But though the development of the Turkish empire was thus arrested for a moment, the development of Turkish poetry proceeded without check or pause. In the work produced about the time of the Tartar onslaught we find no trace of that uncertainty as to course, that halting between two opposing principles, which in greater degree or less has marked all the verse written up till now. From this time West-Turkish poetry formally renounces every exclusively Turkish characteristic; these Turkish verse-forms which happened to be duplicated in the Persian system are retained, but the old syllabic prosody passes altogether away from literary verse, not to re-appear till the rise of the Modern School in our own day. The victory now obtained by the Persian poetic system is complete; not only is every detail of this accepted and made into an integral part of the Ottoman, but whatever is unrepresented there is resolutely refused admittance, or if it happened to be present, is ruthlessly cast out.

Along with this development appears another phenomenon. Before the invasion of Timur poets had been few in Rûm — we have not been able to find a dozen in the course of a hundred years — after that event they arise on every side.

One cannot but ask how it is that these things, the final self-adjustment of Turkish poetry to its foreign model and the sudden increase in the number of its practitioners, should have occurred at the very moment when the Power which represented the nascent nationality of the Western Turks was reeling under the rudest blow ever dealt it in all its long history.

^Ali suggests as an answer to this question the influence of certain Persian men of letters who accompanied Timur on his campaign in Asia Minor. Like many another Oriental prince, the Tartar conqueror was fond of the society of
poets and men of learning, and numerous stories are on record concerning his interviews with the learned men of Rûm and of the good-humoured way in which he received their sometimes not very courtier-like sallies. These Turkish scholars would doubtless discuss their craft with the erudite Persians in Timur's suite, and in the course of conversation get many a hint that would profit them in their further work. Such friendly intercourse between the followers of an invader and the people of an invaded country may appear strange to a modern European; but there was nothing unusual in it. In those days nationality and patriotism, as we conceive them, existed not in the East. Wars were waged under the impulse of religious enthusiasm, or from sheer greed of plunder, or the mere love of fighting, or else, as in this instance, through the ambition of princes. Except in the first case, nothing like personal animosity existed between the individual combatants; and when they were not actually engaged in fighting, they were ready enough to meet on friendly terms.

But though the impulse given to Ottoman letters by such intercourse with accomplished Persians no doubt goes for something, it seems hardly a sufficient explanation of the efflorescence of full-blown literary poetry at this particular juncture. Another partial explanation may perhaps be found in the encouragement given to letters, and especially to poetry, by Prince Suleymán, the eldest son of the Thunderbolt, and for a time the most successful of the competitors for the throne. The court which this gallant but reckless Prince held at Adrianople was, while it lasted, the centre of Ottoman culture, and under the genial influence of his appreciative patronage poetry was fostered as it had never been before.

But it seems to me that the true answer to the question lies in the simple fact that the time was now ripe for the
development that took place. That this synchronised with
the Tartar invasion was a mere accident; it would have been
accomplished all the same had Timur never crossed the
frontier. We have seen how the distinctively Turkish element
was becoming ever less and less as poet succeeded poet.
There was very little trace of the syllabic prosody in Süley-
mân's Hymn; the next step would naturally be to omit it
altogether. Again, we are told that Niyâzi, who wrote before
the invasion, had exactly reproduced the Persian lyric style
in his Turkish verses, and the scraps of these that we have
go to confirm the statement. ¹

Niyâzi, moreover, did not stand alone; the poets Ahmed-i
Dâ'î, Ahmedî and Nesîmi were all contemporary with him;
and although much of the work of these three was doubtless
produced after the Tartar raid, they were (with the possible
exception of Dâ'î of whom we know little) certainly writing
before that catastrophe, and most probably during the life-
time of Niyâzi. ² The complete Diwâns of Ahmedî and Nesîmi
are in our possession, and in these we find the Persian system
completely accepted and alone recognised. As it is unlikely
either that these poets rewrote their early lyrics in later
life or that their editors would omit their earlier works when
compiling their Diwâns, I am inclined to believe that the

¹ Niyâzi is the first Turkish poet to follow the universal Persian practice
of using a Makhlâs or Pen-name. Previous and contemporary writers had
been content with their personal name or their surname; but 'Niyâzi' is
neither a personal name nor a surname, but a pen-name, and one, moreover,
that has been adopted by several subsequent Ottoman poets. To choose such
and write under it was, of course, an essential part of the programme of an
author whose aim was the naturalisation of every Persian literary usage. The
practice at once became universal, and from this time forth the poets who
wrote under their personal name are in a microscopic minority.

² The first draft at any rate of Ahmedî's Iskender-Nâmê was finished
in 792 (1390). Some of Nesîmi's verses are said to have been recited in the
presence of Fâzî-ullah the Hurufi who was put to death by Timur in 804
(1401-2).
complete ascendency of the Persian system was practically established shortly before Timur’s invasion, and so was not, as ‘Ali would infer, a result of that event.

The increase in the number of poets at this point may be accounted for by the general advance in culture made by the Turkish people since the chaos brought about by the Mongol invasion and the Seljúq collapse. Especially during the reign of Bāyezíd was this advance remarkable. Under that monarch Brusa became a centre of learning; and although this for the most part took the direction of scholastic theology, the science which above all others stood emphatically for ‘learning’ in medieval Islam, it prepared the ground for a wider and more liberal culture.
For eight years after the Battle of Angora Prince Suleyman reigned as an independent sovereign over the Ottoman territories in Europe. During this time his court at Adrianople was, as we have said, the centre of West-Turkish culture. That it was so in a truer sense than Brusa had yet been was owing to the Prince's possessing a taste for literature, and especially for poetry, such as none of his fathers had ever displayed. He loved to surround himself with poets; and it was chiefly from their ranks that he chose his booncompanions for the wild carouses in which he delighted. For unhappily for himself, this Prince's devotion to every form of pleasure was at least as strong as his love of poetry. His unbridled debauchery lost for him the respect of his soldiers and his people; so that at last in the hour of need his army deserted and left him to perish miserably at the hands of his rivals. 814 (1411).

'\textit{\'Ashiq and \'Ali give us the names of some of the poets whom Suleymán gathered around him at Adrianople. Prominent among these are the brothers Ahmedî and Hamzevi. Ahmedî, the author of the earliest extant Ottoman romantic poem, is so notable a figure that we leave him and his work to be dealt with at some length in the next chapter. His brother Hamzevi is chiefly remarkable for having collected in twenty-four volumes the legendary history of Hamza the uncle of the Prophet. This work was in prose freely interspersed with verses; and it was by reason of it that the author adopted his makhlâs of Hamzevi.}'

\footnote{\textit{\'Hamzevi} is an adjectival form of Hamza; \textit{\'Hamzan} we might say. Von}
Another of the circle was Sheykh-oghli, of whom 'Ashiq tells us that he wrote a poem called Ferrukh-Nâme or 'The Book of Ferrukh' (the name of the hero) from which this couplet is quoted:

So came from hand what comes from heart, it would e'en be
That every beggar would a king or queen be.

More important than either Hamzevi or Sheykh-oghli—at least so the biographers must have deemed him as they accord him alone of the three an entry all to himself—is the poet Ahmed-i Dâ'i. Latifi, Hasan Chelebi and 'Ali agree in making this writer a native of Germiyan, in which petty kingdom, according to the last-mentioned, he had been a cadi or judge. In due time, however, he found his way to Adrianople, where he was received into high favour by Prince Suleymân.

He wrote a good deal for his Ottoman patron including a poem called Jenk-Nâme or 'The Book of War,' which seems to have been a versified history of the struggle between

1 'Ali is mistaken in saying that 'Ashiq attributes the Ferrukh-Nâme to Ahmed-i Dâ'i. Kâtib Chelebi describes this book as 'a Turkish poem by Sheykh-zâde in the reign of Sultan Yildirim Khan.' In the printed edition of 'Ali and in Fluegel's Kâtib Chelebi the name of the work is given as Ferah-Nâme (which would mean 'The Book of Gladness'), an obvious slip for Ferrukh-Nâme, as will appear from what is said in Chapter IX.

Sheykh-oghli and Sheykh-zâde are the same name, the first being the Turkish, the second the Persian form for 'Sheykh-son.'

2 i.e. could the hand carry out the heart's desires.

