammad Báqir-i-Majlisí.

1067). Of these the first composed the *Káfi*, the second *Man lá yaḥḍuru-hu'l-Faqth* (a title which approximates in sense to our familiar "Every man his own Lawyer"), and the third the *Istibṣár* and the *Tahdhíbu'l-Aḥkám*, which are known collectively amongst the Shí'a as "the Four Books" (*al-Kutubu'l-arba'a*)¹, and of which full particulars will be found in the above-mentioned *Kashfú'l-Ḥujub*.

The "three Muḥammads" of later days.

More modern times also produced their "three Muḥammads," namely Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn 'Alí...al-Ḥurr al-'Ámilí (author of the above-mentioned *Amalu'l-Ámil*); Muḥammad ibnu'l-Murtaḍá, commonly known as Mullá Muḥsin-i-Fayz (Fayd), who died about 1090/1679; and Muḥammad Báqir-i-Majlisí (d. 1111/1699-1700)². Each of these also produced a great book, the first the *Wasá'il*, the second the *Wáfi*, and the third the *Biháru'l-Anwár* ("Oceans of Light"), which constitute the "Three Books" of the later time. These seven great works on Shí'a theology, jurisprudence and tradition

Arabic the usual medium of theological works.

are, of course, like the great bulk of the works of the Muhammadan Doctors and Divines, written in Arabic, which language occupies no less a position in Islám than does Latin in the theological literature of the Church of Rome. Of them space will not permit me to speak further; it is the more popular Persian manuals of doctrine, whereby the great theologians of the Ṣafawí period sought so successfully to diffuse their religious teachings, which must chiefly concern us here, and even of these it will be impossible to give an adequate account. According to the *Rawḍātu'l-Jannát*³, Kamálu'd-Dín Ḥusayn of Ardabíl, called "the Divine Doctor" (*al-*

Persian theological works of the later period.

¹ Or *al-Uṣūlu'l-arba'a* ("the Four Principles"). See *Nujúmu's-Samá*, p. 75.

² See p. 120 *supra*.

³ Vol. i, p. 185.

Iláhi), a contemporary of Sháh Isma'íl I, "was the first to compose books in Persian on matters connected with the Holy Law according to the doctrine of the Shí'a":

نُقل أَنَّهُ أَوَّلُ مَنْ صَنَّفَ فِي الشَّرْعِيَّاتِ عَلَى مَذْهَبِ الشَّيْعَةِ بِالْفَارِسِيَّةِ

We have already seen¹ what difficulty Sháh Isma'íl experienced on his capture of Tabríz in finding teachers or

books to inculcate the doctrines of the creed which he was determined to impose throughout his dominions, and it is not strange, though the fact is often overlooked, that it became necessary to introduce into Persia learned Arabs of the

Shí'a persuasion, where such were obtainable. Two districts furnished the bulk of these: Bahrayn, across the Persian Gulf, and Jabal 'Ámil in Syria². To the divines furnished by each of

these two localities a special biographical work has, as we have seen, been devoted, namely the *Lú'lú'atu'l-Bahrayn* and the *Amalu'l-Ámil*. Some of them came to Persia totally ignorant of the Persian language, like Sayyid Ni'matu'lláh al-Jazá'irí, who, on reaching Shíráz with his brother, had to obtain from a Persian acquaintance the sentence "*Madrása-i-Mansúriyya-rá mi-khwáhm*" ("We want the Mansúriyya College"), and even then each learned only half of this simple phrase and spoke alternately³.

¹ Pp. 54-5 *supra*.

² See G. le Strange's *Palestine under the Moslems*, pp. 75-6 and 470.

³ *Qīṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá* (ed. Lucknow, p. 229; ed. Tīhrán, p. 333):

... پس با پای برهنه آن راه را طی کردیم و من یازده ساله بوده و در وقت نماز صبح بشیراز رسیدیم پس بخانه آن شیخ که با ما بود رفتیم و منزلش از مدرسه منصوریه دور بود و ما می خواستیم که در آن مدرسه منزل کنیم زیرا که بعضی از اقارب ما در آنجا بود پس آن شیخ گفت که این راه را بگیر و بگوئید که

It is the autobiography of this same Sayyid Ni'matu'lláh, as given in the *Qīṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá*, which furnishes us with

so unusually vivid a picture of the privations and hardships experienced by a poor student of Divinity. He was born in 1050/1640-1 and

wrote this narrative when he was thirty-nine years of age¹, "in which brief life," he adds, "what afflictions have befallen me!" These afflictions began when he was only five years old, when, while he was at play with his little companions,

his father appeared, saying, "Come with me, my little son, that we may go to the school-master, so that thou mayst learn to read and write, in order that thou mayst attain to a high degree." In

spite of tears, protests, and appeals to his mother he had to go to school, where, in order the sooner to escape and return to his games, he applied himself diligently to his lessons, so that by the time he was aged five years and a half he had finished the *Qur'án*, besides learning many poems. This, however, brought him no relief and no return to his childish games, for he was now committed to the care of a blind

grammarian to study the Arabic paradigms and the grammar of Zanjání. For this blind teacher he had to act as guide, while his next preceptor

مدرسه منصوریه را میخواستیم و ما فارسی نمی دانستیم پس ما رفتیم و سخن را تقطیع کردیم پس يك كلمه را من ضبط كردم و كلمه ديگرا آن ديگري ضبط كرد پس هر كه را كه می دیدیم يكي میگفت مدرسه منصوریه آن ديگري میگفت كه میخواستیم تا بآن مدرسه رسیدیم

¹ He died, according to the *Kashfu'l-Hujub*, p. 70, No. 328, in 1130/1718. Since writing this, I have found the Arabic original of this autobiography in one of my MSS. (C. 15) entitled *Kitābu'l-Anwārī'n-Nu'māniyya*, composed by Sayyid Ni'matu'lláh in 1089/1678. It concludes the volume, and occupies ff. 329-34.

Autobiography of a student of theology.

First steps in learning.

Tyranny of teachers.

Scarcity of works of Shí'a theology in early Safawí days.

Importation to Persia of Shí'a doctors from Arabia.

compelled him to cut and carry fodder for his beasts and mulberry-leaves for his silk-worms. He then sought another teacher with whom to study the *Káfiya* of Ibnu'l-Ḥájib, and found an imposing personage dressed in white with an enormous turban "like a small cupola," who, however, was unable to answer his questions. "If you don't know enough grammar to answer these questions, why do you wear this great load on your head?" enquired the boy; whereupon the audience laughed, and the teacher rose up ashamed and departed. "This led me to exert myself to master the paradigms of grammar," says the writer; "but I now ask pardon of God for my question to that believing man, while thanking Him that this incident happened before I had attained maturity and become fully responsible for my actions."

After pursuing his studies with various other masters, he obtained his father's permission to follow his elder brother to Ḥuwayza. The journey thither by boat through narrow channels amongst the weeds, tormented by mosquitoes "as large as wasps" and with only the milk of buffaloes to assuage his hunger, gave him his first taste of the discomforts of travel to a poor student. In return for instruction in Jámí's and Járbardí's commentaries and the *Sháfiya*, his teacher exacted from him "much service," making him and his fellow-students collect stones for a house which he wished to build, and bring fish and other victuals for him from the neighbouring town. He would not allow them to copy his lecture-notes, but they used to purloin them when opportunity arose and transcribe them. "Such was his way with us," says the writer, "yet withal we were well satisfied to serve him, so that we might derive benefit from his holy breaths."

He attended the college daily till noon for instruction and discussion, and on returning to his lodging was so hungry

An ignorant Professor.

Hardships of travel "in search of knowledge."

that, in default of any better food, he used to collect the melon-skins cast aside on the ground, wipe off the dust, and eat what fragments of edible matter remained. One day he came upon his companion similarly employed. Each had tried to conceal from the other the shifts to which he was reduced for food, but now they joined forces and collected and washed their melon-skins in company. Being unable to afford lamps or candles, they learned by heart the texts they were studying, such as the *Alfiyya* of Ibn Málik and the *Káfiya*, on moonlight nights, and on the dark nights repeated them by heart so as not to forget them. To avoid the distraction of conversation, one student would on these occasions often bow his head on his knees and cover his eyes, feigning headache.

After a brief visit to his home, he determined to go to Shíráz, and set out by boat for Bašra by the Shaṭṭu'l-'Arab. He was so afraid of being stopped and brought back by his father that, during the earlier part of the voyage, he stripped off his clothes and waded behind the boat, holding on to the rudder, until he had gone so far that recognition was no longer probable, when he re-entered the boat. Farther on he saw a number of people on the bank, and one of his fellow-passengers called out to them to enquire whether they were Sunnís or Shí'a. On learning that they were Sunnís, he began to abuse them and invoke curses on the first three Calíphs, to which they replied with volleys of stones.

The writer remained only a short while at Bašra, then governed by Ḥusayn Páshá, for his father followed him thither to bring him home, but he escaped privily with his brother, and, as already narrated¹, made his way to Shíráz and established himself in the Manšúriyya College, being then only eleven

Study under difficulties.

From Bašra to Shíráz.

At College in Shíráz.

¹ P. 360 *supra*.

years of age. He found one of the tutors lecturing on the *Alfiyya* of Ibn Málík, who, on the conclusion of the lecture, questioned him as to his aims and adventures, and finally, seizing him by the ear and giving it a sharp twist, said, "O my son, do not make thyself an Arab Shaykh or seek for supremacy, and do not waste thy time! Do not thus, that so perchance thou mayst become a scholar."

In this college also the life was hard and the daily allowance of food inadequate, and the writer's brother

wished to return home, but he himself determined to remain, copying books for a pittance, and working almost all night through the hot

weather in a room with closed doors while his fellow-students slept on the roof. Often he had neither oil for his lamp nor bread to eat, but must work by moonlight, faint with hunger, while in the winter mornings his fingers often bled with the cold as he wrote his notes. Thus passed two or three years more, and, though his eyesight was permanently affected by the strain to which it was subjected, he began to write books himself, a commentary on the *Káfiya*, and another, entitled *Miftáhu'l-Labíb*, on the *Tahdhíb* of Shaykh Bahá'u'd-Dín Muḥammad¹. He now began to extend the range of his studies beyond Arabic grammar, and to frequent the lectures of more eminent teachers from Baghdád, al-Aḥsá and Baḥrayn, amongst them Shaykh

Ja'far al-Baḥrání. One day he did not attend this Shaykh's lecture because of the news which had reached him of the death of certain relatives.

