own, or of the Jewish, Christian, or (though some contest this) Magian faith, for a fixed period of time, which may vary from a fraction of a day to a year or several years. Properly speaking, it is the contract drawn up by the officiating mullah (in which both the period of duration of the marriage, and the amount of the dowry—though this last may be no more than a handful of barley—must be specified), which is called the sigba, but the term is commonly applied to the woman with whom such marriage is contracted. This species of marriage (if it can be dignified by this name), though held in very proper detestation by Sunnite Muhammadans, is regarded by the Shi'ites as perfectly legal, and children resulting from it are held to be lawful offspring. Though prevalent to some extent throughout Persia, it flourishes with especial vigour in Kirmán, where, owing to the great poverty of the people, the small dowry bestowed on the sigba induces many parents to seek for their daughters such engagement. Bad as this institution is at the best, the mullahs, by one of those unrighteous gentle quibbles of which they are so fond, have succeeded in making it yet more abominable. According to the law, a sigba, on completing the contracted period, must, before going to another husband, wait for forty-five days or two months to ascertain whether or no she is with child by the former husband. This, however, only applies to cases where the marriage has been actually consummated. So, as many of these women are practically sigbas by trade, and do not wish to be subjected to this period of probation, the mullahs have devised the following means of evading the law. When the contracted period of marriage has come to an end, the man makes a fresh contract with the woman for another very short period; this second (purely nominal) marriage, being with the same man as the first, is legal without any intervening period of probation, and is not consummated; so that, on its expiration, the woman is free to marry another man as soon as she pleases.

The Seyyid's hints, whether intended maliciously or prompted by a friendly feeling, caused me a good deal of disquietude; for, absurd and false as the slander was, I clearly saw that if it gained the credence of the vulgar it might become a source of actual peril. Háji Šafar, who made no attempt to exculpate himself, was of the same opinion, and entreated me to leave Kirmán as soon as possible. "Sáhib," he concluded, "you do not know the malice and mischief of which these accursed Kirmánis are capable; if we stay here much longer they will find some pretext for killing us both."

"Nonsense," I said, "they are a quiet, peaceable, down trodden folk, these same Kirmánis, though over-fond of idle tattle. Besides you know what Sheykh Sa'dī says—"dā-rā ǧi ḥisāb pšk-ast ar muḥāsbī chē bāk-ast?" ("To him whose account is clean what fear is there of the reckoning?") But in future I hope that you will be careful to avoid doing anything which may compromise my good name. I have no wish to interfere either with your religion, or with such indulgences as are accorded to you by it, but I have a right to expect that you will avoid anything which is liable to discredit my character." And so the matter dropped, the quotation from Sa'dī being more effective (as quotations from Sa'dī or Háfiz always are with a Persian) than any quantity of argument.

I have had occasion to allude to the unrighteous quibbles whereby the mullahs, while keeping the letter, contravene the spirit of the law; and I may here add an instance (which was related to me to-day by one of my Bábí friends) of the gross ignorance which sometimes characterises their decisions. A certain man in Kirmán, wishing to expose this ignorance, addressed the following question to a distinguished member of the local clergy. "I agreed with a labourer," said he, "to dig in my garden a hole one yard square for eight kran: he has dug a hole half a yard square. How much should I pay him?"

"Half the sum agreed upon, of course," said the mullah, "that is to say four kran." After thinking for a while, however, he
corrected himself: "two "kydus" is the sum which you legally owe him," he declared; and this decision he committed to writing and sealed with his seal. Then the inquirer demonstrated to him that the labour required to excavate a hole measuring half a yard in each direction was only an eighth part of that needed for the excavation of one measuring a yard in each direction. This conclusion the cleric resisted as long as he could, but, being at length compelled to admit its justice, he got out of the difficulty by declaring that, though mathematically the labourer could only claim one "kyán", his legal due was two "kyán".

_Monday, 17th June, 7th Shawwāl._—This afternoon I visited a young secretary of the Prince's with whom I had become acquainted, and found him with the son of the Prince-Telegraphist, Mullá Yúsuf, and other congenial friends (all, or nearly all, Ezell Bábís) sitting round a little tank which occupied the centre of the room, and smoking opium. The discussion, as usual, turned on religion, and Mullá Yúsuf gave me some further instances of the quibbles whereby the Shi‘ite clergy and their followers have made the law of no effect. "There are," said he, "six obligations incumbent on every Musulmán, to wit, Prayer (salât), Fasting (ṣiyām), Pilgrimage (hajj), Tithes (khums), Alms (zakat), and, under certain circumstances, Religious Warfare (jihād). Of these six, the last three have practically become null and void. Of Religious War they are afraid, because the infidels have waxed strong, and because they remember the disastrous results which attended their more recent enterprises of this sort. As for the Tithes (khums, literally 'fifths'), they should be paid to poor Seyyids or descendants of the Prophet. And how do you suppose they manage to save their money and solve their consciences at the same time? Why, they place the amount of the money which they ought to give in a jar and pour treacle (shirê) over it; then they offer this jar to a poor Seyyid (without, 1 See my Traveller's Narrative, vol. ii, pp. 118-119, and n. 3, on the former.

of course, letting him know about the money which it contains), and, when he has accepted it, buy it back from him for two or three "kydus"! Or else they offer him one "tāmân" on condition that he signs a receipt for fifty." I turned these admissions against Mullá Yúsuf when he began to argue for the superiority of Islám over Christianity. "You yourself," I said, "declare that the essential characteristic of the prophetic word is that it has power to control men's hearts; and as you have just told me that out of six things which Muhammad made binding on his followers, three have become of none effect, you cannot wonder if I question the proof of Islám by your own criterion. God knows that the mass of professing Christians are very far from putting into constant practice all the commands laid upon them by Him whom they profess to follow; but I should be sorry to think that His precepts and example had as little effect on my countrymen as those of Muhammad, on your own showing, seem to have on yours."

On returning to the garden I found a note from the officious Ḥāji Muḥammad Khān, enquiring whether I had learned anything more about the two Frenchmen who had arrived in Kirmán. He had also left with Ḥāji Šafar a verbal message asking for some brandy, which message, by reason of Seyyid Ḥuseyn's presence, Ḥāji Šafar communicated to me in Turkish. "Don't attempt to conceal anything from me," exclaimed the Seyyid, "by talking a foreign language, for I perfectly understand what you are talking about." This, however, was, as I believe, a mere idle boast.