3 It must be by a slip that Von Hammer makes Dâ'i a native of Qaraman.

4 Von Hammer, without indicating his authority, gives 815 (1412) as the date of Dâ'i's death.

5 Von Hammer, following Latifi, reads Chenk-Nâme or 'The Book of the Harp;' but Hasan Chelebi and Kâtib Chelebi read Jenk-Nâme. 'Ali confuses Dâ'i's poem with Sheykh-oghli's, calling the former Ferah-Nâme, while he says it contains much brilliant battle imagery.
Suleyman and his brothers. Another of his works was a treatise on the branch of polite learning that is called İlm-i Teressul. This consists in the knowledge of the rules of courtesy that must be observed in correspondence, rules which determine with great nicety the manner in which a person should be addressed according to his social station, and the ways in which different subjects should be presented. When Hasan and ʿAli wrote, this treatise of Daʿī's was widely known among the people. In some manuscripts and in the printed edition of Latifi it is said that Ahmed-i Daʿī wrote further a work dealing with Persian and Arabic lexicography, which he called ʿUqīd-ul-Jewahir or ‘The Strings of Gems.’

According to Von Hammer, Sehi Bey, the earliest biographer of poets — he wrote but a few years before Latifi, — says that in his time Daʿī's Diwān was known everywhere, copies being very common in both Rumelia and Anatolia. Such may very well have been the case three centuries and a half ago, but copies are sufficiently rare nowadays; at least I have failed to discover any, and so must rest content with repeating Latifi’s somewhat superfluous remark that the ghazels are in an ‘antiquated’ style. Latifi and Hasan quote this couplet, than which, they both declare, there is nothing better in the whole Diwān: —

By Tā Hā’s chapter, 2 O mine eye, I charge thee speak, didst e’er thou see
A worry like my Dear, a frenzied Lover like this heart of me? 3

1 Flugel’s edition of Katib Chelebi thus describes the Jenk-Nāme: ‘In Turkish, by the poet Ahmed of Germiyan and the poet Dervish, concerning the war of Sultan Selim with his brother Bāyezid.’ This last phrase obviously should read ‘the war of Sultan (i.e. Prince) Suleyman with his brothers the sons of Bāyezid.’ Sultan Selim I had no brother named Bāyezid, while Sultan Selim II was never engaged in war with a brother. Who the ‘poet Dervish’ is, or what Katib Chelebi means by making him joint author of the Jenk-Nāme, I do not know.

2 The twentieth chapter of the Koran is called the Chapter of Tā Hā,
Ali, though he cites the above, prefers the following ghazel, which he says he takes from Şeqi Bey. In this ghazel, the first three couplets of which are quoted also by Latifi and Hasan, the Persian influence now supreme in poetry appears in fullest flower. The rhyming is already intricate to a degree beyond which no later master of the craft ever pushed. Here, in this little poem whence every vestige of spontaneity is banished and where artificiality is all in all, we see forged to the last link those alien fetters which are for ages to trammel and repress the genius of Turkey.

these being the Arabic names of the two letters TH which are prefixed to it.

3

In the printed edition of Latifi there is the following comment on this couplet: 'The foregoing couplet was highly esteemed of Dâ'i, and is the most approved artistic distich in his Diwan. But it is remarkable that with all his skill and knowledge he should have overlooked the amphibologous sense of his words and should not have perceived of how many meanings his language is susceptible. For he saith in the second line of the above distich, Ya'rim gibi fitne, 'a worry like my Dear.' The word fitne 'worry' is in this place a curious expression, amphibologous, implying censure, and suggesting a coarse word. In the common speech of the people they apply fitne 'worry' to a certain small dog, a kind of cur. The poets of the age generally use this word when speaking of the rival, as in this couplet: —

Rûbeîye Cheïder, dîîdak, oîn fitneîî oîlîî
Bûnm ber àïm Cîêdr waî, waî qîewînîî, dâîrîam bîqî\n
Thou'st shown the rival the chief seat, and to yon worry, {"Rey!"} hast said. Alack! alack! I am not held c'en as a dog before thy gate!'

[In this verse the word Àîlî, addressed by the sweetheart to the rival, has two meanings, 'great' and 'howl': an attempt has been made to preserve the equivoque in the translation, by the homonyms Bey (title) and Bay (bark).

The word fitne may have been popularly applied to a dog in Latifi's time, but I have seen no allusion to such a use elsewhere, and it is unknown in the present day.]
Ghazel. 1 [39]

1 Lunar-fashioned Sun of light! 2 thy face is jovial in sight! 3

By thy fair face ashine is earth, and by thy life the time 's a garth!
What garth? The garth of Heaven on high. What Heaven? The Heaven of Kevser's site. 4

Thy face it is the Verse of Ruth, thy self it is of Power the Proof!

As Solomon's the story thine, as Alexander's glory thine!

The chesner Sphere 6 thou hast outdone; the realm of fortune thou hast won!
What realm? The realm of luck. What luck? The luck of him who 's Caesar 7 hight.

Untold the slaves about thy stead; the meanest is thy slave Ahmed!

1 This ghazel is evidently addressed to Prince Suleyman.
2 The Sun that combines the beauty of the Moon with his own radiance is the Prince.
3 Jupiter was reckoned by the astrologers the most auspicious of the planets.
4 Kevser is the name of one of the rivers of Paradise, see p. 36.
5 Joseph, as we shall see again and again, is the constant type of youthful beauty with the Muslim poets.
6 The Sphere, conceived as an evil power whose delight is to thwart and baffle man (see p. 44, n. 3.), is constantly personified by the poets, sometimes under a male, sometimes under a female form. In the present instance it is represented as a chess-player intent on checkmating the Prince, who none the less has beaten it and won the prize fortune.
7 Qaysar i.e. 'Cesar,' is the special title of the Emperor of Constantinople, be he Byzantine or Ottoman.
8 The word Dāʾī, which this poet Ahmed adopted as his makhlas, means 'one who prays for another,' a 'bedesman.'
CHAPTER V.

THE ROMANCIsts.

Ahmedi.

The earliest romancist among the Western Turks was probably that Ahmed whose poem Canopus and Vere was, according to ʻAshiq Chelebi, written in the days of Murâd I. But as nothing is known of that author or his work save from the brief and contemptuous passage in ʻAshiq’s Tezkire, Tâj-ud-Dîn Ahmed, better known under his makhlâs of Ahmedi, the brother of Hamzevî and the panegyrist of Prince Suleymân, is to all intents and purposes the introducer of the metrical romance.

There is the usual uncertainty as to Ahmedi’s birthplace; Latîfi and ʻAlî make him a native of Siwas, but Tash-köprüzâde, whose notice of this poet appears more reliable than Latîfi’s, says that he and his brother were born in the little kingdom of Germiyan. While yet quite young he left his native land in order to prosecute his studies in Cairo, then the metropolis of Arab culture; and when there he foregathered with two other young Turks, Hajji Pasha¹ and

¹ Hajji Pasha was a native of the petty kingdom of Aydin. After studying and writing a good deal on scholastic subjects, he turned his attention to medicine in consequence of an illness which he had contracted. He acquired so great a name in this science that he was appointed governor of the hospital in Cairo. He wrote in Arabic a famous medical treatise called Shifâ-
Fenari, who had gone thither on the same errand as himself, and who both were destined to become illustrious in the learned world of their day. Tash-köprü-zade tells us, and the story is repeated, more or less slightly modified, by all the subsequent biographers, that the three friends, who were then studying under the famous teacher Sheykh Ekmel-ud-Din, being anxious to learn something of the fortune that awaited them, repaired one day to the cell of a certain professor of the occult arts who had a high reputation as a reader of the future. This gifted personage 'looked into the mirror of their auspicious destiny,' and turning to Hajji Pasha, said, 'Thou shalt busy thyself with medicine;' then to Fenari, 'Kindling thee at the light of learning, thou shalt shine, and from thee shall many light the lamp, many stir the fire of guidance on the way of salvation;' and lastly to Ahmedî, 'Thou shalt waste thy time over poetry; and neglecting the universal sciences, thou shalt turn thee to the particular arts;' all of which prophecies of course duly came to pass.

From Cairo Ahmedî returned to his native country of ul-Esqâm ve Dewâ-ul-Alâm or 'The Healing of Ills and the Cure of Pains;' and in Turkish a smaller work on the same subject which he named Teshi'l-ut-Tibb or 'The Facilitation of Medicine.'