When he reappeared on the following day the Shaykh was very angry and refused to give him any further instruction, saying, "May God curse my father and mother if I teach

¹ See the *Kashfu'l-Hujub*, p. 146, No. 725. The author died in 1031/1621-2. He was one of the most notable theologians of the reign of Sháh 'Abbás the Great, and is commonly called in Persia "Shaykh-i-Bahá'í." See p. 407 *infra*.

you any more! Why were you not here yesterday?" And, when the writer explained the cause of his absence, he said, "You should have attended the lecture, and indulged in your mourning afterwards"; and only when the student had sworn never to play the truant again whatever might happen was he allowed after an interval to resume his attendance. Finally he so far won the approval of this somewhat exacting teacher that the latter offered him his daughter in marriage; an honour from which he excused himself by saying, "If God will, after I have finished my studies and become a Doctor (*'álim*), I will marry." Soon afterwards the teacher obtained an appointment in India, at Ḥaydarábád in the Deccan.

Sayyid Ní'matu'lláh remained in Shíráz for nine years, and for the most part in such poverty that often he swallowed nothing all day except water. The

earlier part of the night he would often spend with a friend who lived some way outside the town so as to profit by his lamp for study, and thence he would grope his way through the dark and deserted bazaars, soothing the fierce dogs which guarded their masters' shops, to the distant mosque where he lectured before dawn. At his parents' wish he returned home for a while and took to himself a wife, but being reproached by a learned man whom he visited with abandoning his studies while still ill-grounded in the Science of Traditions, he left his parents and his wife (he had only been married for three weeks) and returned to the Manşúriyya College at Shíráz. Soon afterwards, however, it was destroyed by a fire, in which one student and a large part of the library perished; and about the same time he received tidings of his father's death. These two misfortunes, combined with other circumstances, led him to leave Shíráz and go to Işfahán.

During his early days at Işfahán he still suffered from the same poverty with which he had been only too familiar

Sufferings from cold and hunger.

Life of a poor student at Shíráz.

An exacting Professor.

in the past, often eating salted meat to increase his thirst, so that the abundance of water he was thereby impelled to drink might destroy his appetite for solid food. The change in his fortune took place when he made the acquaintance and attracted the notice of that great but fanatical divine Mullá Muḥammad Báqir-i-Majlisí, perhaps the most notable and powerful doctor of the Shí'a who ever lived. He was admitted to the house of this famous man and lived with him for four years studying theology, and especially the Traditions¹. Yet in this case familiarity did not breed contempt, for, as the author mentions in his *Anwáru'n-Nu'mániyya*², though specially favoured by this formidable "Prince of the Church," he often, when summoned to his library to converse with him, or to help in the compilation of the *Biháru'l-Anwár*, would stand trembling outside the door for some moments ere he could summon up courage to enter.

He obtains a
lectureship at
Iṣfahán.

Thanks to this powerful patronage, however, he was appointed lecturer (*mudarris*) in a college recently founded by a certain Mírzá Taqí near the Bath of Shaykh-i-Bahá'í in Iṣfahán, which post he held for eight years, when the increasing weakness of his eyes and the inability of the oculists of Iṣfahán to afford him any relief determined him to set out again on his travels. He visited Sámarrá, Kázimayn, and other holy places in 'Iráq, whence he returned by way of Shúshtar to Iṣfahán. In 1079/1668-9 his brother died, and ten years later, when he penned this autobiography, he still

¹ As has been already mentioned (p. 359 *supra*), this powerful prelate was one of the "three Muḥammads" of the later time, and his great work on Shí'a tradition, the *Biháru'l-Anwár*, is still accounted in Persia the most authoritative work on this subject.

² See the *Kashfu'l-Hujub*, p. 70, No. 328. I have a MS. of this work obtained from the late Hájji 'Abdu'l-Majíd Belshah and now bearing the class-mark C. 15. As already noted (p. 361), it concludes (ff. 329-34) with the Arabic original of the narrative here given.

keenly felt this loss. After visiting Mashhad he returned to Ḥuwayza, where he was living a somewhat solitary and disillusioned life at the time of writing (1089/1678-9). Of his further adventures I have found no record, but his death did not take place until 1130/1718, only four years before the disaster which put an end to the Ṣafawí Dynasty.

I have given in a somewhat compressed form the whole of this illuminating narrative, one of those "human documents" which are so rare in Persian books (though indeed, as already noted on p. 361, it was originally written in Arabic), because it throws so much light on the life of the Persian student of theology, which, for the rest, *mutatis mutandis*, closely resembles that of the mediaeval European student. We see the child prematurely torn from the games and amusements suitable to his age to undergo a long, strenuous, and arid course of instruction in Arabic grammar and philology, reading one grammar after another in an ascending scale of difficulty, with commentaries, supercommentaries, glosses and notes on each; we see him as a boy, now fired with ambition, pursuing his studies in theology and law, half-starved, suffering alternately from the cold of winter and the heat of summer, ruining his eyesight by perusing crabbed texts by the fitful light of the moon, and his digestion by irregular and unwholesome meals, varied by intervals of starvation; cut off from home life and family ties; submerged in an ocean of formalism and fanaticism; himself in time adding to the piles of glosses and notes which serve rather to submerge and obscure than to elucidate the texts whereon they are based; and at last, if fortunate, attracting the favourable notice of some great divine, and becoming himself a *mudarris* (lecturer), a *mutawallí* (custodian of a shrine), or even a *mujtahid*.

But if the poor student's path was arduous, the possible prizes were great, though, of course, attained only by a few.

Power and position of the *mujtahids* under the Safawis and their successors.

IN THE EYES OF THE SAFAWI KINGS THE *mujtahid* WAS THE representative of the Expected Imám, whose name they never mentioned without adding the prayer, "May God hasten his glad advent!" (*'ajjala 'Uláhu faraja-hu!*). He had power of life and death. Hájji Şayyid Muḥammad Báqir ibn Muḥammad Taqí of Rasht, entitled *Hujjatu'l-Islám* ("the Proof of Islám"), is said to have put to death seventy persons for various sins or heresies. On the first occasion, being unable to find anyone to execute his sentence, he had to strike the first ineffective blow himself, after which someone came to his assistance and decapitated the victim, over whose body he then recited the funeral prayers, and while so doing fainted with emotion¹.

Another *mujtahid*, Áqá Muḥammad 'Alí, a contemporary of Karím Khán-i-Zand, acquired the title of *Şúft-kush* ("the Şúft-slayer") from the number of *'urafá* and *darwishes* whom he condemned to death².

Another, Mullá 'Abdu'lláh-i-Túní, induced Sháh 'Abbás the Great to walk in front of him as he rode through the *Maydán-i-Sháh*, or Royal Square, of Işfahán³, with the object of demonstrating to all men the honour in which learning was held.

Mullá Hasan of Yazd, who had invited his fellow-townsmen to expel, with every circumstance of disgrace, a tyrannical governor, was summoned to Tíhrán by Fath-'Alí Sháh to answer for his actions, and threatened with the bastinado unless he disavowed responsibility for this procedure. As he refused to do this, and persisted that he was entirely responsible for what had happened, he was actually tied up to receive the bastinado, though it was not actually inflicted. That night the Sháh was notified in a dream of the extreme displeasure with which the Prophet regarded

¹ *Qiṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá* (Lucknow ed.), p. 138.

² *Ibid.*, p. 210.

³ *Ibid.*, part ii, p. 54.

the disrespect shown by him to the exponent of his doctrine and law, and hastened next morning to offer his apologies and a robe of honour, which last was refused by the indignant ecclesiastic⁴.

Mullá Aḥmad of Ardabíl, called *Muqaddas* ("the Saint," died in 993/1585), being asked by one of the King's officers who had committed some fault to intercede for him, wrote to Sháh 'Abbás the Great in Persian as follows⁵:

بانی ملک عاریه عباس بداند که اگر این مرد اول ظالم بود
اکنون مظلوم مینماید چنانچه از تقصیر او بگذری شاید حق
سبحانه و تعالی از پاره تقصیرات تو بگذرد
کتبه بنده شاه ولایت احمد الاردبیلی

"Let 'Abbás, the founder of a borrowed empire³, know that this man, if he was originally an oppressor, now appears to be oppressed; so that, if thou wilt pass over his fault, perhaps God (Glorious and Exalted is He) may pass over some of thy faults.

"Written by Aḥmad al-Ardabílí, servant of the Lord of Saintship⁴."

To this the Sháh 'Abbás replied:

بعرض میرساند عباس که خدماتیکه فرموده بودند بجان منت
دانسته بتقدیر رسانید که این محب را از دعای خیر فراموش
نکند

کتبه کلب آستان علی عباس

"'Abbás makes representation that he accepts as a spiritual favour and has fulfilled the services which you enjoined on him. Do not forget [me] your friend in your prayers!

"Written by 'Abbás, the dog of 'Alí's threshold."

¹ *Qiṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá* (Lucknow ed.), pp. 99-100.

² This and the following anecdote are from the *Qiṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá* (Tíhrán ed., p. 260; Lucknow ed., p. 132).

³ Because it really belongs to the Expected Imám, and is only held by the Sháh as his trustee and vice-gerent.

⁴ *I.e.* 'Alí ibn Abí Tálíb, the First Imám.

Another *mujtahid* of Ardabil entitled *muḥaqqiq* ("the Investigator" or "Verifier") wrote on behalf of certain Sayyids to Sháh Ṭahmásp, who, on receiving the letter, rose to his feet, placed it on his eyes, and kissed it, and gave the fullest satisfaction to its demands. Then, because the letter addressed him as "O brother" (*Ayyuhá'l-Akh*), the Sháh caused it to be placed with his winding-sheet and ordered that it should be buried with him, "in order that," said he, "I may argue with the Angels of the Tomb, Munkir and Nakír, that I should not be subjected to their torment."

Still more extraordinary is another anecdote in the same work¹ of how Prince Muḥammad 'Alí Mírzá gave a thousand *túmáns* to each of two *mujtahids* in return for a paper, duly signed and sealed, promising him a place in Paradise. One of them (Sayyid Ridá ibn Sayyid Mahdí) hesitated to do this, but the Prince said, "Do you write the document and get the doctors of Karbalá and Najaf to witness it, and I will get it (*i.e.* the mansion in Paradise) from God Most High."

Many similar anecdotes might be cited, besides numerous miracles (*karámát*) ascribed to most of the leading divines, but enough has been said to show the extraordinary power and honour which they enjoyed. They were, indeed, more powerful than the greatest Ministers of State, since they could, and often did, openly oppose the Sháh and overcome him without incurring the fate which would almost inevitably have overtaken a recalcitrant Minister.

Nor is this a thing of the past, as is abundantly shown by the history of the overthrow of the Tobacco Concession in 1890-1, which was entirely effected, in the teeth of the Náṣiru'd-Dín Sháh and his Court, and the British Legation, by the *mujtahids*, headed by Hájji Mírzá Ḥasan-i-Shírází and Hájji Mírzá Ḥasan-i-Ashtiyání,

¹ *Qīṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá*, ed. Lucknow, p. 32.

A mansion in Paradise bought by a Prince.