From Mullá Yúsuf I to-day obtained a more circumstantial account than I had yet heard of an event which some time ago created a good deal of excitement in Kirmán, especially amongst the Bábís. A lad of fifteen, the son of an architect in the city, who had been brought up in the doctrines of the Sheykhs, turned Bábí, and, inspired by that reckless zeal which is the especial characteristic of the "people of the Beyán," repaired to
Langar, the headquarters of the Sheykhís and the residence of the sons of Háji Muḥammad Karím Kháń, and there publicly addressed the assembled Sheykhís on the signs of the Manifestation of the Imám Mahdí and the general theory of Theophanies. The Sheykhís, believing him to be one of themselves, at first listened complacently enough as he developed his doctrine, and were even pleased with his eloquence and fervour. But when, after declaring that in each dispensation there must needs be a “Point of Darkness” opposed to the “Point of Light,” a Nimrod against an Abraham, a Pharaoh against a Moses, an Abú Jahl against a Muḥammad, an Antichrist (Dajjád) against a Mahdí, he so described the “Point of Light” and “Point of Darkness” of this cycle as to make it clear that by the former he meant Mírzá ‘Alí Muḥammad the Báb, and by the latter Háji Muḥammad Karím Kháń, the fury of his audience burst forth; they seized him, dragged him from the mosque, reviled him, cursed him, pelted him with stones, bound him to a tree, and scourged him most cruelly. In spite of all they could do, however, he continued to laugh and exult, so that at last they were obliged to release him.

Tuesday, 18th June, 8th Shawwal.—This afternoon, I received another visit from Afgal Kháń the Belúch, who wished me to give him a letter of introduction to my friend the Nawwáb Mírzá ‘Alí Kháń at Mashhad, whither he proposed to proceed shortly. Then he began to persuade me to accompany him thither, and thence onwards to Kândhâr and Kálat-i-Nášírí, his home in Belúchistán. “You say you are a traveller,” concluded he, “desirous of seeing as much as you can of the world: well, Belúchistán is part of the world, and a very fine part too; not Persian Belúchistán, of course, which is a poor, miserable place, but our own land.” I declined his seductive offer, and thereupon he taunted me with being afraid. At this juncture the Sheykh of Kúm and the postmaster’s son arrived.

“Well,” said the Sheykh, when the usual greetings had been exchanged, “what do you make of these two Firangís who have come to Kirmán?”

“Hitherto,” I replied, “I have hardly seen them, and consequently am not in a position to form an opinion.”

“They declare themselves to be Frenchmen,” continued the Sheykh, “but if so it is a very astonishing thing that they should be so wanting in good manners as they appear to be, for we always suppose the French to be remarkable amongst European nations for their courtesy and politeness.”

“Your supposition is correct, as a rule,” I answered, “even though there be exceptions; but you know the aphorism ‘en-nádiru K’al-ma’dín’ (‘the exceptional is as the non-existent’). In what way have they shown a lack of courtesy?”

“Why,” said the Sheykh, “his Royal Highness the Prince (may God perpetuate his rule!) naturally wished to see them and ascertain the business which had brought them here, so he sent a message inviting them to visit him. They refused to come. He was naturally very angry; but, seeing that they were Firangís, and so (saving your presence) not to be judged by our standards of good behaviour, he swallowed down his annoyance, and sent another message saying, ‘Since you do not wish to visit me, I must needs visit you.’ In answer to this second message they sent back word that their lodging was not suitable for receiving so august a personage. His Royal Highness hesitated to punish their curtliness as it deserved; but, finding that they had with them a Persian attendant lent to them by the Governor of Mashhad (with whom Prince Nášíru’d-Dawla is not on the best of terms), he ordered him to come to the palace for interrogation on the following day; ‘for,’ thought he, ‘him at least I can oblige to speak.’ When the Firangís found that their fists were going to be opened, in spite of them, they decided to accompany their man before the Prince, and, without giving any notice of their visit, in they marched with their great dirty boots (which

1 *I.e.* that their secrets were going to be disclosed.
they never even offered to remove); neither would they give any satisfactory account of themselves or their business. We think it probable that they are come after walnut-trees, which, as men say, they cut and polish in some manner known to themselves, in such a way that pictures or reflections of any scene which may have taken place in the neighbourhood of the tree appear in the polished surface of the wood; but of this you probably know more than we do. The question is, are they really Frenchmen, as they assert?

"I don’t know," said I; "all I can say is that they talk French, so far as I can judge, as though it were their native language."

"Don’t you believe a word of it," broke in the Belúch; "they are no more French than I am. Who are the French that they should dare to act towards his Royal Highness as these men have done? No; they are either Russians or English; of that you may be sure."

We laughed at the Belúch’s ideas on the balance of power in Europe, while he continued with increasing excitement—

"If his Royal Highness will but give me a hint, I will seek out these Firangs in their lodging—I and my companions here—and will kill them, and cut off their heads, and lay them at the Prince’s feet."

"And how would you do that?" asked the Sheykh, with difficulty suppressing his mirth.

"Do it?" rejoined Afzal Khán; "easily enough. I would find out, where they lodged, walk in one fine day with an ‘es-salámú ‘alekhmú’ (‘peace be upon you’), and cut them down with this sword of mine before they had time to speak, or flee, or offer the slightest resistance."

"Oh," said the Sheykh, "but that wouldn’t be at all right; you shouldn’t say ‘peace be upon you’ to a man you are just going to kill."

"Why not?" retorted the Belúch, "they are infidels, káfir, and such it is lawful to slay in any manner."

"But he is a káfir too," slyly remarked the Sheykh, pointing towards myself.

"Yes, I know he is," exclaimed the Belúch, "and if only——"

Here he was interrupted by a general roar of laughter.

"O most excellent Khán," I cried, as soon as the general merriment had somewhat subsided, "now your fist is opened! Now I see why you were so eager for me to accompany you to your interesting, hospitable country. A long journey, in sooth, would it have been, and one, as I think, on which I might have set out singing—"

'Dam-i-rafstun-ast, 'Uríf; bi-rúkhast wajdí'i kun, Kí umíd-i-ház-gažban ház az in safár na-dáréw."

"Tis the moment of departure, O ‘Uríf; take a last look at his face, For from this journey none may hope to return."

The Belúch hung his head in some confusion, and then began to laugh gently. "You are quite right, Śáhib," he said, "but I know very well that you are an agent of your government, engaged in heaven knows what mischief here."

"Why, look at me," I replied; "I live, as you see, like a dervish, without any of the circumstance or having which besits an envoy of such a government as ours."

"Ay," he retorted, "but you English are cunning enough to avoid ostentation when it suits your own ends to do so. I know you to my cost, and that is the way it always begins."