1 Mevlâna Shems-ud-Din Mehmedî-i Fenâri was among the most distinguished of the early Ottoman âlemâ. He was born in 751 (1350) at a village called Fenâr, whence his surname. During the reigns of Bâyezîd and Mehmed he enjoyed great reputation as a teacher in Brusa, students coming from all parts to attend his lectures. In 828 (1425) Murâd II made him Cadi of Brusa. In 833 (1430) he undertook for the second time the pilgrimage to Mekka, on this occasion as an act of thanksgiving for the recovery of his sight which he had temporarily lost. He died in 834 (1431). He left several works in Arabic on scholastic subjects.

2 By the term 'universal sciences' (âlîm-i kullîye) is meant the abstract sciences, such as metaphysic; these, being the peculiar province of the Soul Reasonable, were accounted more worthy of respect than the 'particular arts' (funûn-i juzîye), like prosody and rhetoric, which depend upon such faculties of the Soul Sensible as observation and imagination. See pp. 48-51.
Germiyan where he became khoja or titular tutor to the Emir or King who, we are told, being fond of poetry, held his preceptor in high esteem. This was most probably during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Murâd I; in any case it must have been before 792 (1390), the year in which Bâyezîd the Thunderbolt swept away the independence of Germiyan and of so many other of the states of the Decarchy.

The next glimpse we get of Ahmedî is at Amasiya where he is said to have presented a qasîda to Timur who had paused at that city while on his devastating march through the Turkish lands. The poem, we are told, greatly pleased the Tartar king who bade the author join his private circle, where his wit and conversational gifts found much favour. Here again the author of the Crimson Peony tells a story which is reproduced without substantial difference by his successors. One day Timur invited Ahmedî to accompany him to the private bath in the establishment which served him as a palace, and when there he asked him by way of pleasantry to set a value on each of the young beauties who were in attendance to perform the various offices connected with the Eastern bath. So the poet began and valued one at the ‘tribute of Egypt’; one at the world full of silver and gold, and so on. When he had finished, Timur said, ‘Come now, value me likewise.’ Ahmedî looked at the great conqueror, the master of half Asia, and answered, ‘Eighty aspers.’ ‘Out on thee, Ahmedî!’ said the King,

1 ‘The tribute of Egypt,’ a phrase used to express any immense sum of money.
2 The Ottoman coinage was inaugurated by Sultan Orkhan who in 729 (1329) issued small silver pieces which were originally called aqcha-i-osmâni. Until the end of the reign of Selim I (the first quarter of the sixteenth century) these little coins were usually called simply ‘osmâni; from that time onwards the common designation has been aqcha. English writers have almost always used the word ‘asper’ to represent the Turkish aqcha; and as the former term, though incorrect, has found its way into our dictionaries
'how is it thou thus judgest? the towel' alone which is about my middle is worth eighty aspers.' 'It is even the towel about thy middle that I valued,' rejoined the poet, 'that apart, thou art not worth a brass farthing.' Timur had the magnanimity not only to pardon Ahmedi, but to present him with such valuables as he had with him at the bath. Perhaps, if there is any truth in the story, the despot admired the courage which dared thus address him.

Some time after this, Ahmedi attached himself to the court of Prince Suleyman at Adrianople, where he was well received. According to the Crimson Peony he presented to this Prince his great poem the Iskender-Name or 'Book of Alexander' which had been written several years earlier, but to which he continued to add almost to the time of his death; he also wrote for him a great number of qasidas and ghazels which were formed into a Diwan. He returned to Amasiya, probably on the death of his patron, and there, according to Tash-kopri-zade, he died about the end of the year 815 (Jan.—Feb. 1415). The same authority states that Ahmedi was over eighty years of age at the time of his death; if this is correct, he must have been upwards of seventy when at Suleyman's court.

Latifi's account of Ahmedi, which has been followed by Von Hammer, differs considerably from the foregoing. Accord-

and may be considered as the English representative of the original, I shall make use of it in the present work. Authorities differ as to the exact value of the original aqcha or asper; but it is agreed that the coin was pretty nearly equivalent to the modern ghurush or piastre, that is, to about 2½ d. of our money. This value was fairly maintained till the time of Mehemmed II [855 (1451) — 918 (1481)] when it fell to about 2d. After this the asper continued steadily to decline. The last struck were issued by Mahmut II in 1234 (1818-9). For an excellent and detailed account of the Ottoman coinage, see Ghâlib Edhem Bey's Taqwmi-i Meskât-i Osmâniya.

1 The towel or napkin which the bather puts round his waist and which reaches to the knees or a little lower.
ing to this biographer, the poet, who was a native of Siwas, was the panegyrist of one Mîr (Lord) Selmân or Sulmân, a tribal chief of Murâd I's time, for whom he wrote his Iskender-Nâme and his Dîwân. The prince here meant is probably the King of Germiyan to whom, according to the Crimson Peony, Ahmedi acted as khoja. There is, however, generally considerable difficulty in individualising the rulers of these little states of the Decarchy, as the Ottoman historians, who are our chief authorities, have an unfortunate habit of speaking of those kinglets by a simple patronymic such as Germiyan-oghli, 'the Son of Germiyan,' without mentioning the name of the descendant in question. That Latîfî's Mîr Sulmân was the King of Germiyan is the opinion of the modern Ottoman scholar Fâ'îq Reshad Bey. This opinion receives some support from the fact that, as we shall learn more fully in a later chapter, the contemporary poet Sheykh-oghli began his romantic mesnevi when 'Shâh Suleymân was King of all Germiyan,' although this sovereign appears to have died before the completion of the poem, which was eventually presented to Bâyezîd Bey (Sultan Bâyezîd the Thunderbolt). On the other hand, no mention of a king of Germiyan called Suleymân has been found in the histories. These tell us that in 783 (1381-2) Prince (afterwards Sultan) Bâyezîd married the daughter of the Germiyan-oghli of the time, then an aged man, whose son Ya'qûb Bey (the name in this case is recorded) was ruler of the country when it was annexed by the Ottomans some nine years later. The Germiyan-oghli who was Bâyezîd's father-in-law may be the Mir Sulmân or Shâh Suleymân of the poets.

Latîfî says nothing about the sojourn in Egypt, nothing about the intercourse with Timur, but on the other hand he tells a story concerning the Iskender-Nâme which, though repeated by Hasan Chelebi, is passed over by all the other
biographers. It is to the effect that when Ahmedī presented this poem to 'the magnates of the age,' — by which term must be meant Mir Sulman and his courtiers, — these declined to accept it, saying, 'A deft qasida had been better than such a book as this.' Deeply chagrined by such a reception, the author went back to the house which he shared with Sheykhi, afterwards so illustrious as a poet, and there told his friend the cause of his dejection. That night Sheykhi composed an elegant qasida which he gave to Ahmedī telling him to offer it on the morrow to his dissatisfied patrons. Ahmedī did so, when the patrons, who seem to have had some idea of criticism, having glanced over the lines, said to him, 'If this qasida be thine, yon book is not; and if the book be, this qasida is not.'

Such is Latifi's story, and it need not be without foundation. The Iskender-Nāme contains no dedication; the question is therefore between the statements of the biographers. Latifi, the earliest authority, says it was presented to the 'tribal chief' Mir Sulman (presumably the King of Germiyan); Tash-kopri-zāde says it was presented to Prince Suleyman the son of Bayezid; ʿAshiq, Hasan and ʿAli are silent on the subject. The identity of name between the two princes has probably bred confusion; but it may be that the first draft of the work was offered to the King of Germiyan and rejected as Latifi tells, and that later on a more perfect version was presented to and accepted by Prince Suleyman.

With regard to the part attributed to Sheykhi; we know from the Crimson Peony that in his youth this poet, who was likewise a Germiyan Turk, was a pupil of Ahmedī's, so is it not improbable that they may at one time have lived under the same roof. Sheykhi's skill in decorative verse was certainly far beyond Ahmedī's; but whether the elder
poet would have condescended to pass off a pupil’s work as his own may fairly be questioned.