Modern instances of clerical power.

inspired and prompted by that extraordinary man Sayyid Jamálu'd-Dín miscalled "the Afghán¹." Dr Feuvrier, the Sháh's French physician, who was in Ṭihrán at the time, gives a graphic account of this momentous struggle in his *Trois Ans à la Cour de Perse*². I have described it fully in my *Persian Revolution of 1905-1909*³, and also the still more important part played by Mullá Muḥammad Kázim of Khurásán and other patriotic *mujtahids*⁴ in the Persian struggle for freedom and independence in the first decade of this century of our era. Mullá Muḥammad Kázim, a noble example of the patriot-priest, deeply moved by the intolerable tyranny and aggression of the then government of Russia, formally proclaimed a *jihád*, or religious war, against the Russians on December 11, 1911, and was setting out from Karbalá for Persia in pursuance of this object when he died very suddenly on the following day, the victim, as was generally believed, of poison⁵. He was not the only ecclesiastical victim of patriotism, for the *Thiqatu'l-Islám* was publicly hanged by the Russians at Tabríz on the 'Ashúrá, or 10th of Muḥarram, 1330 (January 1, 1912)⁶, a sacrilegious act only surpassed by the bombardment three months later of the shrine of the Imám Ridá at Mashhad, which many Persians believe to have been avenged by the fate which subsequently overtook the Tsar and his family at the hands of the Bolsheviks.

The *mujtahids* and *mullás*, therefore, are a great, though probably a gradually decreasing force, in Persia, and concern themselves with every department of human activity,

¹ For a full account of him, see my *Persian Revolution*, ch. i, pp. 1-30 etc.

² Paris, n.d., ch. v, pp. 307-349.

³ Ch. ii, pp. 31-58.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 262 etc. For facsimiles of *fatwá* and letter, see pp. 421-4.

⁵ See my *Press and Poetry of Modern Persia*, p. 334.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 335-6, and also my pamphlet entitled *The Reign of Terror at Tabríz* (October, 1912).

from the minutest details of personal purification to the largest issues of politics. It is open to any Shí'a Muslim to submit any problem into the solution of which religious considerations enter (and they practically enter everywhere) to a *mujtahid*, and to ask for a formal decision, or *fatwá*, conformable to the principles of Shí'a doctrine. Such *fatwá* may extend to the denunciation of an impious or tyrannical king or minister as an infidel (*takfir*), or the declaration that anyone who fights for him is as one who fights against the Hidden Imám. The fact that the greatest *mujtahids* generally reside at Najaf or Karbalá, outside Persian territory, greatly strengthens their position and conduces to their immunity. To break or curb their power has been the aim of many rulers in Persia before and after the Şafawís, but such attempts have seldom met with more than a very transient

success, for the *mullás* form a truly national class, represent in great measure the national outlook and aspirations, and have not unfrequently shielded the people from the oppression of their governors. And although their scholarship is generally of a somewhat narrow kind, it is, so far as it goes, sound, accurate, and even in a sense critical. The finest Persian scholar I know, Mírzá Muḥammad ibn 'Abdu'l-Wahháb of Qazwín, is one who has superimposed on this foundation a knowledge of European critical methods acquired in England, France and Germany.

On the other hand, apart from corruption, fanaticism and other serious faults, many of the 'ulamá are prone to petty jealousy and mutual disparagement. A well-known anecdote, given by Malcolm¹ and in the *Qiṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá*², shows that great doctors like Mír Dámád and Shaykh Bahá'u'd-Dín al-'Ámilí could rise

The better side of the "clergy."

The worse side: jealousy and vulgar abuse.

¹ *History of Persia* (ed. 1815), vol. i, pp. 258-9.

² Lucknow ed., second part, pp. 26-7; Tíhrán ed., p. 181.

above such ignoble feelings; but, as the author of the latter work complains, their less magnanimous colleagues were but too prone to call one another fools and asses, to the injury of their own class and the delight of irreligious laymen. Nor was this abuse rendered less offensive by being wrapped up in punning and pedantic verses like this¹:

وَلَسْتَ جَدِيرًا أَنْ تَكُونَ مُقَدَّمًا، وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا نِصْفُ ضِدِّ الْمُقَدَّمِ

"Thou art not worthy to be advanced; nay, thou art nothing more than half of the opposite of 'advanced'!"

The opposite of "advanced" (*muqaddam*) is "postponed" (*mu'akhhhar*), and the second half of the latter word, *khar*, is the Persian for an ass. This is a refined specimen of *mullás'* wit: for a much coarser one the curious reader may refer to an interchange of badinage between Mullá Mírzá Muḥammad-i-Shírwání the Turk and Áqá Jamál of Isfahán recorded in the *Qiṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá*². That some *mullás* had the sense to recognize their own rather than their neighbours' limitations is, however, shown by a pleasant anecdote related in the same work³ of Jamálu'd-Dín Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn-i-Khwánsarí. As a judge he was in receipt of a salary of four thousand *túmáns* a year. One day four persons successively put to him four questions, to each of which he replied, "I do not know." A certain high official who was present said to him, "You receive from the King four thousand *túmáns* to know, yet here to everyone who asks you a question you reply 'I do not know.'" "I receive these four thousand *túmáns*," replied the *mullá*, "for those things which I do know. If I required a salary for what I do not know, even the Royal Treasury would be unable to pay it."

¹ *Qiṣaṣu'l-'Ulamá*, Lucknow ed., second part, p. 165; Tíhrán ed., p. 281.

² *Ibid.*, Lucknow ed., second part, p. 52; Tíhrán ed., pp. 200-1.

³ *Ibid.*, Lucknow ed., second part, p. 50; Tíhrán ed., p. 199.

Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and theology (*'aqd'id*), with the ancillary sciences, all of which are based on a thorough knowledge of the Arabic language, normally constitute the chief studies of the "clergy," though naturally there is a certain tendency to specialization, the *qādl*, or ecclesiastical judge, being more concerned with *fiqh*, and the theologian proper with doctrine. We must also distinguish between the prevalent *Uṣūlī* and the once important but now negligible *Akhhbārt* school, between whom bitter enmity subsisted. The former, as their name implies, follow the general "principles" (*uṣūl*) deducible from the *Qur'ān* and accredited traditions, and employ analogy (*qiyās*) in arriving at their conclusions. The latter follow the traditions (*akhhbār*) only, and repudiate analogical reasoning. Mullá Muḥammad Amín ibn Muḥammad Sharíf of Astarábád, who died in 1033/1623-4, is generally accounted the founder of the *Akhhbārt* school, and was, according to the *Lū'lū'atū'l-Bahrayn*¹, "the first to open the door of reproach against the *Mujtahids*, so that the 'Saved Sect' (*al-Firqatu'n-Nājiya*, i.e. the Shí'a of the Sect of the Twelve) became divided into *Akhhbārts* and *Mujtahids*," and the contents of his book *al-Fawā'idū'l-Madaniyya*² consist for the most part of vituperation of the *Mujtahids*, whom he often accused of "destroying the true Religion." A later doctor of this school, Mírzá Muḥammad *Akhhbārt* of Bahrayn, entertained so great a hatred for the *Mujtahids* that he promised Fath-'Alí Sháh that he would in forty days cause to be brought to Ṭihrán the head of a certain Russian general who was at that time invading and devastating the frontier provinces of Persia, on condition that Fath-'Alí Sháh would, in case of his success, "abrogate and abandon the *Mujtahids*,

"Envoitement"
of a Russian
general.

¹ Bombay lith., p. 122.

² See the *Kashfū'l-Hujub*, p. 406, No. 2242. The author wrote the book at Mecca two years before his death.

extirpate and eradicate them root and branch, and make the *Akhhbārt* doctrine current throughout all the lands of Persia." The Sháh consented, and thereupon the *Akhhbārt* doctor went into retirement for forty days, abstained from all animal food, and proceeded to practise the "*envoitement*" of the Russian general, by making a wax figure of him and decapitating it with a sword. According to the story, the head was actually laid before the Sháh just as the period of forty days was expiring, and he thereupon took council with his advisers as to what he should do. These replied, "the sect of the *Mujtahids* is one which hath existed from the time of the Imáms until now, and they are in the right, while the *Akhhbārt* sect is scanty in numbers and weak. Moreover it is the beginning of the Qájár dynasty. You might, perhaps, succeed in turning the people from the doctrine [to which they are accustomed], but this might be the cause of disastrous results to the King's rule, and they might rebel against him. Moreover it might easily happen that Mírzá Muḥammad should be annoyed with you, arrive at an understanding with your enemy, and deal with you as he dealt with the Russian '*Ishpukhtur*.' The wisest course is that you should propitiate him, excuse yourself to him, and order him to retire to the Holy Thresholds (Karbálá or

¹ *Qisaṣū'l-'Ulamá*, Ṭihrán ed., p. 132; Lucknow ed., pp. 188-9. The Russian general is here called *Ishpukhtur* (اشپختر), which, as my friend M. V. Minorsky informs me, represents "Inspector" (pronounced *Išpektor*), and is, perhaps, influenced in its form by the popular etymology ایشی بوخ دور (in Ottoman Turkish = در ایشی بوق) invented by the Turkish-speaking Ádharbáyjánís, meaning "his work is dirt." M. Minorsky further informed me that this general's real name was Tsitsianoff, that he was a Georgian, and that the phrase "Have you brought the Inspector's head?" (مگر سر اشپختر را آوردی) is still used proverbially to one who presents himself in great hurry and excitement, as though in fulfilment of some very important commission.

Najaf) and stay there; for it is not expedient for the State that such a person should remain in the capital." This advice Fath-'Alí Sháh decided to follow.

The very dry, narrow and formal divines are called by the Persians *Qishrí* (literally "Huskers," *i.e.* externalists), and to these the *Akhháris* in particular belong, but also many of the *Uşúlis*, like Mírzá Ibráhm, the son of the celebrated Mullá Şadrá, one of the teachers of Sayyid Ni'matu'lláh Jazá'irí, who used to glory in the fact that his belief was that of the common people, and Mullá 'Alí Núrí, who used to pray that God would keep him in the current popular faith¹. On the other hand we have the more liberal-minded divines, whose theology was tintured with Philosophy or Latitudinarians. Şúffism, the *Mutakallimín*, who strove to reconcile Philosophy with Religion and closely resemble the School-men of mediaeval Europe, and finally the pure philosophers, like the celebrated Mullá Şadrá of Shíráz, who, however little their ultimate conclusions accorded with orthodox theology, had generally had the training of the '*ulamá* and were drawn from the same class.

The literature produced by this large and industrious body of men, both in Arabic and Persian, is naturally enormous, but the bulk of it is so dull or so technical that no one but a very leisured and very pious Shí'a scholar would dream of reading it. The author of the *Qişaşu'l-'Ulamá* remarks² that the '*ulamá* often live to a very advanced age, and as their habits are, as a rule, sedentary and studious, and they devote a large portion of their time to writing, it is not unusual to find a single author credited with one or two hundred books

¹ *Qişaşu'l-'Ulamá*, Tíhrán ed., p. 248; Lucknow ed., second part, p. 107.