And so the matter dropped, and that was the last I saw of my friend Afzal Khán.

Later on several other visitors came; the Seyyid, of course; Hájí Shirázi, who was immensely convivial, having, as he informed me, drunk half a bottle of brandy "for his stomach’s sake"; and the pachter of peas. The last drew me aside out of the hearing of the Seyyid (between whom and himself subsisted a most violent antipathy), and said he had come to ask me to have supper one night with him, the postmaster, and some other
congenial friends, so that we could converse quietly and without fear of intrusion.

"Thank you," I said, "I shall be very pleased to come any evening that suits you, and I am no less anxious than yourself for an opportunity for some quiet conversation; for hitherto, though I know that many of my friends here are Bábís, we have only talked on side-issues, and have never come to the main point. And it is about the Báb especially, and Kurruṭu'l-Āyn, and the others, not about Behá, that I want to hear. It was he whom I heard about and learned to admire and love before I left my native country; and since my arrival in Persia, though I have conversed with many Bábís, it is always of Behá that they speak. Behá may be very well, and may be superior to the Báb, but it is about the Báb that I want to hear."

"Yes," he replied, "you shall hear about him, for he is worth hearing about—the Lord Jesus come back to earth in another form. He was but a child of nineteen when his mission began, and was only twenty-six when they killed him—killed him because he was a charmer of hearts, and for no crime but this—"

'Dar kudūm millat-asr in, dar kudūm madhab-bast in?'

'Kī kūdūm dilhār-rād, kī, 'Tū dil-rūhā chird-i?"'

'In what church, in what religion, is this lawful,
That they should kill a charmer of hearts, saying, "Why dost thou steal hearts?"'

"Whose is that verse?" I enquired.

"Oh," he replied, "the original verse is 'Irāk'í's, and runs thus—"

'Dar kudūm millat-asr in, dar kudūm madhab-bast in?'

'Kī kūdūm 'dīshikār-rād, kī, 'Tū 'dīshikām chird-i?"'

'In what church, in what religion, is this lawful,
That they should kill a lover, saying, "Why art thou my lover?"

But we have altered the verse to suit our purpose."

At this point the Seyyid was seen approaching us, and the parcher of peas fled as from the Angel of Death. But Háji Shírází outstayed even the Seyyid, and after supper consumed as much brandy as he could get, observing repeatedly in a rather unsteady voice that no amount of it produced any effect upon him, because moisture so greatly predominated in his natural temperament.

Wednesday, 19th June, 9th Shawwal.—This morning I received a visit from a very melancholy person, who, I think, held the office of treasurer to the Prince-Governor. He told me that he did not like Europeans, and would not have come to see me if he had not heard that I, unlike most of them, took an interest in religious questions, into which he forthwith plunged, arguing against the possibility of the use of wine being sanctioned by any true prophet, and defending the seclusion of women and the use of the veil. Against these last I argued very earnestly, pointing out the evils which, as it appeared to me, resulted from them. He was silent for a while after I had finished speaking, and then said:

"It is true; I admit the force of your arguments, and I cannot at this moment give a sufficient and satisfactory answer to them, though I believe there must be one. But I will not attempt to give an insufficient answer, for my sole desire is to be just and fair."

Before he left he told me that he suffered much from indigestion, brought on by excessive meditation, adding, "I fear, I fear greatly." I asked him what he feared, and he replied, "God."

In the afternoon Ferídūn came to me while I was sitting in Háji Shírází's shop, to arrange for a visit to the dakhmeh, or "tower of silence" of the Zoroastrians. Háji Shírází was most insolent to him, calling him a son of a dog ("pišar-rag"), a gahs, and the like. I saw poor Ferídūn flush up with an anger which it cost him an effort to control, and would fain have given the drunken old Háji a piece of my mind, had I been certain that he did not intend his rudeness for playful banter, and had I not further feared that in any case my remonstrances would only increase his spite against Ferídūn, which I could only hope to
suppress so long as I remained at Kirmán. I told Ferídún this afterwards, and he not only approved my action, but begged me not to interfere in any similar case. “It would do no permanent good,” he said, “and would only embitter them against us. But do not forget what we poor Zoroastrians have to suffer at the hands of these Musulmáns when you return to your native land, and try, if you can, to do something for us.”

Towards evening I rode out with Gush tásp and Ferídún to the lonely dakhmeh situated on a jagged mountain-spur at some little distance from the town. Gush tásp rode his donkey; but Ferídún, who was a bold and skilful rider, had borrowed a horse, for the Zoroastrians at Kirmán are not subjected to restrictions quite so irksome as those which prevail at Yezd. We stopped twice on the way to drink wine, at a place called Sar-i-pul (“Bridge-end”), and at a sort of half-way house, where funerals halt on their way to the dakhmeh, or rather dakhmás, for there are two of them, one disused, and one built by Mánájú, the late Zoroastrian agent at Teherán, a little higher up the ridge. At the foot of this we dismounted, Mullá Gush tásp remaining below to look after the animals, while I ascended with Ferídún by a steep path leading to the upper dakhmeh. Here Ferídún, whose brother had recently been conveyed to his last resting-place, proceeded to mutter some prayers, untying and rebinding his girdle of kustád as he did so; after which he produced a bottle of wine and poured three libations to the dead, exclaiming as he did so, “Khudí bi-yamúraz hadásán-áfságán-rd” (“May God forgive all those who are gone!”), and then helped himself and passed the wine to me. Observing an inscribed tablet on the side of the dakhmeh (which was still some twenty yards above us) I called my companion’s attention to it, and made as though I would have advanced towards it; but he checked me. “None,” said he, “may pass beyond this spot where we stand, save only those whose duty it is to convey the dead to their last resting-place, and a curse falls on him who persists in so doing.” As he spoke he pointed to a Persian inscription cut on the rock beside us, which I had not previously observed, wherein a curse was invoked on anyone whom curiosity, or a desire “to molest the dead,” should impel to enter the dakhmeh. Near this was inscribed the well-known verse—

“Ey dušt! bar jená-bi-dushman zhi bigzari,
Slád tig-ma-ham, kí bar tā bamtí má-jard baward.”

“O friend! when thou passest by the corpse of thine enemy
Rejoice not, for on thee will the same fate fall.”

Below this was recorded the date of the dakhmeh’s completion—Dhş’l-Hijjé 20th, A.H. 1283 (25th April, A.D. 1867), corresponding to the year 1236 of Yezdigird.