Ahmedi’s great work the Iskender-Náme or ‘Book of Alexander’ is what in early French literature would be called an Alexandréeide, that is a history of Alexander the Great as this was understood by the medieval world. It is the first important secular poem of the Western Turks, if indeed we may describe as secular a book which though dealing with a legendary story and touching upon all branches of the knowledge of the day, takes each incident as it arises for the text for a sermon and discovers in every scene an allegory or a parable. For this poem is not merely one of the many fabulous versions of the life of the great conqueror which in the Middle Ages sprang up on all sides both in East and West; here the story of Alexander is so to speak but the frame-work within which the author sought to enclose an epitome of all the science, whether sacred or secular, of his time. His aim was thus to make of his book a kind of encyclopædia embracing in abstract all human knowledge.

For this purpose the story of Alexander was well chosen; for the King being represented as of an inquiring turn of mind and being ever accompanied by his sages, Aristotle, Plato and the rest of them, the machinery for a formidable scientific discussion is always at hand. In this way Ahmedi contrives to introduce not merely abstracts of psychology and medicine, astronomy and geography, and the other sciences of the time, but a summary of the whole field of history as the medieval East knew it. This summary, which occupies about a fourth of the entire poem, finishes in some

1 Ahmedi’s Iskender-Náme is still unpublished. The British Museum has five MSS. (Harl. 3273: Add. 7918: Add. 7905: Or. 1376: Add. 5986) of which only the first is complete. There is an imperfect copy in my collection.
manuscripts with the fall of the Baghdad Khalifate, while in others it is carried down to the author's own time, winding up with the reign of his patron Suleyman over European Turkey.

But such discourses on science or history, which are always put into the mouth of some sage or other and thus woven into the story, are not the only interruptions to which this is subjected. After every incident in the narrative Ahmed stops and, speaking in his own person, draws a moral from what he has just related, the incident itself being most often turned into an allegory; and thus he makes his book a manual of Practical Philosophy as well as of Theoretic.

When Ahmed wrote, Turkish literature was, as we know, extremely limited, consisting almost entirely of a few mystic poems; it may have been his ambition to supply a complete library in one great work and to present to his countrymen in their own language the essentials of an education hitherto accessible only to those versed in Arabic and Persian. But whatever may have been the motive of the author, it is beyond question that while his book gains in interest from an archaeological point of view by what is practically a panorama of Oriental science in the fourteenth century, the continually recurring interruptions and long-winded digressions are fatal to the poem as a work of art. But then we have no reason to think that Ahmed ever regarded the Iskender-Name as a work of art; his obvious purpose was to educate and to supply a guide for conduct. That he chose to write in verse may well have been simply because verse was the easiest and most natural medium of literary expression in the existing condition of the Turkish language. He makes no attempt to embellish his lines with any kind of rhetorical ornament; even the homonym, which the single-minded 'Ashiq did not disdain, is disregarded. Picturesqueness of
imagery is equally little sought after; the result being a style of extreme simplicity often degenerating into baldness. Here and there this simplicity of thought and language lends a certain vigour to the verse, and would do so more often but for the intolerable prolixity which is the besetting sin of Ahmedí as it is of the whole family of medieval romancists.

The Iskender-Náme was written during the latter half of the fourteenth century, somewhat before the definite settlement of prosody. None the less, the metre employed, which is the same as that used by Veled, ʿAshiq and Suleymán, is fairly correctly observed, the chief irregularity being an inordinate use of elision. From the first the poets had occasionally, as a prosodial license, elided a short vowel immediately followed by a long one; this license Ahmedí turned into a practice. The result is displeasing, and must have been at once felt to be so, as no subsequent poet availed himself of this license to anything like the same extent, and eventually the use of elision was dropped altogether.

As might be expected, the old Ottoman critics, Latifí, ʿAshiq, Hasan and ʿAlí, are at one in disparaging the manner of the Iskender-Náme. So artless a poem could hardly commend itself to those masters of the 'grand style.' Latifí declares that the literary skill of Ahmedí is in no wise commensurate with his learning; Hasan says that though his Iskender-Náme is renowned, the manner of its versification is notorious; ʿAlí sees in 'his diffuse and prolix mesnevi' and in 'his insipid and awkward phrases' a fulfilment of the prophecy of the Egyptian seer who foretold that he would 'waste his time' over versifying.

Ahmedí's poem is not, like many Turkish romances, a translation from the Persian. It has little beyond the name and the general subject in common with Nizámi's celebrated
poems. The story as given by Ahmedi follows generally on the lines of the history of Alexander as this is detailed in the Shah-Name of Firdausi. But the Turkish poet frequently modifies, sometimes quite alters, the incidents of the romance, and very often changes their order. The numerous digressions, scientific and didactic, are entirely his own.

In the epilogue to Ahmedi's poem we are told that the work consists of 8,250 couplets, and that it was finished on the first day of the Latter Rebi' of 792 (19th. March, 1390), which date, it is added, corresponds to the years 1700 of Alexander, 759 of Yezdejird, and 310 of Melik Shah. But additions were evidently made from time to time; thus in some manuscripts we find this allusion to the death of Prince Suleyman which occurred in 814 (1411):

 Báyezid and Timur kings were yesterday;
 Now on one the snake, on one the ant, both prey.
 Yesterday reigned Mir Suleyman royally;
 Darksome dust within the earth to-day is he.
 Unto him with whom the power of vision lies
 Prince Suleyman's fate as warning will suffice. 1

The Iskender-Nâme opens with a number of introductory cantos, some celebrating in more or less mystic fashion the glory of God and the praises of the Prophet, others dealing with certain technical points of Sûfî lore. When these preliminaries, which occupy many pages, have been got over, the author embarks upon the romance. This is divided into

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These lines occur in the historical portion of the Iskender-Nâme, where the author, when speaking of the destruction of Kustem's family, mentions as other examples of the instability of earthly greatness, the deaths of his own contemporaries, Báyezid the Thunderbolt, Timur and Prince Suleyman. It is possible, but improbable, that the Mir Suleyman referred to is the King of Germiyan.
a series of Dāstāns or ‘Legends,’ each devoted to some conquest or exploit of the hero. These Dāstāns consist each of several cantos, each narrative canto being as a rule followed by one pointing out the moral lesson to be drawn. Leaving out of sight these preachments and also the scientific discussions, as forming no real part of the romance, the story of Iskender or Alexander, as given by Ahmedi, is in outline as follows: —

Dārā (Darius), the mighty King of Persia, conquers Rūm, and having killed the Caesar, divides the country among a number of native nobles who are to rule as his vassals. Faylaqūs (Philip) in this way receives the region of Yūnān (Ionia) subject to an annual tribute of a thousand golden eggs — such eggs, each a misqāl in weight, forming, we are told, the money of those days. Darius also marries the daughter of Philip, but restores her to her father when he returns to his own capital Medāʿāʾin. Before departing he leaves instructions that if the child born of her be a son, he is to receive all Rūm as his heritage and that Philip is to act as his guardian. Some time after his return home Darius dies and is succeeded by his son Darāb (Darius Codomanus). By and by there is born to Philip a grandson for whom the astrologers predict the most brilliant future, and whom Eflāṭūn (Plato) and Buqrāṭ (Hippocrates) name Iskender (Alexander). He is surnamed Zū-l-Qarnayn (i. e. ‘He of the Two Horns,’ ‘the Bicornered,’) because he is destined to conquer East and West, and because he was born with two tresses. Aristū (Aristotle) and Suqrāṭ (Socrates) as well as Plato and Hippo—

1 Medāʿāʾin, which in Arabic means ‘Cities,’ is the name given by the Muslim writers to that great city on the Tigris which the Byzantines called Ctesiphon. We are told that it consisted of seven cities (whence the name) which together formed the capital of the ancient Persian Empire. Little of Medāʿāʾin now remains above the ground save the ruins of the Tāq-i Kislā or ‘Arch of the Chosroes,’ built by the Kislā, or Chosroes, Nišīrewān.
crates are charged with his education, and so by the time
he has reached his tenth year he is a philosopher versed
in the mysteries of the heavens. Philip dies when Alexander
is fifteen years old, whereupon the latter becomes king. His
first act is to summon the four philosophers and ask them
concerning the nature of things; they are explaining this in
a materialistic fashion when Khizr, \(^1\) who is present though
not recognised, declares that matter is not eternal and that
God formed the universe from nothing. He convinces Plato
and then vanishes, whereupon they recognise who he is that
had come to teach them the True Faith, which, on the
King's suggestion, they accept. Alexander then asks each of
the four to embody in a treatise his counsels, that these
may aid him in the hard task of kingship; and this they
accordingly do. One night Alexander sees in a vision an
angel who gives a sword into his hand telling him to use
it against his enemies, East and West having been given
to him; which dream Aristotle interprets as a Divine pro-
mise that he will conquer the whole world.