² Lucknow ed., p. 65.

and pamphlets. Thus the author of the *Qişaşu'l-'Ulamá* enumerates 169 of his own works, besides glosses, tracts and minor writings¹; of those of Mullá Muhsin-i-Fayḍ (Fayz), 69 by name, but he adds that the total number is nearly 200²; of those of Muḥammad ibn 'Alí... ibn Bába-wayhi, entitled *aş-Şadıq*, 189³; and so on. Many of these writings are utterly valueless, consisting of notes or glosses on super-commentaries or commentaries on texts, grammatical, logical, juristic or otherwise, which texts are completely buried and obscured by all this misdirected ingenuity and toil. It was of this class of writings that the late Grand Muftí of Egypt and Chancellor of al-Azhar Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abduh, one of the most able and enlightened Muhammadan divines of our time, was wont to say that they ought all to be burned as hindrances rather than aids to learning.

The works on Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) also, even the best, are as a rule very unreadable to a non-Muslim. What is taught in English universities as "Muhammadan Law" is, of course, only a portion of the subject as understood in the Lands of Islám. The *Sharí'at*, or Holy Law, includes not only Civil and Criminal Law, but such personal religious obligations as Prayer and the Purifications necessary for its due performance; Alms; Fasting; Pilgrimage; and the Holy War (*Jihád*), which subjects, with their innumerable ramifications and the hair-splitting casuistry applied to all sorts of contingencies arising from them, constitute perhaps one half of the whole. It is curious that, in spite of the neglect of Shí'a theology by European Orientalists, one of the best European books on Muhammadan Jurisprudence treats of Shí'a Law. This is M. Amédée Querry's *Droit Musulman: Recueil de Lois*

¹ *Qişaşu'l-'Ulamá*, Lucknow ed., pp. 77-85.

² *Ibid.*, second part, pp. 112-16.

³ *Ibid.*, second part, pp. 183-6.

*concernant les Musulmans Schyites*¹; and the European reader who wishes to form an idea of the subject, with all its intricate, and, to the non-Muslim mind, puerile and even disgusting details, cannot do better than consult this monumental work, which is based on the *Sharā'i'u'l-Islām fi masd'ili'l-Halāl wa'l-Harām*² of the celebrated Shī'a doctor Najmu'd-Dīn Abu'l-Qāsim Ja'far ibn al-Ḥasan... al-Ḥillī, commonly called *al-Muḥaqqiq al-Awwal* ("the First Verifier" or "Investigator"), who died in 676/1277-8. Other works of authority, enumerated in the Preface (vol. i, p. vii) were also consulted, as well as leading contemporary Persian jurists, by M. Querry, whose twenty-five years' sojourn in Turkey and Persia, where he occupied important official positions, such as counsellor of the French Legation at Tīhrān, singularly fitted him for the arduous task which he so ably accomplished. An excellent Index of Arabic technical terms explained in the course of the book greatly enhances its value.

Mention should be made in this connection of a Persian catechism on problems of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) entitled *Su'āl u Jawāb* ("Question and Answer"), by the eminent *mujtahid* Ḥājji Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir, whose severity in enforcing the death-penalty in cases where it is enacted by the Ecclesiastical Law has been already mentioned³. This work, composed subsequently to 1236/1820, was very beautifully printed in 1247/1832, apparently at Iṣfahān, under the supervision of Mīrzā Zaynu'l-'Ābidīn of Tabrīz, "the introducer of this art into Persia." It comprises 162 ff. of 29.6 × 20.5 c. and 28 lines, and the letters س (*su'āl*, "question") and ج (*jawāb*, "answer")

¹ Two vols. of pp. viii+768 and 669 respectively (Paris, Maisonneuve, 1871-2).

² See p. 54, n. 3, *supra*.

³ See p. 368 *supra*. His life is given very fully in the *Qiṣaṣu'l-Ulamā* (Lucknow ed., pp. 129-78).

are throughout inserted by hand in red. I possess only one volume, which was to have been followed by a second, but whether this was ever completed I do not know¹. The topics are arranged in the usual order, beginning with the personal obligations of purification, prayer, alms, fasting and pilgrimage, and ending with the *Kitābu'l-Wad'at*, dealing with objects deposited in trust in the hands of another. An Introduction on "Principles" (*Uṣūl*) is prefixed to the whole, and in each book, or section, various problems connected with the topic in question are propounded, with the author's decisions, the whole in the form of dialogue. Thus the Introduction begins abruptly, without any doxology, with the following question:

Q. "If a person follows the opinions of one of the *mujtahids* (may God increase the like of them!) during the life of that *mujtahid*, is it lawful after his death for that person to continue to follow him and act according to his sayings, or not?"

The answer, which fills nearly a page, is to the effect that it is not lawful so to do, and that the person in question should transfer his allegiance to some other *mujtahid*. Numerous authorities are cited in support of this view, amongst them Muḥammad Bāqir (presumably al-Majlisī), Sayyid Muḥammad Mahdī, the "Second Martyr" (*ash-Shahīdu'th-Thāni*), and the "Second Verifier" or "Investigator" (*al-Muḥaqqiqu'th-Thāni*).

The "books," or sections, are of very unequal length, that on Prayer occupying nearly 70 ff., and other "books," including the last, on Trusts, only half a page. Of the latter, which contains only two questions and their answers, the full translation is as follows:

¹ The British Museum Library also possesses only this one volume. See E. Edwards's *Catalogue* (1922), col. 458. The *Qiṣaṣu'l-Ulamā* gives 1227/1812 as the date of composition, but on f. 28^b of the text, line 2, Muḥarram 1236/Oct. 1820 is mentioned as the current date.

Q.—“Zayd¹ sends an article in trust to a trustee, bidding him give it to So-and-so. After the arrival of the article, the trustee learns for certain that the article entrusted to him belongs to ‘Amr¹, and that the hand of the sender, etc., is the hand of borrowing and usurpation. Moreover ‘Amr lays claim to the trust, saying, ‘This trust committed to thee is my property.’ The trustee also admits the validity of his claim to the property, but says, ‘He sent it to me to give it to So-and-so; I will not give it to thee.’ Has ‘Amr legally power to assume possession of the property and take it from the trustee, or not? And to whom should the trustee surrender the trust, so that he may be cleared of all further responsibility?”

A.—“If what has been penned actually corresponds with the facts of the case, that is to say, if the trustee knows that the property belongs to ‘Amr, and that the hand of the sender of it is the hand of usurpation and violence, it is incumbent on the said trustee to surrender such property to its owner, whether the sender gives permission for such surrender or not. For such trustee to say to ‘Amr, having knowledge of the fact that the said property really belongs to him, ‘I will not give it to thee, in view of the fact that the sender of it bade me give it to So-and-so, not to thee,’ is incompatible with the functions of a trustee, and is not conformable to the Holy Law.”

Q.—“If Zayd shall have deposited an article in trust with ‘Amr, and if nearly seventeen years shall have passed, and if, notwithstanding ‘Amr’s urgent insistence with Zayd that he should remove the said article, he neglects to do so, and the said article, without any excess or defect of action² [on ‘Amr’s part], perishes, is ‘Amr liable to any penalty, or not?”

A.—“Provided the details as set forth in writing correspond with the facts, there will be no penalty.”

This sample of Shí’a jurisprudence must suffice, but such as desire a further illustration of the matters which pre-occupy the minds of these jurisconsults and doctors may with profit read the narrative of the trial of the Báb at Tabriz for heresy about A.D. 1848, of which an account,

¹ ‘Amr and Zayd in Muslim jurisprudence correspond to “John Doe” and “Richard Roe” of English law-books; in grammar to Balbus and Caius; and in common speech to “Tom, Dick, and Harry.”

² *I.e.* without any fault of commission or omission on his part.

based on the principal Persian narratives, will be found in vol. ii of my *Traveller's Narrative*, pp. 277–90.

We turn now to the more interesting subject of Shí’a theology, which has hitherto hardly attracted the attention it deserves from European Orientalists, and can only receive brief and inadequate treatment here. It must suffice to sketch in outline the current popular creed, without considering its evolution from early times, and to mention a few of the chief doctrinal works written in Persian during or since the Şafawí period. For the purpose of this outline, however, I choose not one of the larger, more authoritative and more famous books like the *Ḥaqqu'l-Yaqín* (“Certain Truth”) of Mullá Muḥammad Báqir-i-Majlisí, but a little manual entitled *‘Aqd’idu’sh-Shí’a* (“Beliefs of the Shí’a”) composed during the reign of Muḥammad Sháh Qájár (before the middle of the nineteenth century of our era) by a certain ‘Alí Aşghar ibn ‘Alí Akbar, and lithographed in Persia without indication of place or date. This work, comprising 438 (unnumbered) pages, consists of an Introduction (*Muqaddama*), five sections called *Mishkát*, and a Conclusion (*Khátima*). The contents are briefly as follows:

Introduction (*Muqaddama*).

Sets forth that God has not created mankind in vain, but that they should worship and serve Him, and reap the recompense of their actions in the next world. He has sent, to make known to them His Will and Law, numerous prophets, of whom Muḥammad is the last and greatest. He left behind him the Scripture (the *Qur’án*) and his holy descendants and representatives for the continued guidance of mankind. In these days of the Greater Occultation (*Ghaybat-i-Kubrâ*)¹ wherein we live, the true faith is deduced

¹ This began in 260/873–4, when the Twelfth and last Imám disappeared, to return in “the Last Time”

Popular
theological
doctrine.

*‘Aqd’idu’sh-
Shí’a.*

from the *Qur'án* and the sayings and traditions of the Holy from the *Qur'án* and the sayings and traditions of the Holy Imáms. According to these, three things are required of us: (1) heartfelt belief; (2) oral confession; (3) certain prescribed acts. These are ascertained either by personal investigation and "endeavour" (*ijtihád*), or by adopting the opinions of such investigator (*mujtahid*) by conformity to his authority (*taqlíd*). The author concludes by enumerating a number of heresies to be avoided, such as

Various heresies denounced. Pantheism (*wahdatu'l-wujúd*); Apotheosis and Incarnation (*ittihad wa hulúl*); Determinism or Fatalism (*jabr*); Antinomianism (*suqút-i-'ibáddát*) consequent on self-mortification and discipline (*riyáddát*); Communism (*ibdhát*); Deification and adoration of the Imáms; denial of the Resurrection of the body, or of any future life; sanction of the use of musical instruments, and of narcotic or intoxicating substances; Metempsychosis (*tanásukh*); Anthropomorphism (*tashbíh*), and the like.

Mishkát I (pp. 7-28), in four sections (*Mishkát*).