On returning to the garden I found the inevitable Seyyid Huseyn, who had arrived soon after I had gone out, and, in my absence, had been inflicting his theological dissertations on Ná’ib Hasan. It had been arranged that I should visit a certain Mirzá Muhammad Ja’far Kháñ (a nephew of the great leader of the Sheykhs and antagonist of the Bábís, Haji Muhammad Karím Kháñ), who had called upon me a few days previously: and the Seyyid, hearing this, insisted on accompanying me. On reaching his house, which stood alone at some distance from the town, we were received by him and a stout pallid youth named Yúsuf Kháñ (who, I believe, was his cousin or nephew) in the tanba-kháñ, or lounging-room, the walls of which were profusely decorated with a strange medley of cheap European prints and photographs representing scripture incidents, scenes from Uncle Tom’s Cabin, scantily clothed women, and other incongruous subjects, arranged in the worst possible taste. The low opinion of my host’s character with which this exhibition inspired me was not bettered by his conversation, which was, so far as I remember, singularly pointless. He evidently felt ill at ease in the presence of the Seyyid, who enquired very searchingly as to the reception which the eldest of Háji Muhammad Karím Kháñ’s sons, the chief of the Sheykhs, had met with at
the holy shrines of Kerbelá and Nejef, whither he had recently
gone. So far as we could learn, he had been anything but cordially
received, and at Kázímeyn the people had not suffered him to
preach in the mosque. On my return to the garden I had supper
with Ná‘íb Hasan, who aspersed the character of my new ac-
cquaintance in a way which I cannot bring myself to repeat.

Thursday, 20th June, 11th Shawwáli.—This morning I paid a visit
to one of the most eminent members of the clergy of Kirmán,
the mujtabí Mulla Muhammed Šálih-i-Kirmání. He was a fine-
looking man, with a long black beard and deeply furrowed brow,
and received me with a somewhat haughty courtesy. He con-
versed on religious topics only, pointing out the beauties of the
law of Islám, and taking great exception to the carelessness of
Europeans in certain matters of purification. On leaving his
house I was taken to see an iron foundry, where I was shown
two excellent-looking Enfield rifles manufactured by a Kirmání
gunsmith, in imitation of one of European workmanship lent
to him by the Prince-Governor.

In the afternoon I received a visit from the two Frenchmen
of whose arrival in Kirmán I have already spoken. Hájí Muham-
mad Khán, Mulla Yusuf, and Seyyid Huseyn happened to come
while they were with me; but the last, on a hint from Ná‘íb
Hasan that wine was likely to be produced, fled precipitately,
to the satisfaction of everyone. The Frenchmen appeared, from
their account, to have had a very rough journey from Mashhad
to Kirmán, and not to enjoy much comfort even here; they were
delighted with the wine, cognac, and tea which I placed before
them (for they had not been able to obtain any sort of alcohol
here, not knowing whither to go for it), and conversed freely
on everything save the objects of their journey, of which they
seemed unwilling to speak, though Hájí Muhammed Khán, who
really did speak French with some approach to fluency, en-
deavoured again and again to extract some information from
them. He was so disgusted at his ill success that he afterwards

announced to me his conviction that they were persons of no
rank or breeding, and that he had no wish to see anything more
of them.

In the evening I supped with the Prince-Governor, the party
being completed by the Sheykh of Kum and the Prince-Tele-
graphist. The meal was served in European fashion in a room
in the Bagh-i-Ná‘íríyya palace, which was brilliantly illuminated.
A great number of European dishes was set before us, no doubt
in my honour, though, as a matter of fact, I should have greatly
preferred Persian cookery. Wine, too, was provided, and not
merely for show either. The Prince, acting, I suppose, on the
aphorism, “Address men according to the measure of their
understandings,” conversed chiefly on European politics, in
which I felt myself thoroughly out of my depth. He was, how-
ever, extremely kind; and when I left, insisted on lending me a
horse and a man to conduct me home.

Friday, 21st June, 12th Shawwáli.—In the afternoon I returned
Mírzá Jawád’s call, and found with him his son and his son’s
tutor, Mulla Ghulám Huseyn, a Sheykhí, from whom I extracted
the following account of the essential doctrines of his school:—

“The Bálásásífs, or ordinary Shi‘ítes,” said he, “assert that
the essentials of religion are five, to wit, belief in the Unity of
God (tawhíd), the Justice of God (‘adl), the Prophetic Function
(nubuvvá), the Imámate (imamát), and the Resurrection (ma‘dd).
Now we say that two of these cannot be reckoned as primary
doctrines at all; for belief in the Prophet involves belief in his
book and the teachings which it embodies, amongst which is
the Resurrection; and there is no more reason for regarding a
belief in God’s justice as a principal canon of faith than belief
in God’s Mercy, or God’s Omnipotence, or any other of His
Attributes. Of their five principles or essentials (‘uquíl), therefore,
we accept only three; but to these we add another, namely, that
there must always exist amongst the Musulmáns a ‘Perfect
Shi‘íte’ (Shí‘a-i-kúmil) who enjoys the special guidance of the
KIRMAN SOCIETY

Imams, and acts as a Channel of Grace (Wasiqa-i-fayz) between them and their Church. This tenet we call ‘the Fourth Support’ (Rukn-i-rabi’), or fourth essential principle of religion.”

In the evening I was the guest of Ustá Akbar, the parcher of peas, at supper, and stayed the night at his house. Amongst the guests were Aka Fatju'lláh, a young Ezeli minstrel and poet, who sung verses in praise of the Báb, composed by himself; Sheyk Ibrahim of Sulatan-ábád; one of his intimates and admirers, a servant of the Farrásh-báshí, named ‘Abdu'lláh; a post-office official, whom I will call Haydaru'lláh; and the pea-parcher’s brother. As the evening wore on, these began to talk very wildly, in a fashion with which I was soon to become but too familiar, declaring themselves to be one with the Divine Essence, and calling upon me by such titles as “Jund-i-Salih” and “Hagrat-i-Firangi” to acknowledge that there was “no one but the Lord Jesus” present. Weary and somewhat disgusted as I was, it was late before they would suffer me to retire to rest on the roof.