Darius, who hears of Alexander's pretensions, is incensed
and sends an ambassador demanding the annual tribute.
Alexander bids the envoy tell his master that the bird that
laid the golden eggs is dead, having been eaten by Philip
during his last illness. Darius, furious at such an answer,
sends a second envoy with a sack of millet which he empties
out before Alexander. The latter, divining this to be a
symbol of the magnitude of the host that will be led against
him, sends for a cock which eats up all the millet, thus
indicating that the vast army will be destroyed by a single
person. Darius then assembles his countless hosts, the war-
riors not alone of Persia, but of the many regions subject
to the Great King, and with these he marches exultant

\(^1\) See p. 172. n. 1.
into Rûm. Alexander, whose brave bearing and eloquent words have won the hearts of his warriors to fight valiantly for him, advances to resist the foe. A furious battle follows which results in the utter defeat of Darius, whose camp and possessions fall into the hands of Alexander. Darius himself flies from the field, and as he is seeking some place of shelter he is overtaken and mortally wounded by two of his own nobles to whom he had given some offence. These thereupon go to Alexander and report what they have done, looking to be rewarded; but the King, indignant at their treachery, has them both hanged straightway. This is told to Darius, who is pleased at Alexander’s justice, and sends him a message making over to him his kingdom and all his treasures. Alexander hastens to the dying King who with his last words confirms the gift. Alexander, who thus becomes King of Persia as well as of Rûm, proceeds to Medâ’in where by the justice of his rule he wins the hearts of all.¹

By and by Alexander resolves to lead an expedition into India, so he sends a letter to Keyd the king of that land, demanding his submission. Now Keyd is a wise prince; and as some little time before, he had been warned in a vision of the approach of an irresistible conqueror from Rûm, he determines to at once tender his submission and if possible

¹ In some MSS. there follows here a long dâstân dealing with the love-adventures of Alexander and Gul-Shâh (Princess Rose) daughter of Zeresb the King of Zâbulistân. This interlude I strongly suspect to be, if not altogether apochryphal, at any rate an after-thought and no part of the original scheme. My reasons for this opinion are these: 1, This dâstân, and this alone, is omitted from many MSS. 2, Nothing in any way corresponding to it occurs in the Shâh-Nâme version of the story, which Ahmedí elsewhere follows generally. 3, The literary style is different from that of the rest of the work; here alone are ghazels interspersed through the mesnevi, in the fashion of Sheykhi and later poets. 4, It is awkwardly interpolated, having no connection with the story proper, and being evidently introduced merely for the sake of the love element which is otherwise quite unrepresented in the Iskender-Nâme.
make a friend of the invincible invader. To this end he despatches an ambassador to Alexander not only to announce his submission, but to pray the Rumi King to accept as an offering his four unique treasures, namely, his sage who knows the secrets of the spheres and the influences of the stars, his physician who can cure all ills save death alone, his bowl which, however much one drink from it, can never be emptied, and his peerless daughter Shehr Bāni.¹ The plan succeeds, and Alexander enters Keyd’s territory as a friend. The two kings meet and feast together and exchange gifts. Alexander tests the Indian sage by requiring the explanation of a number of symbolic actions, and then asks him about the beginnings of the universe and of man; after which he inquires of the physician concerning the body of man and the nature of the mind.

In the spring Alexander determines to march against Für (Porus), another Indian king, who however refuses to follow Keyd’s example, and prepares to resist the aggressor. He has in his army many elephants, animals new to Alexander, who none the less devises a stratagem to put them to flight. He constructs a number of artificial elephants, filled inside with inflammable materials, which are set on trolleys and pulled along in front of his soldiers. When the two armies meet, the trolleys are driven right up to the elephants, which are in front of the Indian troops, the combustible materials are then set ablaze, whereupon Für’s elephants turn in terror, and rushing back upon the Indian lines, throw everything into confusion. The Rumi-Persian army then attacks, when the Indians are totally defeated, and Für himself is slain. By this victory Alexander becomes lord-paramount of all India.

¹ Shehr Bāni, i.e. ‘Lady of the City;’ in some MSS. the name is Shehd Bānū, i.e. ‘Lady Honey.’
Having settled affairs in his new possession, Alexander, accompanied by his army and his sages, sets out on his long course of wanderings, wanderings to which he is impelled as much by his intense desire to see the wonders of the world as by his lust of conquest. He begins by exploring the islands of the China Sea. \(^1\) The first place at which the flotilla touches is the Island of Ra‘ij; here they find a creature in human form, but winged, and speaking a tongue they cannot understand; they see also a huge mountain infested by snakes as large as dragons; and they catch a parrot belonging to a species that can learn any human language they hear spoken. In the same island grows the camphor-tree, in the shade of which a hundred persons can rest; all summer these trees also are infested by huge snakes so that no one can approach them, the natives therefore shoot at them arrows to which they have affixed their own names, and when winter is come and the snakes are gone, each man appropriates the tree in which his arrow has stuck, and draws the camphor from it. Alexander and his warriors sail next to the Isle of Raziya where gold grows on the ground like grass, and where they find a timid people who flee on their approach. The next halt is at the Isle of Wāq-Wāq \(^2\) which is ruled by a queen who has an army of six thousand maidens, and who sends gifts to Alexander on hearing of his arrival; this island owes its name to a tree the fruit of

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\(^1\) The China Sea was *par excellence* the region of marvels. Most of the wonders seen by Alexander, as well as the names of most of the islands he visited, are taken from the works of the old geographers, Qazwini, Idrisi and Ibn-al-Verdi. Some are mentioned in the Arabian Nights story of Sindbad. Those matters are carefully investigated, and many points in connection with them elucidated, by M. van der Lith, in his fine edition of the Kitāb ‘Ajā‘ib al-Hind (Livre des Merveilles de l’Inde), Leyden, E. J. Brill, 1883-6.

\(^2\) M. de Goeje has identified the Wāq-Wāq Isles with Japan, which is called Wo-Kwok in the Chinese dialect of Canton, where the Arab sailors doubtless learned the name. L. de Merveilles, pp. 295 et seq.
which cries out Waq! Waq! They proceed to another island where there is a very beautiful people who live among inaccessible mountains; also a race of dog-headed men. Alexander questions an old man whom he meets here concerning the ocean, and is told that someone else had inquired as to its depth, whereupon an angel had appeared and informed the questioner that a man who had fallen in three hundred years before was still falling, not yet having reached the bottom. The old man tells further of a great fish that seeks to swallow ships but can be driven off by the beating of drums; of a monster crab the shell of which when pounded and mixed with tutty is good for illnesses of the eye; of a wondrous deer; of a radiance that appears in the form of a bird whereat if one look, his eyes are dazzled, and on the appearance whereof the sky becomes as a garden while the sea shines with light and the waves are stilled; of a snake-bodied, elephant-headed fish; and of a creature that swims in the sea by day and flies through the air by night. As the climate of the Isle of Jaba is pleasant, Alexander builds there a city which he calls Serendib; he then subjects the whole island which was being torn by internal wars. In the Isle of the Tinnin (Dragon) he encounters a great dragon which eats two oxen every night. Alexander destroys this monster by filling two ox-skins with pitch and lime and leaving these in the path of the dragon who eats them and is burned. The next island is Selamit where they see a fountain flowing into a well; the drops of water as they descend into this well are changed into stones, white or black according as they fall by day or by night. Alexander reaches the Valley of Diamonds through which he is told none, not even dragons, may pass, as it is full of venomous snakes and as there blows in it a wind that turns stones to wax, though nothing can cut the diamonds there. The King determines
to obtain some of these, so he has a thousand eagles caught and kept foodless for two days, when he has pieces of meat thrown before their eyes into the Valley. The birds are then released, whereupon they fly down and pick up the pieces of meat to which many diamonds adhere; they are followed, and where they alight the precious stones are found. In another island the King sees a great palace concerning which he asks the Indian sage, who tells him that none can enter it and no one knows what it is. As they are speaking there issue from it a host of dog-headed men who attack Alexander's army, but are defeated and fly back into their stronghold. The King desires to follow them, but is dissuaded by the sage who declares to him that the place is enchanted.