What is to be believed concerning the Essence and Attributes of God.

Belief in the Unity of God (*tawhíd*) is fourfold, namely:

Section i. *Unity of the Divine Essence (Tawhíd-i-Dhát)*. God is One, without partner, peer or equal; Holy; Perfect; Free from defect; not composite, or capable of being so conceived, imagined, or apprehended; neither Body, nor Light, nor Substance, nor Accident; not located, nor born, nor producing offspring; Invisible both in this world and the next¹, even to the

The Divine Essence and Attributes.

¹ Communism was preached in Persia in Sásánian times (sixth Christian century) by Mazdak. From his time until that of the Bábis this accusation has been brought against many heterodox sects.

² Háfiz has accordingly been blamed by one of his critics for the verse:

Prophets, Imáms and Saints, but known to us only by His acts and the signs of His Power; neither eating, nor drinking, nor clothing Himself; exempt from anger, vexation, pain, joy, height, depth, change, progression, or retrogression; Eternal and absolutely independent of all else. His Attributes are identical with His Essence, not added to or superimposed on His Essence. These Attributes are for the most part negative, and are called *Şifát-i-Salbiyya* or "Privative Attributes."

Here again the author digresses to denounce various heresies of the Şúfis, especially the idea that beautiful persons are especially the Mirrors or Tabernacles of God, and the doctrine of Pantheism (*Wahdatu'l-Wujúd*), according to which the relation of Phenomena to Absolute Being is similar to that between the Waves and the Sea, or to sunlight passing through windows of variously coloured glass.

Section ii. *Unity of the Divine Attributes (Tawhíd-i-Şifát)*. These Attributes are of several kinds, namely

(1) "Essential Attributes" (*Şifát-i-Dhát*)¹, to wit, Life, Power, with its derivative Speech, and Knowledge, with its derivatives Will and Comprehension. To these six some theologians add Eternity and Truth, but these, like Speech, Will and Comprehension, are Secondary Attributes, while Life, Power and Knowledge are primary. (2) The "Privative" or "Negative Attributes" (*Şifát-i-Salbiyya*), also called the "Attributes of Glory" (*Jalál*) as opposed to "Perfection" (*Kamál*) and

Tawhíd-i-Şifát.

این جانِ عاریت که بحافظ سپرد دوست

روزی رخس ببینم و تسلیم وی کنم

"This borrowed spirit which the Friend hath entrusted to Háfiz, one day I shall see His Face and surrender it to Him."

¹ Or "Positive" (*Thubútiyya*), or *Şifát-i-Kamál*, "Attributes of Perfection."

"Beauty" (*Jamál*), are seven qualities from which God is exempt, namely, Compositeness, Corporeality, Visibility, Locality, Association or Partnership, Unreality, and Need. (3) "Effective Attributes" (*Şifât-i-Fi'li*), or "Attributes of Beauty" (*Şifât-i-Jamál*), are acts which may be ascribed or not ascribed to God at different times and in different circumstances, like "the Provider" (*Ráziq*), "the Creator" (*Kháliq*), "the Merciful, the Compassionate" (*Rahmán, Rahím*), "the Bounteous" (*Jawádd*), and so forth. In this section reference is made to other views entertained by the Ash'arís, the Mu'tazila, the Kirámís, al-Balkhí, an-Najjár, Ḥasan of Başra, etc.

Section iii. Creative Unity of God (*Tawḥíd-i-Khalq*). God alone can create, and it is heresy to believe with the Zoroastrians that God creates only what is good, and the Devil what is evil. But God can and does use means to this end, and can delegate His creative powers to Angels or other agents. "The good or evil manifested through God's plenipotentiary servants¹ is not God's act but their act, wherefore they are the recipients of reward or punishment, by reason of the option which they enjoy, so that they themselves, by their own

¹ This passage is so important in connection with the doctrine of Free Will and Predestination that I give it in the original:

وَأَمَّا خَيْرٌ وَ شَرٌّ مِنْ بندگان مختار ظاهر میشود کارِ خدا نیست بلکه کارِ بنده است لهذا موردِ ثواب و عقاب میشوند باختیاریکه دارند و بخواهشِ خود بخود میکنند آنها را که خداوند امر و نهی نموده است اگرچه ایشان هم بقدرت و قوتی که ندارند بایشان عطا فرموده است میکنند لکن چون اختیار را هم بایشان داد پس ثواب و عقاب را هم قرار داد و اما خدا خالقِ خیر و شر است و بنده فاعل و کنندۀ اوست، باری چون [این] رساله بجهتِ عوام است محلّ کلام با [ما] اینجا نیست،

volition, do those things which God hath commanded or forbidden. For although they act by virtue of a power and strength which they do not in themselves possess, but which God hath conferred upon them, yet, since He hath given them this option, He hath also assigned to them rewards and punishments. Yet God is the Creator of Good and Evil, while His servant is but the agent and doer thereof. Since, however, this treatise is designed for the common people, it would be out of place for us to discuss this matter [more fully] here."

The author next proceeds to refute certain opinions entertained by the extreme Shí'a (*Ghulát*), such as that 'Alí can create, with or without God's permission; or that he is the "Assigner of Daily Bread" (*Qásimul-Arzáq*); or that God obtained his permission to create the universe; or that he put his hand under his prayer-mat and brought forth in it the heavens and the earth. It may, however, be believed, as is implied in sundry traditions, that on the Day of Judgement God will leave "the Reckoning" with 'Alí or other of the Imáms, and will accept their intercession, and the like. Hence 'Alí is entitled "the Face of God" (*Wajhu'lláh*), "the Hand of God" (*Yadu'lláh*), "the Gate of God" (*Bábu'lláh*), and the like.

It is also necessary to believe in *al-Biddá*, or God's sovereign Will, that He does what He pleases; and that He can create what He pleases "without material or period" (*bilá mádda wa mudda*), that is, from nothing in the twinkling of an eye.

Section iv. Unity of Worship (*Tawḥíd-i-'Ibádát*). Worship is the exclusive prerogative of God, and of the Divine Essence, not of the Attributes. To worship an Attribute or Name (such as "the Word of God") apart from the Essence is unbelief, while to worship an Attribute in conjunction with the Essence is polytheism. This is of two sorts, patent and latent. The

Refutation of the *Ghulát*.

Tawḥíd-i-Khalq.

Tawḥíd-i-'Ibádát.

former includes the external worship of idols, trees, stars, the sun and moon, fire and human beings; or of symbols, such as crucifixes or pictures of holy persons; the latter includes excessive devotion to wife or child, or worldly wealth, or ambition, or hypocritical ostentation of piety. The visitation of the Ka'ba at Mecca and the Tombs of the Holy Imáms is, however, permitted; as also bowing down before kings or holy and learned men, provided there be not actual prostration (*sujúd*), and that no worship be intended.

Mishkát II (pp. 28-31).

What is to be believed concerning the Justice of God.

"It is necessary to believe that God is just, not a tyrant, and that at no time hath He acted, or doth He or will He act, unjustly towards any one. This is a fundamental article of our Faith, and whosoever holds the contrary is eternally damned." Thus begins this section, of which the most interesting portion again deals with the question of Free Will and Predestination. "It is also necessary to believe that God neither compels His creatures to act in a given way (*jabr*, 'compulsion'), nor allows them unrestricted choice (*tafwíd*), but pursues a course intermediate between these two: that is to say that He has created them equally capable of both good and evil, so that they neither act under such compulsion that their deeds are in reality God's deeds, nor can they do what they do by their own strength and power without God's assistance. The former belief is Determinism or Fatalism (*jabr*) and the latter Free Will (*tafwíd*). The correct view is that, whatever they do, they do voluntarily, not by compulsion and constraint, although God furnishes them with the power, means, and instruments, and has indicated to them the paths of good and evil, so that whoever elects to do good becomes deserving of reward, while he who elects to do evil becomes deserving of punishment."

Free Will and
Predestination.

The author illustrates this by the example of a carpenter's apprentice, who, having been taught his craft and furnished with the necessary tools, is bidden by his master to make a window of a certain size and description. If instead of this he makes a door, he cannot excuse himself by pleading that his master taught him the craft and gave him the tools which enabled him to make the door. Such is the case of man if he misuses the powers and limbs which God hath given him. Here follows the well-known story¹ of the sceptic whose three questions were answered by a *darwísh* who struck him on the head with a clod, but here Abú Hanífa and Buhlúl (the "wise fool") take the parts of the sceptic and the *darwísh* respectively.

The author's theory that God created the hearts of believers, unbelievers, and waverers each from a different clay, "Knowing before He created them that the believer by reason of his belief would be good, and the unbeliever by reason of his unbelief bad, and so creating each of the appropriate substance, so that there might be no question of compulsion" (*jabr*), is not very convincing.

Mishkát III (pp. 32-45).

On the Prophetic Function, general and special.

Section i. *The general Prophetic Function (Nubuwwat-i-'ámma)*. The number of the true prophets antecedent to Muḥammad, "the Seal of the Prophets and the last of them," is variously stated as from 140 to 124,000. It is necessary to believe that these, whatever their actual number, were true and immaculate (*ma'súm*), that is, that during the whole of their lives they were guilty of no sin, major or minor; that they all enunciated the same essential truths; and that the revela-

¹ It is included in the extracts at the end of Forbes's *Persian Grammar*, No. 67, pp. 57-58.

tions which they received were essentially identical, though in detail the later abrogate the earlier, to wit, the *Qur'án* the Gospel, and the Gospel the Pentateuch (*Tawrát*). These three, together with the Psalms of David (*Zubúr*) and the Books of Abraham (*Şuhuf*), are the principal Scriptures, but the total number of revealed books is estimated by some as 104 and by others as 124. Of the Prophets sent to all mankind (*mursal*) four (Adam, Seth, Enoch or Idrís and Noah) were Syrians; five (Húd, Şálih, Shu'ayb, Ishmael and Muḥammad) were Arabs, and the remainder of the Children of Israel. The five great Prophets called *Ulu'l-'Azm* are Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muḥammad.

Section ii. *The Special Prophetic Function [of Muḥammad]* (*Nubuwwat-i-Khássa*). It is necessary to believe

The Prophet-hood of Muḥammad. that Muḥammad was the last of all the Prophets, and that anyone after him who claims to be a prophet is an unbeliever and should be killed by the Muslims. Also that in every virtue and excellence he surpasses all other beings; that his "Light" (*Núr-i-Muḥammad*) was created thousands of years before all other creatures; that he was sent not only to all mankind but to the *Jinn*; and that his doctrine and law abrogate all preceding ones.