Saturday, 22nd June, 12th Shawwal.—The party at Ustá Akbar’s did not break up till about an hour and a half before sunset, when I returned to the garden accompanied by Sheyk Ibrahim, who from this time forth until I left Kirman became my constant companion, though more than once, disgusted at his blasphemous conversation and drunkenness, I endeavoured to discourage his visits. But he was not one to be easily shaken off; and on these occasions, when my indignation had been specially kindled against him, he would make so fair a show of regret for his conduct that I was constrained to forget his unseemly behaviour. Moreover, he was a man well worth talking to, so long as he was sober or not more than half drunk, having travelled widely through Persia, Turkey, and Egypt; seen many strange things and stranger people; and mixed with almost every class and sect, as it is the privilege of his order to do. He was, indeed, one of the most extraordinary men whom I ever met, and presented

a combination of qualities impossible in any but a Persian. Anarchist, antinomian, heretic, and libertine to the very core, he gloried in drunkenness, and expressed the profoundest contempt for every ordinance of Islam, boasting of how he had first eaten pork in the company of a European traveller with whom he foregathered in Egypt, and quoting in excuse for his orgies of bashish and spirits this couplet from the Maganu—

“Nang-i-bang u khawar bar khud mii-ni
T’d dami ac khwisttan t’u va-rabi.”

“Thou disgracest thyself with hung and wine
In order that for a moment thou mayest escape from thyself.”

I have seen him, on an occasion when by the laws of Islam the minor ablution was incumbent on him, take up an empty ewer (djalbe), and, when warned by his friends that it contained no water, reply, “Bah! What do I care? I only carry it to blind these accursed dogs of orthodoxy, who, if they had but proof of one-tenth of the contempt which I entertain for them and their observances, would tear me in pieces.” He professed to be a Babi, and (as will be related in its proper place) had all but suffered death for his beliefs. When a youth he had visited Beha at Acre and Subh-i-Ezeli in Cyprus, and declared himself to be a follower of the former, though in point of fact he paid no more attention to the commands and prohibitions of the Kitab-i-Akdas than to those of the Kuru’m, accounting all laws, human and divine, as made by the wise for fools to observe. In short, he was just a free-thinking, free-living, antinomian dervish or kalander, a sort of mixture of Omar-i-Khayyam and ‘Iraki, with only a fraction of their talent and culture, and ten times their disregard for orthodox opinion and conventional morality. Yet he was lacking neither in originality, power of observation and deduction, nor humour; and his intelligence, now sadly undermined by narcotics and alcohol, must have originally been sufficiently acute.

Such was the man in whose society it was my lot to pass
a considerable portion of my remaining days at Kirmán. Again and again, as I have said, I would have cast him off and been quit of him, but ever the interest of his extraordinary character and the charm of his conversation made me condone his faults and bear with him a little longer. He was a perfect repository of information concerning the roads, halting-places, towns, and peoples of Western Asia; you had but to ask him how to reach any town from a given starting-place, and he would in a few minutes sketch you out two or three alternative routes, with the stages, advantages, disadvantages, and points of interest of each.

To give an instance, I had at this time some idea of quitting Persia by Hamadán, and making my way thence to the Mediterranean, and I enquired of Sheykh Ibráhím whether this project were feasible.

"Oh yes," he replied, "nothing can be easier. From Hamadán you will go to Sanandij, a march of four days; thence in four days to Suleymáníyyé; thence in four days more to Mosul, where you must certainly pay a visit to Zeynu'l-Muṣarrabín."

"And who," enquired I, "is Zeynu'l-Muṣarrabín?"

"He is one of the most notable of the Friends" (Aḥbāb, i.e. the Bábís), replied he, "and to him is entrusted the revision and correction of all copies of the sacred books sent out for circulation, of which, indeed, the most trustworthy are those transcribed by his hand. His real name is Mullá Zeynu'l-ʿAbidín of Najaf-ābád. You may also see at Mosul Mírzá 'Abdu'll-Wahháb of Shíráz, the seal-engraver, who will cut for you a seal bearing an inscription in the New Writing ( Kháṭṭ-i-bádi), and Mírzá 'Abdu'lláh 'Aláka-hánd, both of whom are worth visiting."

"Are these the only Bábís at Mosul?" I enquired.

"Oh, no," he answered, "you will find plenty of them there and elsewhere on your route. You can tell them by their dress; they wear the Turkish fez with a small white turban, and a jubbé; they do not shave their heads, but on the other hand they never allow the zulf to grow below the level of the lobe of the

ear. Well, to continue. From Mosul you will go in four days to Jeziré, thence in three days to Márdín, thence in four days to Díyár Bekr, thence in four days to 'Urfa, thence in two days to Suwárak, thence in three days to Āvrá, thence in three days to Birejik, and thence in six days to Iskanderún (Alexandretta), where you can take ship for Constantinople, or Alexandria, or your own country, as you please. But you should by all means go to Acre, and visit Behá, so that your experience may be complete."

"You have visited Acre, have you not?" I enquired; "tell me what sort of place it is, and what you saw there."

"Yes," he replied, "I was there for seventy days, during which period I was honoured (mubáraraf) by admission to the Holy Presence twelve times. The first time I was accompanied by two of Behá's sons, by his amanuensis and constant attendant Áká Mírzá Áká Ján of Káshán, whom they call 'Jenáb-i-Khádim' (His Excellence the Servant of God), and by my fellow-traveller. All these, so soon as we entered the presence-chamber, prostrated themselves on the ground; but while I, ignorant of the etiquette generally observed, was hesitating what to do, Behá called out to me 'It is not necessary' (Lájím nist). Then said he twice in a loud voice, 'Báraksá'lláhu 'aleykum' ('God bless you!'), and then, 'Most blessed are ye, in that ye have been honoured by beholding Me, which thing saints and prophets have desired most earnestly.' Then he bade us be seated, and gave orders for tea to be set before us. My companion hesitated to drink it, lest he should appear wanting in reverence, seeing which Behá said, 'The meaning of offering a cup of tea is that he should drink it.' Then we drank our tea, and Khádim' object one of the Epistles (Alváh); after which we were dismissed. During my stay at Acre I was taken ill, but Behá sent me a portion of the piláw which had been set before him, and this I had no sooner eaten than I was restored to health. You should have seen how the other believers envied
me, and how they begged for a few grains from my share! And this happened on two subsequent occasions. When I left Acre, Behá commended me, but bade me preach the doctrine no more, because I had already suffered enough in God's way."

Later on Mirzá Yúsuf of Tabriz joined us, and, thinking to please Sheykh Ibráhim, pretended that he too was a Bábí. But when Sheykh Ibráhim feigned ignorance of the whole matter, expressing surprise, and, in some cases, mild disapproval, at what Mirzá Yúsuf told him of the doctrines and practices of the sect, the latter, thinking that he had made a mistake, changed his ground, and told us that he had only pretended to be a convert to the new religion so as to get money from the rich and charitable Bábís at Yezd. I could hardly contain my laughter as I watched Mirzá Yúsuf thus entangling himself in the snare set for him by the Sheykh, who, meanwhile, never so much as smiled at the success of his stratagem. I expected, of course, that the whole story would become known to all the Bábís in Kirmán, but I think the Sheykh kept his own counsel, being less concerned with the exposure of hypocrisy, than with his own amusement.