Alexander now turns his face towards China, which when Tamgháj Khan, the king of that country, hears, he is sore perplexed. He however resolves to submit, and goes out to meet Alexander, and the two kings enter the Chinese capital together in triumph. The usual feasts and philosophical discussions ensue, and Alexander confirms Tamgháj in all his former rights. He next proceeds to the most eastern East and looks upon the rising-place of the sun. Then desirous of beholding the wonders of the West, he retraces his footsteps, and soon afterwards he has left China behind him. He is encamped in a lovely spot when he is accosted by a man who tells him that yesterday he saw a wonderful stone which changes from colour to colour and at night shines like a mirror. Alexander asks Aristotle of this and is told that the name of this stone is feylaquis, that it is found in China and Russia, that he who possesses it can control the demons and enjoys safety from wild beasts and reptiles; but that the demons hide it lest any man should through it obtain mastery over them. After visiting a mine whence is obtained the metal khârchin from which are made poisoned
spear and arrow heads, but whereat if a paralytic look, he is cured, they proceed through Cashmere to the Turkish lands. A Turkish chieftain offers battle, and after a hard fight is defeated, whereupon his country is made over to the King of China. Alexander converts the people, who are heathen, to the Unity, and after the customary carouse, sets out on the search for new wonders. They encounter giant apes and one-horned hares on their way to the land of Tagharun whose inhabitants are men in form but brutes in nature, and where they see men with the heads of wolves and others with the faces of elephants or dogs.

Proceeding, they come to a place where are two great mountains with a gap between them, and beneath which dwells a feeble and timid folk. In reply to the King's questions, these tell him that they live in terror of Gog and Magog, two barbarous tribes, that dwell on the other side of the mountains and ever and anon descend upon them through the gap, and harry and lay waste their land. In response to their prayer for aid, Alexander gets together a vast array of workmen and blocks up the gap through which the savages come, by building in it a huge dyke or rampart. When this has reached the summits of the mountains he covers it over with pieces of metal which he then melts by means of blasts from innumerable furnaces so that, when the metal has cooled, mountains and dyke present one solid mass which nothing can penetrate. As this charitable action was done for the love of God, Alexander put much gold and silver among the metal on the dyke.

Having thus effectually barred the way of Gog and Magog, Alexander continues his journey. The Russians of Khazar try to stop his progress, but after a desperate battle they are defeated and their lands laid waste. The King then proceeds to Mazenderan in order to conquer the divs or demons.
whose head-quarters are in that province and of whose exploits he has heard. He fights a great battle with them, in the course of which a demon leaps upon his shoulders and cannot be displaced till smitten down by an angel from heaven. When the fiends have been utterly defeated, Alexander passes into Khurasán, and there founds the cities of Merv, Samarcand and Herat.

The next country visited is Egypt, where the King sees the pyramids and many other marvels. He founds there the city of Alexandria which he names after himself and makes his capital. He builds in this city a pillar, on which is set a glass called the giti-numá or 'world-displayer,' wherein is reflected all the good and all the evil done throughout the world. Besides this, there is erected on the pillar a talismanic figure of a man which turns towards the quarter where any enemy is plotting against the city; and there is likewise another talisman which keeps the city free from snakes and all stinging things.¹

Meanwhile Qayzāfá, ² the great Queen of the Sunset-land (Maghrib), ³ having heard of the mighty deeds of Alexander, sends a clever painter to Egypt, who, without the King's knowing it, takes his portrait and carries it back to his mistress. Alexander on his part hears of the splendour and power of Qayzāfá, and straightway desiring that she too be subject to him, sends an ambassador demanding her sub-

¹ Ahmedi tells how those talismans were destroyed through the craft of a Frank who having ingratiated himself with the 'Abbási Khalífa of the day, persuaded him by means of a lying story of a treasure hidden beneath, to demolish the pillar whereon they stood.

² This name should perhaps be transliterated Qaydáfa, the ୪ being often written ୫ in old Persian books.

³ Maghrib, literally the 'Sunset-land' or the 'Land of the Setting,' is constantly mentioned in Eastern romance. It vaguely represents the western regions of the earth (as then known), especially Barbary or North-western Africa with Spain and Portugal.
mission. She replies by bidding him beware of presumption and arrogance. On receiving this answer, he sets out against her with a vast army, and on his way he comes to a great city, which he takes. Qayzāfa's son Qandarush, who is married to the daughter of the king of this city, is here made prisoner along with his wife. In order himself to spy out the resources of Qayzāfa's land, Alexander devises and executes a stratagem; he makes his vezir assume the royal dress and personate the king, while he disguises himself as a simple noble, and when Qandarush and his wife are led out to be executed, he intercedes for them with the fictitious king and obtains their freedom, and having thus won their gratitude, he accompanies them in the character of an ambassador to the court of Qayzāfa. The Queen, who recognises the King from his portrait, asks his errand, whereupon he declares that he is an ambassador from Alexander who demands her submission; this she again refuses. After he has given a false name in answer to her questions, Qayzāfa tells him that he himself is Alexander and shows him his own portrait. On finding himself thus discovered, the King is in terror for his life; but the Queen reassures him, and after making him swear never to lead an army against her, proposes a treaty of alliance, to which he agrees. He is then presented with many gifts and set at liberty. But no sooner is he in safety, than, tormented by the thought that he has had to treat with another sovereign as with his equal, he schemes the destruction of Qayzāfa and her land. Precluded by his oath from drawing the sword against her, he is compelled to fall back on stratagem. The Sunset-land lies at a lower level than Rum, so in order to destroy the former, he causes great canals to be dug to it from the Sea of Rum, which is then allowed to enter these canals, and thus the Sunset-land is submerged, and Qayzāfa and all her subjects are drowned.
When they hear of this, all the remaining kings of the earth, dreading the violence and craft of Alexander, offer him their submission, and he becomes lord-paramount of the whole world. But still he is not satisfied, and sighs that there are no more worlds to conquer. Scorning his vizir's counsel to be content, he fits out a ship with provisions for a year and gives it in charge to a skilful captain and crew, who have with them two learned men from each of the nations of the world, and who are bidden sail the seas for a year and see whether there be still any land unconquered. They sail for a whole year but see nothing, and are about to return when they perceive another ship. This they approach, but though they have with them interpreters for seventy-two languages, they are unable to understand a word of the strangers' speech. The two crews agree by signs that a man from each ship shall go and stay for a time in the other so that he may learn the language and tell what there is to tell. Alexander's ship returns with the stranger on board, and when the latter has learned the Rumi tongue, he is brought before the King to whom he tells that in the world whence he comes there is likewise a king whose name is Alexander and who, having conquered all the kingdoms there, had despatched that ship with two years' provisions to bring him tidings of the earth, of which he now desires to possess himself.

On hearing this, Alexander's pride is somewhat abated, and he bids Aristotle tell him the history of all that has happened and that shall happen upon the earth. In response to this command the sage gives a sketch of the history of the world as this was known in Ahmedî's time, beginning with Keyumers the first legendary king of Persia and coming down to the time of the composition of the Iskender-Nâme. In the course of this history Alexander hears of the future advent of the Prophet and of the glories of Baghdad; and
anxious to behold the sacred Ka'ba and the city where the Khalifas are to rule, he again sets out with his great army. Having visited Baghdad, he proceeds towards the Hijaz, on the way to which he comes upon a monastery which he enters and where he sees an ancient monk who continues his devotions utterly regardless of the great King's presence. On Alexander's asking what he means by this behaviour, the monk replies that it were unbecoming he should bow down to a slave of his slave. Alexander demands an explanation of his words, whereupon he says, 'Thou art the slave of lust whose master I am.' The King is pleased with this answer, and prays the monk to give him some helpful counsel, which he does. The next object Alexander encounters is a lofty palace, the door of which, though guarded by a talisman, opens to his hand. On entering he perceives upon a gold and ivory throne the body of a king, and hard by a tablet setting forth that this is Ad, conqueror of East and West, who ruled for twelve hundred years till death came to him, when none could save him, and bidding the reader beware of trust in the world and of pride; and when Alexander reads this he weeps. The King passes on and reaches Mecca, where he performs all the rites of the pilgrimage. When he has heard the history of the city, he leaves and proceeds to Jerusalem, after visiting which, he returns to Egypt. There he reigns in all prosperity and splendour; and sages repair thither from every land, and study and write books.