Section iii. *What is to be believed touching the Qur'án.* It is the last and greatest of revealed Scriptures, abrogating

The Qur'án. all others, and is the miracle of Muḥammad, though not the product of his mind; it is temporal (*ḥadīth*), not eternal (*qadīm*); was revealed in the pure Arabic language (as were all the Scriptures, though each prophet received his revelation in the language of his people), and was sent down on the *Laylatu'l-Qadr* ("Night of Worth") in its entirety from the Preserved Tablet (*Lawḥ-i-Mahfūz*), but was revealed by Gabriel in instalments, as occasion arose, over a period of 23 years.

Neither men nor *Jinn*, though all should combine, can produce the like of the *Qur'án*, or even one chapter or verse of it. It contains all truth and all knowledge, and the full interpretation of it is known only to God, the Prophet, and the Imáms, and those "firmly established in Knowledge" to whom they have imparted it. The original *Qur'án* is in the keeping of the Hidden Imám, and has undergone no change or corruption.

Section iv. *The Prophet's Attributes.* He was "illiterate" (*ummi*), having never studied or received instruction from

Character of the Prophet. men or *Jinn*; he cast no shadow; a cloud used to overshadow his head; he could see behind his back as well as before his face; he was

luminous to such a degree that in his presence on the darkest night his wives could find a lost needle without the aid of lamp or candle. His birth was heralded and accompanied by miracles, enumerated in detail. He was immaculate (*ma'súm*), and the most excellent of all beings. Gabriel was really his servant, and 'Azrá'íl (the Angel of Death) could not approach him to receive his soul without his permission. He was neither a poet (*shá'ir*), nor a magician (*sáhir*), nor a liar (*kadhhab*), nor a madman (*dtwána*), and to assert any of these things is blasphemy. He had five souls or spirits, of which the first three (called *Rúh-i-mudraj*, *Rúh-quwwat*, and *Rúh-i-shahwat*) are common to all men; the fourth, *Rúh-i-imán*, "the Spirit of Faith," is peculiar to true believers; while the last, "the Holy Spirit" (*Rúhu'l-Quds*), belongs to the Prophet alone, and his successors, the Holy Imáms.

Section v. *The Prophet's Miracles.* These included the Cleaving of the Moon (*shaqqu'l-qamar*); knowledge of the Past, the Future, and the Unseen; raising the dead; knowledge of 72 out of the 73 Names of God, whereof not more than twenty were known to any previous Prophet, and the like. He saw

Miracles of the Prophet.

Paradise and Hell with his own eyes, and ascended into Heaven in his material body, clad in his own clothes, and wearing his sandals, which he would have put off on approaching God's Throne, but was forbidden by God to do so.

Section vi. *The Prophet's Ascension (Mi'ráj).* He ascended in his material body to the Station of "Two bow-shots or less¹," a point nearer to God than that attained by Enoch or Jesus or any angel or archangel. To assert that this Ascension was allegorical, or within himself, or spiritual and esoteric, is heresy.

Section vii. *Sundry other beliefs concerning the Prophet.* He was "a mortal man to whom revelations were made" in various ways mediate and immediate. He combined in himself the functions of Apostle (*Rasúl*), Prophet (*Nabí*), *Imám*, and *Muḥaddith*, by which is here meant one who sees and holds converse with the Angels. His intercession for sinners will be accepted in the Day of Resurrection; and God has bestowed on him, within certain limits, authority to command and prohibit, and to add to the obligations imposed by God in such matters as prayer and fasting. He explicitly appointed his cousin and son-in-law 'Alí ibn Abí Ṭálib to succeed him; but to assert that Gabriel took the Revelation from a well in a plain, and, receiving permission from God to see who was the author, looked into the well and saw that it was 'Alí; or that Gabriel mistook Muḥammad for 'Alí and brought the Revelation to him by mistake, are blasphemous heresies.

¹ *Qur'án*, liii, 9.

² *Ibid.*, xviii, 110.

Mishkát IV (pp. 45-71).

On the Imámate.

Section i. Enumeration of the Twelve Imáms of the *Ithná-'ashariyya* or "Sect of the Twelve," and refutation of the Sunnis, who recognize Abú Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmán as the *Khulafá*, or successors and vicegerents of the Prophet; of the Kaysániyya, who accept Muḥammad ibnu'l-Ḥanafíyya, a son of 'Alí by another wife than Fáṭima, as Imám; of the Zaydiyya, who accept Zayd ibn Ḥasan; of the Isma'íliyya, who accept Isma'íl in place of his brother Músà al-Kázim; of the Aftahiyya, who accept 'Abdu'lláh al-Aftah, another son of Ja'far aṣ-Ṣádiq the sixth Imám, and so forth. The Kaysánis, Zaydis, Isma'ílís, Ṭá'úsís, Aftahís and Wáqifís all belong to the Shí'a, but not to the "Sect of the Twelve," and they will all be tormented in Hell for their error, though they are Muslims, as are even the Sunnis, who are therefore pure, wherefore, according to the prevailing view, it is not lawful to interfere with their lives, wives or property, though some Shí'a doctors hold the contrary view.

Section ii. *Knowledge of the Prophet and Imáms.* This section is entirely historical or quasi-historical, giving the dates of the births, deaths, and chief events in the lives of Muḥammad and the Twelve Imáms.

The Prophet Muḥammad was born on Friday 17th (or 12th) of Rabí' i in the "Year of the Elephant," in the year 1021 of Alexander, and in the Seventh year of the reign of Anúsharwán "the Just." He lived 63 years, of which 53 were spent at Mecca and ten at al-Madína, and his "Mission" began when he was forty years old. He had nine (or 12, or 15) wives and two concubines; four sons, Qásim, Ṭáhir and Ṭayyib by Khadíja, and Ibráhím by Mary the Copt; and three

Knowledge of
the Prophet and
Imáms.

The Prophet
Muḥammad.

daughters, Fátima (who married 'Alí), and Zaynab and Ruqayya, who were married to 'Uthmán. He died (poisoned by a Jewess of Khaybar, as asserted) on Monday the 27th or 28th of Šafar, and was buried at al-Madína.

'Alí ibn Abí Tálíb was the immediate legitimate successor of the Prophet and the First Imám, though not formally recognized as Khalífa until after the deaths of Abú Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmán (whom the Shí'a regard as usurpers). He waged three great wars, with the *Qásitín* ("wrong-doers"), *i.e.* Mu'áwiya the Umayyad and his partisans; the *Nákithín* ("troth-breakers"), *i.e.* 'Á'isha, Tálha and Zubayr; and the *Máriqtín* ("rebels"), *i.e.* the Khárijites. He was assassinated by Ibn Muljam on Ramađán 21 at the age of sixty-three. He married twelve wives after the death of Fátima and had seventeen sons and nineteen daughters. His father Abú Tálíb was inwardly a believer, though he made no outward profession of Islám. 'Alí is supposed to have been the twelfth of the *Awšiyá* (executors, trustees, or vicegerents) of Jesus Christ.

Fátima was the daughter of the Prophet by Khadíja, and the wife of 'Alí, to whom she bore three sons (al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn and Muḥassin), and two daughters (Zaynab the elder and Umm Kulthúm). She died, aged about eighteen, on the 3rd of Jumádà ii, A.H. 11 (26 August, 632).

Ḥasan ibn 'Alí, the Second Imám, was born in Sha'bán or Ramađán, A.H. 3 (January or March, 625), resigned the position of Khalífa to Mu'áwiya, to safeguard himself and his followers, after he had held it for ten years and a half, and died of poison administered to him by Ja'da the daughter of al-Ash'ath ibn Nafís, known as Asmá, at the instigation of Mu'áwiya, nine years and a half later. He is said to have had 60 wives, besides concubines, but others say 300 or even 600,

'Alí ibn Abí
Tálíb, the First
Imám.

Ḥasan ibn 'Alí,
the Second
Imám.

of whom he divorced so many that he earned the nick-name of *al-Miřláq* ("the great divorcer"); and to have had fifteen sons and two daughters, though here again there is much difference of opinion. The best known of his numerous titles is *al-Muřtabà*.

Ḥusayn ibn 'Alí, the Third Imám, was born only six months (*sic*) after his brother Ḥasan; had five wives besides concubines; six sons, 'Alí Akbar, who succeeded him as Imám, 'Alí Awsat, 'Alí Asghar, Muḥammad, Ja'far and 'Abdu'lláh; and three daughters, Fátimatu'l-Kubrà, Sakína and Fátimatu's-Šuġhrà. Account of his death at Karbalá on Muḥarram 10, A.H. 61 (October 10, 680) with 72 of his kinsmen and partisans at the age of 56, 57 or 58. Of his titles the best known is "the Chief of Martyrs" (*Sayyidu'sh-Shu-hadà*).

'Alí ibn Ḥusayn, the Fourth Imám, commonly known as *Zaynu'l-'Abidín* and *Sayyid-i-Sajjád*. His mother was the daughter of Yazdigird, the last Sásánian King of Persia. Her name was Shahrbánú, or, according to others, Ghazála or Saláma. He was born in 36/656-7 or 38/658-9. He had one wife, his cousin Umm 'Abdi'lláh, daughter of al-Ḥasan, besides concubines. He had sixteen children (seven or twelve sons, and nine or four daughters). One of his sons, Zayd, was killed by the Umayyad Caliph Hishám ibn 'Abdu'l-Malik, who is also said to have poisoned him in 94/712 when he was fifty-seven years of age.

Muḥammad Báqir, the Fifth Imám, was born in A.H. 57 or 58 (A.D. 676-8), and is said to have been poisoned by the Umayyads in 104/722 or 107/726-7. [From this point onwards there are so many discrepancies and conflicting statements that a more rigorous abridgment seems desirable. Thus the age of this Imám is given as 57 or 58, or even 78, all of which,

Ḥusayn ibn 'Alí,
the Third
Imám.

'Alí Zaynu'l-
'Abidín, the
Fourth Imám.

Muḥammad
Báqir, the
Fifth Imám.

especially the last, are absolutely incompatible with the dates given for his birth and death.]

Ja'far aṣ-Ṣádiq, the Sixth Imám, born 80/699-700, poisoned by the 'Abbásid Caliph al-Manṣúr in 148/765-6.

Ja'far aṣ-Ṣádiq,
the Sixth
Imám.

He took advantage of the internecine strife between the Umayyads and 'Abbásids to carry on an active propaganda for the Shí'a doctrine, which is therefore often called after him "Ja'farí."

Músà al-Kázim, the Seventh Imám, born 129/746-7, poisoned by Hárúnu'r-Rashíd in 180/796-7.

Músà al-Kázim,
the Seventh
Imám, and his
five successors.

'Alí ar-Riḍá, the Eighth Imám, poisoned by al-Ma'mún in 203/818-9, and buried at Mashhad.

Muḥammad Taqí, the Ninth Imám, born 195/810-11, poisoned by his wife at the instigation of the Caliph al-Mu'taṣim in 220/835.

'Alí Naqí, the Tenth Imám, born in 212/827-8, poisoned in 245/868 at the instigation of the Caliph al-Mu'tazz.