After Mirzá Yúsuf’s withdrawal, the Sheykh, having communicated to me a great deal of very scandalous gossip about the postmaster (whom he was by way of considering as one of his best friends), began to discuss with high approval the character of the free-thinking poet Náṣír-i-Khusraw, whose poems and apocryphal autobiography he had been recently reading. The episode in the autobiography which had especially delighted him, and which he repeated to me with infinite relish, runs as follows:

"After much trouble we reached the city of Nishápúr, there being with us a pupil of mine, an expert and learned metaphysician. Now in the whole city of Nishápúr there was no one who knew us, so we came and took up our abode in a mosque. As we walked through the city, at the door of every mosque by which we passed men were cursing me, and accusing me of heresy and atheism; but the disciple knew nothing of their opinion concerning me. One day, as I was passing through the bazaar, a man from Egypt saw and recognised me, and approached me, saying, 'Art thou not Náṣír-i-Khusraw, and is not this thy brother Abú Sa‘íd?' In terror I seized his hand, and, engaging him in conversation, led him to my lodging. Then I said, 'Take thirty thousand miskéts of gold, and refrain from divulging the secret.' When he had consented, I at once bade my familiar spirit produce that sum, gave it to him, and thrust him out from my lodging. Then I went with Abú Sa‘íd to the bazaar, halted at the shop of a cobbler, and gave him my shoes to repair, that we might go forth from the city, when suddenly a clamour made itself heard near at hand, and the cobbler hastened in the direction whence the sounds proceeded. After a while he returned with a piece of flesh on the end of his brand. 'What,' inquired I, 'was the disturbance, and what is this piece of flesh?' 'Why,' replied the cobbler, 'it appears that one of Náṣír-i-Khusraw's disciples appeared in the city and began to dispute with the doctors thereof. These repudiated his assertions, each adducing some respectable authority, while he continued to quote in support of his views verses of Náṣír-i-Khusraw. So the clergy tore him in pieces as a meritorious action, and I too, to merit a reward, cut off a portion of his flesh.' When I learned what had befallen my disciple, I could no longer control myself, and said to the cobbler, 'Give me my shoes, for one should not tarry in a city where the verses of Náṣír-i-Khusraw are recited.' So I took my shoes, and came forth with my brother from Nishápúr."

The Sheykh then recited to me the two following fragments of Náṣír-i-Khusraw's verse, which, it will be allowed, are sufficient to account for the lack of favour wherewith he was regarded by the clergy of Nishápúr:

"Húdá, rást gírman; fi núz az in, Vold az tars na-pílum eubídatan.\nAgar ríg bi-kashík-i-khánu na-dírt\nChídá bajoíst Sheypání shírdán?\nLab ú díndí-i-khání-i-Kháján-rá\nBadí khibí na-bí-yost shírdán.\nBi-bíh mí-zánt ‘Híú! Híú!’ bi kísírj\nBi-kísírj mí-zánt ‘Híú!’ bar dawílán."

"O God, although through fear I hardly dare
To hint it, all our trouble springs from Thee.
Hadst Thou no sand or gravel in Thy shoes
What prompted Thee to bid the Devil be?
'Twere well an Thou hadst made the lips and teeth
Of Tartar beauties not so fair to see.
With cries of 'On!' Thou bid'st the hound pursue;
With cries of 'On!' Thou bid'st the quarry flee!"
KIRMÁN SOCIETY

"Naṣīr-i-Khusraw bi-dāghtī mī-gangash,  
Māt-i-lā-ye-khūj, na chīn mēy-khūdāgarīn.  
Mahtāk dān u mazārdā rū-bi-rū;  
Bāng har zādī; gafī, 'Kāy nāzūdāgarīn!  
Nī'mat-i-donyū, na nī'mat-khūwār bīr;  
insh nī'mat! insh nī'mat-khūdāgarīn!"

"Dead drunk (not like a common sot) one day  
Naṣīr-i-Khusraw went to take the air.  
Hard by a dung-heaps he espied a grave,  
And straightway cried, 'O ye who stand and stare,  
Behold the world! Behold its luxuries!  
Its dainties, here—the fools who are them, there!"

Ere evening was past, the Sheykh, like Naṣīr-i-Khusraw,  
was "dead drunk, not like a common sot," and finally, to my  
great relief, went to sleep, wrapped in his cloak, in a formless  
heap on the floor, where we left him till morning. He awoke  
very late, and was sipping his morning tea with a woe-begone  
air which contrasted strangely with his vivacity of the previous  
day, when visitors were announced, and my disagreeable  
acquaintance, Hájī Muhammad Khān, accompanied by a pleasant,  
well-informed mulā named Hájī Sheykh Ja'far of Kerbelá,  
entered the room. He was more than usually impertinent and  
inquisitive; enquired when Sheykh Ibrāhīm had come to the  
garden, and, on learning from me that he had been there since  
the previous night, lifted his eyebrows in surprise, remarking  
that the Sheykh had said he came that morning early; and then  
proceeded to enquire pointedly how the postmaster was, and  
whether I had any fresh news from Adrianople or Acre, meaning,  
of course, to imply his belief that I was a Bābī. Finally, however,  
Naʿīb Hasan came to the rescue, reminding me in a loud voice  
that I had accepted an invitation to visit Hurmuzyr, one of my  
Zoroastrian friends, at his garden. He omitted to mention that  
the engagement was for the evening, but the intimation had the  
desired effect of causing Hájī Muḥammad Khān to retire, taking  
the divine with him.

I now wished to go out, but to this Sheykh Ibrāhīm objected,  
declaring that it was too hot; so we had lunch, and then ad-  
journed to the summer-house, where he fell asleep over my Bābī  
history. On awakening from his nap he was more like his usual  
self, and began to entertain me with his conversation.

"So you met Sheykh S——, the Bābī courier, at Shīrāz, did you?" he began; "a fine old fellow he is, too, and has had some  
strange experiences. Did he tell you how he ate the letters?"

"No," I replied; "tell me about it."