Alexander sees now that his fortune is at the zenith, and as he knows that declension must follow every ascension, his heart is grieved. A sage who perceives the traces of care upon his face, asks the reason, and when the King tells him, he replies that in the Farthest East springs the Fountain

1 This story is told likewise of Diogenes the Cynic (Diujanesi Kelbi) and the king of his day.
of Life, of which if any drink, he lives for ever in the world, but that the way thereto is very hard. When he hears of this, Alexander is rejoiced as though he had already found the Water, and straightway appoints as regent his son Iskenderús, and accompanied by Khizr and a mighty army, sets out for the distant East. On his march he comes to the City of the Brahmans, a mountain in the caves of which dwell countless naked and fasting devotees; and on his asking their chiefs why they thus live apart from mankind and abstain from food, he is answered that there is other food than bread. Going on, he comes to a vast dome, under which he enters, and there in a jewel-adorned room, on a ruby throne, he sees a dead man, and by him a tablet bearing an inscription in which he (Alexander) is addressed by name and told that this dead man was likewise a King Zú-l-Qarnayn, that he lived four thousand years ago, and that he too having conquered East and West, had got so far on his journey in quest of the Fount of Life. Proceeding onwards, they pass through plains and valleys and forests filled with wild boars and snakes and tigers till they reach the Land of the Witches who seek to bar their progress by causing to spring up before them an enchanted fire, which, however, is extinguished by a great rain sent from heaven in response to Khizr's prayer. A month's further journey brings them to the City of Shád-Kám (Fulfilled Desire), all the inhabitants of which are women. The Queen hospitably receives them and directs them on their way to the Fount of Life which lies no great distance off in the midst of a dense and impenetrable Darkness, the beginnings of which can be seen from the spot to which their lady-guides accompany them. Alexander and his army then advance into the Darkness wherein the Fount is hid; but ere they have got very far, they are assailed by a terrific storm which destroys half the host and scatters
the remainder in hopeless confusion. When Alexander becomes conscious of what has happened, he realises that the Water of Life is not for him; so he and what is left of his army grop their way through the Blackness out into the light as best they may. Meanwhile Khizr, who in the confusion wrought by the storm, had got separated from all the others, comes without trouble upon the Fount of Life, and drinks thereof; and so he lives for ever, though he is never seen again by Alexander or his warriors.

These, on issuing from the Darkness, encamp in a plain in the centre of which is a great tree beneath whose shade Alexander lies down to sleep. At midnight, when all are asleep save the King, he hears the tree sighing and wailing; it then addresses him, asking why he still thus lusts after conquest seeing that his end is near, and reproaching him with having made no provision for the future and with having got no real happiness from his life. When he hears the words of the tree, the King is filled with dismay, and on the morrow he is taken ill; and the army hastens back towards Persia. At a certain place on the road Alexander is attacked with sudden weakness, and there he writes a farewell letter to his mother Ruqiya Khatun. They proceed to Shehr-ruz, where the King's sickness increases on him, and where Plato vainly tries to cure him. He then gives instructions as to his funeral, and dies. His body is taken to Alexandria where his mother visits his bier, and mourning over him, cries that while he went in search of the Water of Life, he drained the cup of Death. He is buried in that city with the utmost pomp; but when his body is being carried to the grave, one hand is left exposed, so that all may take warning, seeing how Alexander who possessed the whole world goes empty-handed as he came. His mother commands each of the Greek sages to write an epitaph on him, and then seeks out his son.
Iskenderus to seat him in his father's place. But this Prince is a philosopher and hates sovereignty, so he refuses the crown and retires into holy seclusion. Anarchy therefore and confusion fill the Eastern world till King Ardeshir, the first of the Sasanians, appears and once again brings order to those lands.

Such is the history of Alexander as recounted by Ahmedí. In this history there is one incident which seems in a pre-eminent degree to have laid hold of the imagination of the Eastern poets. This is the King's futile quest of the Water of Life in the Land of Darkness and the discovery of that Fountain by Khizir. It is not too much to say that there is scarcely an Ottoman poet of any importance who has not in one way or another made allusion to this famous adventure. As we proceed we shall find constant references to it and endless fancies suggested by it, so it will be well to bear this part of the story in our minds. We shall also meet with allusions to the Dyke of Gog and Magog, and to what the poets call the 'Mirror of Alexander,' which would appear to be identical with the talismanic glass that Ahmedí says was set up on the pillar at Alexandria. The King himself is often mentioned as the type of a mighty conqueror and powerful monarch, and the proudest of the Sultans held it for a compliment to be compared to this great forerunner.

Perhaps because the absence of any love-interest rendered it less suitable material for Súfi allegorising, the story of Alexander was less popular as a subject with the Turkish writers than any other of the stock-romances of the Persians; and so while we find several versions, by as many different poets, of the stories of Khusrev and Shirín, of Leylí and Mejnün, and of Joseph and Zelikhá, there is, as far as I know, only one other Iskender-Náme in West-Turkish literature. This is by an obscure Ottoman poet called Fighání,
who wrote about the end of the fifteenth century; but it never achieved any success, and is now practically forgotten.  

The Iskender-Name is far from being the sole outcome of Ahmedi's literary labours. He wrote an immense number of qasidas and ghazels; these have been collected and form a large Diwan, a manuscript of which is in the British Museum.  

The style of these lyric poems differs much from that of the Iskender-Name; far more attention has been paid to matters of technique: there is here a striving after felicity, if not curiosity, of expression, which is wholly absent from the romance. The metres are regularly Persian, although frequent violations of the strict prosodial rules still occur. There is a much more sparing use of the license of elision. Many of the poems are addressed to Mir Sulman; but whether the King of Germiyan or Prince Suleyman is intended, is not always determinable. Ahmedi's Diwan is quite in the Persian style and taste. It is very unlike that of his contemporary Cadi Burhan-ud-Din which was no doubt being written while his own Iskender-Name was in process of composition. If the bulk of Ahmedi's lyrics, as we have them, was produced during the fourteenth century, then the settlement of West-Turkish prosody must have been effected somewhat before the Tartar invasion.

Latifi says that Ahmedi translated most of the qasidas of the Persian poets Selman and Zahir. While it is quite possible that Ahmedi did study and 'parallel,' or even translate, some of the works of these two poets, this statement of Latifi's need not be taken literally. It was the fashion among Ottoman writers of the fifteenth and sixteenth cen-

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1 There is a much better-known version of the story by Mir Ali Shiri Newâ'i; but this of course is in Jaghatay or Eastern Turkish, and so does not come within our sphere.

2 Or. 4127. The Diwan is unprinted.
turies to bracket the names of Selmán and Zahír with that of any poet they wished to commend, without meaning that there was any actual resemblance; thus to say that so and so's qasídás were as those of Selmán and Zahír, implied nothing more than that they were excellent. 1

Latífi credits Ahmedí with a second romantic mesneví, 'Jemshid and Khurshid' by name. In this he is borne out by Kâtib Chelebi who mentions two Turkish poems with that title, one by Ahmedí of Germiyan and one by the poctess Hubbi 2 who flourished in the sixteenth century. Of this romance of Ahmedí's I have been unable to find any particulars. It is not unlikely that it was suggested by, perhaps translated from, a poem of the same name written in 763 (1362) by the Persian Selmán whom Latífi says he followed. If this be so, the Jemshid who is hero of the romance is not the celebrated half-legendary king of ancient Persia, but a wholly imaginary prince, son of the Faghfúr or Emperor of China, while the heroine Khurshid is the daughter of the Cæsar of Rûm.

Several of the biographers mention further a versified treatise on medicine as being among Ahmedí's works; and Kâtib Chelebi speaks of a Turkish poem called Suleymán-

1 Zahír-ad-Dín-i Fáryábí (see p. 144, n. 2.), who died in 598 (1201-2), and Selmán Sávejí, who died about 779 (1377-8), are among the greatest of the Persian qasída-writers. They probably owed the position of conventional paragon that they held among the Turks to the following passage from one of the ghazels of Hâfíz in which the great Persian poet flatters himself on having outdone them:

جهد جایی کفتَت خواجه و شاعر سلمانست
که شاعر حافظ ما به نظم خوب ظهیر

What place is there for the ditties of Khájá and the poetry of Selmán? For the poetry of our Hâfíz is better than the fair verse of Zahír.