Ḥasan al-'Askarí, the Eleventh Imám, born 232/846-7 poisoned in 260/873-4 at the instigation of the Caliph al-Mu'tamid.

The Imám Mahdí, also called Qá'imu 'Alí Muḥammad, Ḥujjatu'lláh and Baqiyyatu'lláh, the Twelfth and last

The Imám
Mahdí.

Imám, born in 255/869 by Narjis Khátún to Ḥasan al-'Askarí, disappeared in 260/873-4, is still living and will return "in the last Days" to establish the Shí'a faith and "fill the earth with justice after it has been filled with iniquity."

Section iii. *Attributes of the Imáms.* It is necessary to believe that the Imáms were created from one pre-existing Light; that all blessings and all knowledge of

Character of the
Imáms.

God come through them; that through them the universe lives and moves and has its being; and that they are in every respect the most excellent of beings after the Prophet Muḥammad, and superior to all other Prophets and to the Angels, though subject to all

human needs and functions. They are also immaculate (*ma'súm*), innocent of any sin, small or great, co-equal, endowed with every virtue, knowledge and power. Their birth was not as that of ordinary mortals, and, like the Prophet, they were born circumcised. After many further amplifications of the Imáms' perfections, the author proceeds to warn his readers against certain opinions of the *Ghuldt*, or most extreme Shí'a, who would put them above the Prophet and even deify them.

Mishkát V¹ (pp. 71-85).

Beliefs connected with Death, Judgement and the Hereafter.

Section i. *Death.* The Angels, the Prophet and the Imáms are present at every death-bed, whether of a believer or an unbeliever. When the spirit leaves the body, it attaches itself to a subtle invisible body (*qálib-i-mithált-i-látf*) which is a simulacrum of the material body in the intermediate world or "World of the Barrier" (*'Álam-i-Barzakhi*). To believe, as do some of the common people, that these disembodied spirits enter the crops of green birds or lamps attached to the Throne of God (*'Arsh*) is an error. This disembodied spirit watches the body it has quitted and the preparations for its burial, urging haste if it be a believing spirit, and delay if unbelieving, but none hears or heeds its appeal. It also sees its place in Heaven or Hell, as the case may be. A believer's death is not always easy, nor an unbeliever's hard. The Prophet's description of the Angel of Death, whom he saw during his Night Ascent to Heaven.

¹ Like so many Persian books, the actual divisions of this book do not correspond with the Table of Contents, which indicates five main divisions, each called *Mishkát*, while only four such headings actually occur in the text. This section is described as Section (*Misbáh*) iv of *Mishkát* IV, but it introduces a quite new topic and should, I am convinced, be called, as I have called it, *Mishkát* V

Section ii. *The Questioning of the Tomb.* When the body has been buried and the mourners have dispersed, the spirit returns to the body to undergo the Questioning of the Tomb (*Su'ál-i-qabr*) at the hands of the Angels Munkir and Nakir, whose terrible aspect is described. If the deceased is a believer and gives satisfactory answers to their questions on his beliefs, they leave him in peace, saying, "Sleep as the bride sleeps in her bridal chamber," and they enlarge his Tomb as far as the eye can see, and open from it a door into Paradise, so that the air of Paradise enters it and gladdens the occupant. But if he is an unbeliever, they revile him and beat him with their clubs, and fill the tomb with fire; and he cries out in agony, so that if men and *Jinn* could hear, they would die of terror. But the animals hear, and that is why a sheep grazing or a bird gathering grain will suddenly stop and shiver and listen intently. Those of the Shí'a who are buried at Karbalá are said to be exempt from this Questioning, and some believe that the whole plain of Karbalá, rid of all impurities, including the bodies of unbelievers and hypocrites, will be bodily transferred to Paradise. The good deeds and kindnesses of the dead may take the form of a beautiful companion who will bear them company in the tomb and dispel their loneliness¹.

Section iii. *The Squeezing of the Tomb.* It is not certain whether all are subject to this, or only the unbelievers. This squeezing is not confined to those who are buried in the ground, for those who are hanged, drowned or eaten by wild beasts are equally subject to it. After the Questioning and the Squeezing, the spirit again leaves the material body and reunites with the subtle invisible body. Opinions differ as to whether this last always existed within the material body, or apart from

¹ This affords an interesting parallel to the Zoroastrian belief set forth in the *Arda Viráf náma*.

The "Questioning of the Tomb."

The "Squeezing of the Tomb."

it in the "World of Similitudes," or is specially created for each spirit at the moment of dissolution.

Section iv¹. *Concerning the Intermediate World ('Alam-i-Barzakh).* *Barzakh* means something intermediate between two other things, in this case a state or world between this life and the next, more subtle than the former and more gross than the latter.

The "World of the Barrier."

Some identify it with the World of Similitudes (*'Alam-i-Mithál*), others believe it to exist in this world, but in an Eighth Clime outside the Seven Climes, called *Ard-i-Huwarqilyá*². The Terrestrial Paradise is in the *Wádi's-Salám* in the western part of this region, and the Terrestrial Hell in the *Wádt Barahút*³, in the eastern part. In these places respectively the souls of the Blessed and the Lost congregate and experience pleasure or pain, and when a new spirit arrives they let it rest for a while to recover from the "Questioning" and the "Squeezing," and then interrogate it as to the friends who survived them on earth, whether they be still living or dead.

Section v⁴. The departed spirits visit their former homes on earth to watch their families and friends, some daily, some weekly, some monthly, some yearly, some only once in several years. Some say they come in the form of green birds and perch on the roof or walls of the house and talk, but the living do not notice or attend to them because of their preoccupation with the things of this world. The spirits of the Blessed see only the

State of the departed before the Resurrection.

¹ This is headed *Misbáh v* (of *Mishkát IV*), and the numbering of the sections begins again, but it appears to me really to constitute Section iv of *Mishkát V*.

² Cf. the *Jism-i-Huwarqilyá't* of the Shaykhís, mentioned in my *Traveller's Narrative*, vol. ii, p. 236.

³ See Qazwín's *Atharú'l-Bilád*, p. 25; also Halévy in the *Journal Asiatique* for Oct.-Dec. 1883, pp. 442-54; and Yáqút's *Mu'jamul-Buldan*, vol. i, p. 598.

⁴ Entitled Section ii of *Misbáh v* (of *Mishkát IV*).

good things which befall, or are wrought by, their families and friends. Some say that they come on a particular day, on Monday at noon, or on Thursday, or on Friday. If their friends remember them, offering good works, prayers or fasting as a present to them, they are pleased; the happiness of the Blessed is increased, and the torments of the Lost alleviated thereby. "Therefore, my dear friend," says the author, "you must not forget the departed in this world, but must strive, so far as in you lies, to send presents to them." The Earthly Paradise (*Bihisht-i-Dunyā*) is a place of rest and peace, there is no sorrow or weeping, nor any obligation to pray or fast.

Section vi¹. *On the spirits of the wicked.* These are also permitted from time to time to visit their homes, but they see only the evil done by their friends, and strive to warn them, but cannot, and return to the Earthly Hell more miserable than before. Discussion as to the state after death of the children of believers and unbelievers, the ignorant and feeble-minded, and the insane; and concerning the Recording Angels. According to some, the male children of believers are, after their death, committed to the care of Abraham, and the female children to that of the Virgin Mary.

Conclusion (*Khātima*)² (pp. 85-132).

Beliefs connected with the Return of the Twelfth Imām.

Section i. *On his Occultation (Ghaybat).* Three Occultations are distinguished, entitled "Lesser," "Greater" and "Least." The "Lesser Occultation" (*Ghaybat-i-Ṣughrā*) began on the 8th of Rabi' i, 260 (Jan. 1, 874), lasted 69 years, and ended with

The "Occultation" (*Ghaybat*) of the Imām.

¹ Entitled Section iii etc., as in the preceding footnote.

² This, I believe, is how the title should stand, but it is actually described as *Miṣbāḥ* vi of *Miṣkāt* IV. See p. 395, n. 1, *supra*.

the death of the last of the four *wakīls*¹ who maintained communication between the Hidden Imām and his followers in 329/940-1. Then began the "Greater Occultation" (*Ghaybat-i-Kubrā*), wherein no one has direct access to the "Hidden Imām²," and wherein we are now living. The "Least Occultation" (*Ghaybat-i-Aṣghar*) will last only from noon on the Friday succeeding his "Return" (*Raj'at*), when he will behead the preacher (*Khaṭīb*) at Mecca and forthwith disappear again, until the morning of the next day (Saturday). The time of the Advent or "Return" of the Imām is known to God alone, but it will be heralded by numerous signs, of which forty-eight or more are enumerated by our author, and of which the most celebrated are the coming of the wicked and hideous Sufyānī, whose army the earth will finally swallow up; the appearance of a figure in the sun; the multiplication of misleading divines and lawyers and of poets; the abounding of tyranny and oppression; the appearance of Antichrist (*Dajjāl*) riding on his Ass; the assembling of 313 chosen supporters of the Imām in Ṭāliqān of Khurāsān, etc. After a "reign of the Saints" lasting seventy years, the Imām will die, poisoned by a woman named Malīḥa, and the Imām Ḥusayn will return to earth to read the Burial Service over him. This is the beginning of what is called the "Lesser Resurrection" (*Qiyāmat-i-Ṣughrā*), when the

The Signs of the Last Time.

The "Lesser Resurrection."

¹ *I.e.* Agents or Representatives, also called "Gates" (*Bāb*, pl. *Abwāb*). The avoidance of this last title by the author is probably intentional, for he wrote in 1263/1847, just when Mīrzā 'Alī Muḥammad's claim to be the *Bāb* was creating so great a stir in Persia. See my *Traveller's Narrative*, ii, pp. 226-34 and 296-8.

² Many particulars concerning the "Occultations," the "Gates," and the claims to communicate with the Hidden Imām advanced by the Shaykhīs and Bābīs, denounced as heretics by our author, are given in the notes (especially D, E and O) at the end of vol. ii of my *Traveller's Narrative*, to which the reader is referred.

Prophet and all the Imāms, as well as their chief antagonists, shall return to earth for a while, and fight their battles over again, but with a different result, since the unbelievers shall be uniformly defeated. In this first temporary Resurrection only those who are purely believers or unbelievers (*Mū'min-i-Khālīṣ* or *Kāfir-i-Khālīṣ*) will come to life. Then they will again disappear from the face of the earth, and, after forty days' anarchy and confusion, the tribes of Gog and Magog (*Yājūj u Mājūj*) will burst through the Wall (*Sadd*) which keeps them back, and will overrun the earth, and eat up all the grass and herbs, and drink up the rivers.