"Ah," he continued, "he is not given to talking much. Well,  
you must know that he goes to Acre once every year to convey  
letters from 'the Friends' in Persia and elsewhere, and to bring  
back replies. He takes Isfahān, Shīrāz, Yezd, and the south,  
while Dervish Khāvar takes Māzandarān, Gīlān, and the northern  
part of 'Irāq, riding about on a donkey, selling drugs, and passing  
himself off as an oculist. The Sheykh, however, goes everywhere  
on foot, save when he has to cross the sea; and this, I fancy, he  
only does when he cannot well avoid it, at least since a ship in  
in which he was a passenger was wrecked between Bushire and  
Bāṣra, and everyone on board drowned save himself and another  
dervish, who managed to keep themselves above water by means  
of floating wreckage, until, after fourteen or fifteen hours'  
exposure, they were drifted ashore. As a rule, he so times his  
return from the interior as to reach Bushire early in the month  
of Dhul-Qa'dah, whereby he is enabled to join the pilgrims bound  
for Jedda and Mecca. After the conclusion of the pilgrimage  
he makes his way to Acre, where he generally stays about two  
months, while the letters which he has brought are being  
answered. Though he is not, perhaps, honoured by admission  
to Behá’s presence more than once or twice during this period,  
he is in many ways a privileged person, being allowed to go into  
the andarun (women’s apartments) when he pleases, and to sit  
with outstretched feet and uncovered head even in the presence  
of the Masters (Akhyān, i.e. Behá’s sons). When the letters are  
all answered, he packs them into his wallet, takes his staff, and  
sets off by way of Beyroudt for Mosul, where he stays for about a  
month with Zeynu‘l-Muṣarrabin, of whom I told you a few days
ago. Thence he makes his way down the Tigris to Baghdád, and so across the frontier into Persia. He walks always off the beaten track to avoid recognition, and, for the same reason, seldom enters a town or village save to buy sufficient bread and onions (he is passionately fond of onions) to last him several days. These he packs away in his wallet on the top of the letters. At night he generally sleeps in a graveyard, or in some other unfrequented spot where he is not likely to be disturbed, unless there be some of ‘the Friends’ in the place where he halts, in which case they are always glad to give him a night’s lodging. Well, it was about his eating his letters that I was going to tell you. Once in the course of his travels he was recognised in a village near Yezd, arrested, and locked up in an empty room to await examination by the káz-khudd, or head-man. The káz-khudd chanced to be engaged when word was brought to him that the Bábí courier had been caught. ‘Leave him locked up where he is,’ said he, ‘till I can come.’ Now the Sheykh is a man of resource, and, finding that the káz-khudd did not immediately come to examine him, he began to cast about for some means of destroying the compromising letters in his wallet; for he knew that if these should fall into the hands of the enemy the writers would get into trouble. Unluckily there was no fire, nor any means of making one; and the earth which formed the floor of the room was too hard to dig a hole in, even if it would have been safe to bury the letters in a place whence they could not afterwards be removed. There was only one thing left to do, namely, to eat them; and this the Sheykh proceeded to do. It was a tough meal, for their total weight amounted to several pounds, and some of them were written on thick, strong paper. In particular there was one great packet from Rafsínján which cost the Sheykh a world of trouble, and on the senders of which, as I have myself heard him say, he lavished a wealth of curses and expletives ere he finally succeeded in chewing it up and swallowing it. At length, however, the whole mass of correspondence was disposed of, and, when his persecutors arrived, there was the old Sheykh (with a very dry mouth, I expect, and, likely enough, somewhat uneasy within) sitting there as innocent-looking as could be. The káz-khudd and his man didn’t pay much heed to that, though, nor to his protestations; but when they had turned his wallet inside out, and searched all his pockets, and found not so much as the vestige of a letter to reward them for their pains, they were rather taken aback, and began to think they had made a mistake. They gave him the bastinado to make all sure, but, as he continued to protest that he was no Bábí, and no courier, and knew nothing about any letters at all, they eventually had to let him go.”

We were interrupted by the unwelcome arrival of Seyyid Huseyn of Jandák, and, quickly as I pushed the Bábí history under a cushion, he noticed the movement, and forsooth proceeded to make himself disagreeable (an accomplishment in which he excelled) to Sheykh Ibráhím, persistently and pointedly asking him about wine, where the best qualities were manufactured, how and when it was usually drunk, and the like, on all of which points the Sheykh professed himself perfectly ignorant. The Seyyid, however, continued to discourse in this uncomfortable strain, concluding severely with the aphorism, “Man dāna bi-dinin, leximahu abkāmnahu” (“Whosoever professest a faith, its laws are binding on him”).

Presently the Fárrásh-báshì’s servant, ‘Abdu’lláh, who was one of the Sheykh’s intimates, joined us, and we had tea; but the Seyyid continued to act in the same aggressive and offensive manner, enquiring very particularly whether the cup placed before him had been properly purified since last it touched my infidel lips. Mírzá Yúsuf of Tabríz, who had brought it, answered pertly enough, and put the old man in a still worse temper, so that I was very glad when Ná’íb Hasan reminded me in a loud voice that it was time to set out for the garden of Hurmuzýár, whose guest I was to be that evening, and the Seyyid departed, grumbling as he went, “You have already forgotten the advice
KIRMĀN SOCIETY

I gave you the other day, "Eat no man's bread, and grudge not thine own bread to any one."

Sheykh Ibrāhīm, though uninvited, insisted on accompanying me and Nā'īb Ḥasan to Ĥurmuzjār's entertainment. We found about twenty guests there assembled, all, with the exception of ourselves and Fatḥu'llāh, the minstrel, Zoroastrians; Rustams and Rashids; Shahriyārs, Dīnyārs, and Ormuzdyaars; Key-Khusraws and Khudā-murādts; Bahmans, Bahrāms, Isfandiyārs and Mihrābs. The entertainment was on a magnificent scale, the minstrel sang well, and the pleasure of the evening was only marred by the conduct of Sheykh Ibrāhīm, who got disgustingly drunk, and behaved in the most indecorous manner. "But that he came under your aegis," said Ĥurmuzjār to me afterwards, when I apologised for his behaviour, and explained how he had forced his company upon me, "we would have tied his feet to the poles and given him the sticks; for if sticks be not for such drunken brutes as him, I know not for what they were created."

I was constrained to admit that he was right; but for all that I was unable to shake off my disreputable companion, who accompanied us back to the garden when we said good-night to our host, and slept heavily on the ground wrapped in his cloak.

The next day, Monday, 14th Shawwāl, 24th June, will ever be to me most memorable, for thereon did I come under the glamour of the Poppy-wizard, and forge the first link of a chain which it afterwards cost me so great an effort to break. Thereon, also, was first disclosed to me that vision of antinomian pantheism which is the World of the Kālandar, and the source of all that is wildest and strangest in the poetry of the Persians. With this eventful day, then, let me open a new chapter.

CHAPTER XVII

AMONGST THE KĀLANDARS

"How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;
Eating the Lotus day by day,

To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy." (Tennyson.)

"Tu va mnūk u jāb-i-Sikandar, man u rasm u rāb-i-Kālandar;
Agor dā khūb-ast, in dar khūrta va gur in bad-ast, mard sazād."

"Sikandar's pomp and display be thine, the Kālandar's habit and way be mine;
That, if it please thee, I resign, while this, though bad, is enough for me."
(Kurratul-'Āyn.)

THIS was how it came about.

On the afternoon of this notable day, about four hours before sunset, I went into the town to pay some visits, leaving Sheykh Ibrāhīm asleep in the garden. I first went to see the Frenchmen, about whose health I had heard disquieting reports, which, fortunately, turned out to be exaggerated. Having remained with them for rather more than half an hour, I proceeded to the house of the young artillery officer whose acquaintance I had made through the Sheykh of Kum. While I was sitting there conversing with him, and watching the grotesque antics of a large tame monkey (antar) which he kept as a pet, I first became conscious of an uneasy sensation in my eye. My host, too, noticed that it appeared inflamed, and bade
one of his servants bring a bowl of iced water that I might bathe it. So far from deriving any benefit from this treatment, however, it rapidly grew worse, so that, on my return to the garden, I was in considerable pain.

Now Ustá Akbar, the pea-parcher, whenever I urged him to tell me more about the Báb and his religion, used to declare that he could not talk freely on this topic save in some place where there was no fear of his being overheard; and it had therefore been arranged a day or two previously that on this evening he and a select company of his Bábí friends—to wit, Sheykh Ibráhím of Írák, the Fárrásh-káší Treasurer, ‘Abdu’lláh, and the Ezfí Kindred, Fáthu’lláh—should sup with me in the garden and spend the night there. Just as I was going out in the afternoon, Ustá Akbar had come to the garden bringing with him a Bábí merchant (whom I will call Aḵá Muḥammad Ḥasan of Ýezd), just arrived on business in Kirkúk from the little village in Rafšinján where he dwelt. He, having heard from Ustá Akbar an account of myself, was so curious to see me that he insisted on at once paying me a visit; and no sooner were they seated than the pea-parcher began to introduce him in his usual wild

language.

“Here is Aḵá Muḥammad Ḥasan,” said he, “come to do penance before you and entreat your forgiveness for his short-comings, in that when you passed through Rafšinján he neither came out to meet you, nor brought you into his house, nor set you on your journey. I have scolded him well, saying, ‘Aḵá Muḥammad Ḥasan, the Holy Spirit (Raḥm’l-Kádh) passed through Rafšinján, and you had not so much as a word of welcome, nor advanced one foot from the other. Are you not ashamed of yourself?’ He is now duly ashamed of himself, and will not be content till he receives from your lips the assurance of his pardon.”

I was in a hurry to get rid of my visitors, as I had to go into the town; so, half assenting to Aḵá Muḥammad Ḥasan’s proposal that I should spend a few days with him at his village before leaving the province of Kirkúk, and inviting him to join us at supper that evening, when we should be able to talk to our hearts’ content, I bade them farewell for the present.

On my return to the garden, about an hour after sunset, I found these two and Sheykh Ibráhím awaiting me. My eye was now so painful that I determined to cover it with a bandage, which at once called the attention of my guests to its condition. They all expressed the greatest concern, and Ustá Akbar begged me to allow him to try a remedy which he had never known to fail. In this request he was so importunate that at last I most foolishly consented. Thereupon he went out into the garden and gathered some leaves from the hollyhock or other similar plant, with which he soon returned. Then he called for an egg, broke it into a cup, removed the yolk, leaving the white, and bade me lie down on the floor on my back, and, if possible, keep the inflamed eye open. Then he poured the white of the egg over the eye, covered it up with the leaves, and entreated me to remain still as long as I could, that the treatment might work. It did work: in two or three minutes the pain became so acute that I could bear it no longer, and called for warm water to wash away the horrid mess which half-blinded me. Ustá Akbar remonstrated, but I told him that the remedy was worse than the disease.

“Ah,” said he, “it is clear that I have made a mistake. When you told me that you had been bathing your eye in iced water, I assumed that this cold was the cause of the affection, and so applied a hot remedy. Now it is evident that it is due not to cold but to heat, so that a cold remedy should be applied. And I know one which will not disappoint you.”

“Thank you,” I rejoined, “if it is anything like the last I should prefer to have nothing to do with it.”

“It is nothing like the last,” he answered. “What I would suggest is that you should smoke a pipe of opium. That is a cold
AMONGST THE KALANDARS

yet higher, in the Sixth Heaven or ‘Station of Love’ (Makhtim-i-Ishk); and Behá, in whom all previous Manifestations find their fulfilment and consummation, occupies the Seventh or highest Heaven, and is a perfect Manifestation of the Unseen and Incintelligible Essence of the Divinity.”

Then suddenly some one bade the minstrel sing; and he, in high-pitched, plaintive voice, every modulation of which seemed to stir the soul to its very depths, burst forth with an ode of the Bábí heroine Khurratul‘Ayn, whereof the translation which I here give can but dimly reflect the passion and the fire.

“The thrills of yearning love constrain in the bonds of pain and calamity
These broken-hearted lovers of thine to yield their lives in their zeal for Thee.

2. Though with sword in hand my Darling stand with intent to slay,
   though I sinless be,
   If it pleases Him, this tyrant’s whim, I am well content with His tyranny.
   As in sleep I lay at the dawn of day that cruel Charmer came to me,
   And in the grace of His form and face the dawn of the morn I seemed to see.

4. The musk of Cathay might perfume gain from the scent those fragrant tresses rain,
   While His eyes demolish a faith in vain attacked by the pagans of Tartary.
   With you, who contain both love and wine for the hermit’s cell and
   the zealot’s shrine,
   What can I do? For our faith divine you hold as a thing of infamy.

6. The tangle curls of thy darling’s hair, and thy saddle and steed are
   thine only care;
   In thy heart the Infinite hath no share, nor the thought of the poor man’s poverty.
   Sikandar’s pomp and display be thine, the Kalandar’s habit and way be mine;
   That, if it please thee, I resign, while this, though bad, is enough for me.

8. The country of ‘I’ and ‘We’ forsake; thy home in Annihilation make,
   Since fearing not this step to take thou shalt gain the highest felicity.”

1 This translation, together with the original text, I first published in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1889, the former at pp. 936–7, the latter