The "Greater Resurrection" (*Qiyāmat-i-Kubrā*), when all the dead shall be raised to life in the same bodies they had while on earth, re-created by God's Power as a broken brick can be re-made from its original materials, will be inaugurated by the blast of Isráfīl's trumpet, which shall draw into itself all the spirits of the quick and the dead, so that no living thing shall remain on earth save the "Fourteen Immaculate Ones" (*Chahārdah Ma'sūm*)¹. Then, when their bodies have been re-created, Isráfīl will again blow his trumpet, and the spirits will emerge from it like a swarm of bees, and fly each one to its own body. All animals will also be raised to life to undergo the Reckoning and be judged for their acts of violence towards one another. Then the Balance (*Mīzān*) will be set up for the weighing of the good and bad acts of each soul, and the scroll of each man's deeds, written down by the Recording Angels Sá'iq and Shahíd, will be placed in his hand.

The Seven Hells (*Jihannam*, *Sa'tr*, *Saqar*, *Jaḥīm*, *Lazzā*, *Hutama* and *Hāwiya*) are next enumerated, whereof the first is for Muslims who died in sin without repenting, and who will be released when adequately punished; the second for the Jews;

The Seven Hells.

¹ *I.e.* the Prophet, his daughter Fáṭīma, and the Twelve Imāms.

the third for the Christians; the fourth for the Sabaeans; the fifth for the Magians; the sixth for the idolatrous Arabs; and the seventh for the hypocrites. Unbelievers will remain in Hell for ever, but some, on account of their virtues, will remain there without suffering torment, as, for example, Khusraw Anúsharwán on account of his justice, and Hátim of Ṭayy on account of his generosity.

Next follows a description of the Bridge of *Širát*, "finer than a hair, sharper than a sword, and hotter than fire," which spans Hell, and over which everyone must pass, even the Prophets and Imāms and Saints, to reach Paradise. A detailed description of a very material Paradise succeeds, which in turn is followed by an account of the Purgatory or intermediate state called *al-A'raf*. This is said to be a beautiful meadow or high ground situated on the Bridge of *Širát*, and peopled by the spirits of the feeble-minded, illegitimate children, and those who are neither good enough for Heaven nor bad enough for Hell. By the intercession of the Prophet or the Imāms some of these will be subsequently admitted to Heaven. Other heavenly delights described, such as the Water of *Kawthar*, the "Lote-tree of the Limit" (*Sidratu'l-Muntahā*), and the *Ṭúbā*-tree. When every soul has been assigned its place in Heaven, Hell or *al-A'raf*, Death will be led forth in the form of a black sheep and slain, to show that henceforth there is neither fear nor hope of death.

The Bridge of *Širát*.

Purgatory (*A'raf*).

Paradise.

Conclusion (*Khátima*)¹ (pp. 132-138).

[Section ii.] *On the meaning of Unbelief (Kufr) and Belief (Imān)*. Five meanings of *Kufr* in the *Qur'án* are distinguished, and three chief kinds in ordinary life, namely

¹ This is so headed, but see pp. 381 and 398 *supra*. This section might be called "Epilogue."

spiritual (*qalbf*), verbal (*qawlf*), and actual (*fi'lf*). Three kinds of *Imán* are also distinguished, and *Imán* is distinguished from *Islám*. Sunnis and Shí'a not of the "Sect of the Twelve" are believers (*mu'min*), but not Muslims; they are not unclean, but will remain for ever in Hell-fire. The apostate (*murtadd*) from *Islám* is deserving of death, nor is his repentance accepted in this world, though, according to some theologians, it may be accepted in the next. But from the convert to *Islám* who reverts to his original faith repentance may be accepted; and a woman who apostasizes should not be killed, but imprisoned and beaten until she repents or dies in prison. The book ends with a description of five kinds of Faith and six kinds of Repentance.

Such in outline is the Shí'a creed of contemporary Persia in its crudest and most popular form. It would be interesting to trace the evolution of that creed from the earliest times of *Islám*, to compare (so far as the available materials allow) the historical with the legendary Imáms, and to contrast in detail the beliefs, both doctrinal and eschatological, of the Shí'a and the Sunnis. This, however, transcends the scope of this book, even had the preliminary work indispensable to such a study been adequately done. Even amongst the orthodox and formal (*qishrī*) *mujtahids* and *mullás* these doctrines must often have been held in a form less crude and childish than that outlined above, though they may have deemed it wiser to leave the popular beliefs undisturbed, and to discourage speculations which might become dangerous amongst a people only too prone to scepticism and heresy. Taking only the broad divisions of theological and philosophical thought in Persia, we may distinguish in each field three main types; amongst the theologians the *Akhbárts*, the *Uṣūlts* (or *Mujtahidts*), and the *Shaykhts*; amongst the philosophers the *Mutakallimín* or School-men,

Belief and
unbelief.

Broad divisions
of religious
thought in
Persia.

the *Falásifa* or *Hukamá* (Philosophers pure and simple), and the philosophical *Ṣúfís*. Of all these Gobineau's account is still the most clear, lively and concise which I have met with in any European language, though it cannot be certainly affirmed that its accuracy is equal to its clarity. Thus he credits the *Akhbárts*, generally regarded as the strictest sect of the Shí'a, with a certain latitudinarianism to which they can hardly lay claim; and describes the *Shaykhís* as "not altogether rejecting the idea of the Resurrection of the Body," when it was precisely their doctrine of the "subtle body" (or *Jism-i-Huwarqilyá*)² which especially laid them under suspicion of heresy. The doctrines of the *Shaykhís*, moreover, definitely prepared the way for the still more heretical doctrines of the *Bábís*, who were outside the pale of *Islám* while the *Shaykhís* were just within it and counted many influential followers in high places. Of the Philosophers and *Ṣúfís* more will be said in another chapter, but as to the theologians we shall do well to bear in mind Gobineau's dictum³: "Il ne faut pas perdre de vue que si l'on peut, approximativement, classer les trois opinions ainsi que je le fais, il est nécessaire pourtant d'ajouter qu'il est rare que, dans le cours de sa vie, un Persan n'ait point passé de l'une à l'autre et ne les ait point toutes les trois professées." Mullá Muḥammad Báqir-i-Majlisí, one of the greatest, most powerful and most fanatical *mujtahids* of the *Ṣafawí* period, found it necessary to apologize for the tolerant and even sympathetic attitude assumed by his father Mullá Muḥammad Taqí-i-Majlisí, not less distinguished than himself as a theologian, towards

Gobineau's
classification.

The Majlisí.

¹ *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale* (2nd ed., Paris, 1866), pp. 28-33 for the three theological parties, pp. 63-111 (ch. iv) for the *Ṣúfís* and the Philosophers.

² See my *Traveller's Narrative*, vol. ii, p. 236.

³ *Op. cit.* pp. 32-3.

the Śúffis. "Let none think so ill of my father," he says¹, "as to imagine that he was of the Śúffis. Nay, it was not so, for I was intimately associated with my father in private and in public, and was thoroughly conversant with his beliefs. My father thought ill of the Śúffis, but at the beginning of his career, when they were extremely powerful and active, my father entered their ranks, so that by this means he might repel, remove, eradicate and extirpate the roots of this foul and hellish growth (*in Shajara-i-Khabttha-i-Zaqqúmiyya*). But when he had extinguished the flames of their infamy, then he made known his inner feelings, for he was a man of the utmost virtue and piety, ascetic and devout in his life," etc.

Yet Mullá Muḥammad Báqir, in spite of his formalism and fanaticism, his incredible industry in writing books in simple and easily intelligible Persian in order to popularize the Shī'a doctrines, and his ruthless persecution of the Śúffis, is credited with posthumous gleams of a higher humanity². One saw him in a dream after his death and asked of him, "How fares it with you in that world, and how have they dealt with you?" He answered, "None of my actions profited me at all, except that one day I gave an apple to a Jew, and that saved me."

The *Qiṣaṣu'l-Ulamá* contains 153 biographies of eminent divines, of whom the following twenty-five appear to me the most interesting and important. They are here arranged, as far as possible, chronologically, the serial number of each biography in the book being indicated in brackets after the name³.

¹ *Qiṣaṣu'l-Ulamá*, Lucknow ed., part ii, p. 19.
² *Ibid.*, part i, p. 216. The author discredited the tale, which is described as widely current. As regards this theologian's literary activity, he is said on the same page to have been accustomed to write 1000 "bayts," i.e. 50,000 words, daily.

³ They are numbered in both editions in the *abjad* notation, e.g. Kulayní as **ص** (96); Najjāshí as **ق** (132), etc.

مجلس باقر



Autograph of Mullá Muḥammad Báqir-i-Majlisí

I. Pre-Şafawî divines.

1. *Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb al-Kulaynī* (No. 96), entitled *Thiqatu'l-Islām*, author of the *Kāfi*, d. 329/941.
2. *Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Ḥusayn ibn Mūsā ibn Bābawayhi* of Qum, called *Şadūq* (No. 95), d. 381/991-2. Of his works 189 are enumerated in the *Qiṣaṣu'l-'Ulamā*, the most important being that entitled *Man lā yaḥḍuruhu'l-Faqīh*, which, like the *Kāfi* mentioned in the last paragraph, is one of the "Four Books."
3. *Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Nu'mān ibn 'Abdu's-Salām al-Ḥārithī*, commonly called *Shaykh-i-Mufīd* (No. 97), d. 413/1022. The *Qiṣaṣ* enumerates 171 of his works.
4. *Sayyid Murtadā*, entitled *'Alamu'l-Hudā* (No. 98), d. 436/1044. He was the great-great-grandson of the Seventh Imām, Mūsā al-Kāzīm.
5. *Aḥmad ibn 'Alī an-Najjāshī* (No. 132), d. 455/1063. He was a disciple of the *Shaykh-i-Mufīd*, and the author of the well-known *Kitābu'r-Rijāl*.
6. *Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan ibn 'Alī aṭ-Ṭūsī*, called *Shaykhu't-Ṭā'ifa* (No. 100), d. 460/1067. He was the third of the older "three Muḥammads" (the others being Nos. 1 and 2 *supra*), and the author of two of the "Four Books," the *Tahdhībū'l-Aḥkām* and the *Istibṣār*, and of the well-known *Fihrist*, or Index of Shī'a books.
7. *Naṣṛu'd-Dīn-i-Ṭūsī*, entitled *Muḥaqqiq* ("the Investigator"), even more celebrated as a philosopher and man of science than as a theologian (No. 90), d. 672/1274. His most famous works are the *Akhlāq-i-Nāṣiri* on Ethics, the Astronomical Tables called *Zij-i-Ilkhāni*, compiled for Hūlāgū Khān the Mongol, and the *Tajrīd* on Scholastic Philosophy, a favourite text for the countless host of commentators and writers of notes and glosses.
8. *Najmu'd-Dīn Ja'far ibn Yahya*, known as *Muḥaqqiq-i-Awwal* ("the First Investigator"), author of the *Sharā-*

Ten great
divines of the
pre-Şafawī
period.