2 In Flügel's edition this name is wrongly printed جنی and transliterated Jeni.
Name or 'The Book of Suleyman,' which he says is by Ahmed of Germiyan. This last may perhaps be the accomplishment of a pious purpose expressed in the Iskender-Name, where, after the account of Prince Suleyman's reign at the close of the historical sketch, the author declares his intention, provided life be accorded him, of writing a book entirely devoted to the exploits of his patron.

We shall now translate a few extracts from such of Ahmed's works as are accessible.

From the Iskender-Name, [40]

Alexander buildeth the Dyke of Gog and Magog.

Journeying onward, did the King two mountains reach.—
Even to the moon upsoared the peak of each. 1
When the King of Earth was come those mountains nigh,
There a passing wretched folk did he espy.
Woman-like were all, and naked and forlorn,
All of them by hunger's hand distraught and worn.
When the Monarch asked them of their case, did they
Answer thus: 'O King, live thou on earth for aye!'
'Howsoc' er the sphere may turn, do thou remain!
'Sure and steadfast may the Lord thy throne maintain!
'May the Etern eternal life on thee bestow!

1 For Muhammedan peoples the source of the story of Gog and Magog (Ye'jiij and Me'jiij, which appear to have been the names of barbarous Turkman tribes, is the following passage from the 18th. chapter of the Koran:
"Then he (Alexander) followed a way, until when he reached to between the two ramparts (i.e. mountains) he found below them a folk who could scarce understand speech. Said they, 'O Bicorned! verily Gog and Magog are evil-doers on the earth: so shall we bring to thee tribute on that thou settest between us and them a dyke!' Said he, 'What my Lord hath established me in is better, so aid me with strength and I will set between you and them a rampart. Bring me lumps of iron until they fill up the space between the mountain-sides.' Said he, 'Blow until that it maketh a fire.' Said he, 'Bring me that I may pour over it, molten brass.' And they (Gog and Magog) could not scale it, neither could they tunnel it."
Ne'er may thy prosperity declension know!

Neither man nor jinn nor lion, parda nor drake

From thy fearful onslaught e'er escape did make.

Thou hast swept disorder from the earth away,

Through thy justice blooms the world a garden gay.

Since, O Monarch, thou hast asked us of our plight,

Hearken that our case before thee we recite.

Haply for this ill thou'dt find some remedy,

Haply this hard knot by thee unloosed will be.

There beyond these mountains, hills and plains untold

Stretch, and therein Gog and Magog have their hold.

If we till the land or if the fields we sow,

Gog and Magog come and waste whate'er we do.

All their work is but to ravage and oppress,

All they do is but to ruin and distress.

Half the stature of a man their height indeed;

Unto one a thousand, — such the rate they breed.

Like the boar's, their bodies bristle o'er with hair,

Passing sharp and long the nails and claws they bear.

Naught is there with them of any human grace,

Neither of religion show they any trace.

Though the sands may numbered be, O mighty King,

Yet of those there is nor tale nor reckoning.

There, between these mountains twain, O King of Earth,

Lies the road by which they alway issue forth.

Other way there is not whereby they might pass.

Let the Monarch find some help for this our case.

So that in the Sovran's reign the folk be glad,

So that be the Sovran's name with blessings said.

Surely he whose name with blessings said shall be,

In the Here and the Hereafter glad shall be!

We too shall bestir ourselves and lend our aid.

'Tween the mountains let a dyke by thee be made;

That such dyke may ever henceforth block their path,

And this land no more be wasted by their wrath.'

Said the King, 'To God be thanks that He Most Great

Made me not on any creature's aidance wait.

1 Drake, i.e. dragon.
Ne'er a need have I of any creature's aid.
So that God but help me, shall the Dyke be made.

Therefore for a season there the King did stay,
And he gathered workmen in untold array.
Gold and silver there for stone and iron he
Used, because he built this Dyke for charity.
(Spend thy wealth in charity, if gracious thou;
Hide it not, elsewise thy name is mean and low.)

So the King renowned upreared a mighty wall
Till it reached the peaks of those two mountains tall.
Then were bits of iron and of copper laid
Whereo'er the wall a space or gap displayed:
Furnaces the King of Persia next supplied,
Blasts were blown on yonder wall from every side:
Thus the metals melted were and fused in one,
And the Dyke made solid, so that flaw was none. ¹

Grace from God the Lord was granted, yea, and aid.

So the Dyke was built in the way I've said,
Gog and Magog on the farther side remain:
Never, never may they hither pass again.
But what time the Eternal One shall give decree,
And the Last Day nears, the Dyke shall riven be: ²
Through the same shall Gog and Magog issue forth,
And lay waste and spoil the Seven Climes of earth. ³

¹ The process of building this Dyke is more explicitly set forth in the Shah-NAME. A huge wall, reaching as high as their summits, was built between the two mountains: this was stopped up and covered over with pieces of rough iron and copper; the whole structure was then heated red-hot with hot blasts from innumerable furnaces, and so the pieces of metal were melted and fused together: the result being that mountains and Dyke formed one solid mass, through or over which it was impossible to pass.

² This alludes to the tradition (referred to in the Koran. xxi, 96.) that shortly before the Last Day, Gog and Magog shall be let loose from their captivity behind Alexander's Dyke.

³ For the Seven Climes, i.e. the whole habitable world, see p. 47; n. 1.
From the Iskender-Náme. [41]

Alexander seeketh the Fountain of Life.

Thence again pushed on the King and his meinie
Till they reached a spot whence they the Mirk could see.
Quoth they 1 to the King, 'O Monarch haught and high,
Yonder Fountain lieth in the Mirk hard by.
Though but short the stage betwixt that place and here,
Mickle dour from end to end the way and drear.'
Quoth the King, 'The Lord may smooth for us the road;
All its rough and smooth can be made one by God.
Seeing how as pain is set by side of gain,
Needs must he who seeks the gain aby the pain!
Till that one in Love's behalf do dolour dree,
Never may he win his heart's beloved to see.'

Then he rose with all his host and went his way,
Straight he pierced within the Mirk that darkling lay.
On they fared amid the gloom and dark a space,
Till, behold, down swept as 'twere the night apace!
Roared the thunder, round them flared the lightning-blaze,
Thou hadst deemed East and West one flaming maze.
Surging wild from forth the heavens, oceans crashed;
Thronging fast from forth the earth, the torrents dashed.
Such the flood that o'er them burst that Noah's flood
Straightway were o'erwhelmed thereby and quick subdued.
Darkness treading upon darkness, onward pressed,
That the abysmal gloom had fallen, thou hadst guessed.
King and warriors lost their wits and lost their way;
Wandering there, they each from each went far astray.
When they might no longer one the other see,
Far and wide they wandered in perplexity.
Khizr, he who on that journey was the guide,
'Gainst his will was parted from the Monarch's side.
Some of yonder folk the raging floods did drown,
Some the lightning burned, and some the wind cast down;
Other some were lost with ne'er a trace to tell

1 i.e. the guides from Shád-Kám.
Whether they were dead or but alive and well.

When the King beheld this woeful plight he knew
That he ne'er should find the way the Fountain to;
For the thing that is not one's allotted share, —
How so much he seek it, he shall win to ne'er.
Helpless then and hopeless, back he turned again:
But the road he came by, now he sought in vain.
Faring on, they lighted on a wonder-land.

Wherefor stones did gleaming jewels strew the sand;
Some were rubies, some spinels of purest ray,
Some were turkis, — there in heaps untold they lay.
All around lay jewels as the Night-lamp's bright,
Shone the mountains with those jewels' radiant light.

King and army of those priceless gems a store
Took, and started on their journey drear once more.
On they toiled a space with bitter stress and ghast,
When on sudden forth from out the Mirk they passed.
Then they looked, and saw how full a half their host,
Left behind within the Dark and Mirk, was lost.

Vainly sought they Khizr all the army through,
Whither he was vanished there was none who knew.
Naught of him they knew, but he his way had gone,
And withouten stress the Stream of Life had won.
Seeing how that Water was to him decreed,
Needs must he his portion find, howe'er he speed.
That which unto any is not fore-ordained
Ne'er by him, yea surely, ne'er shall be attained.
That which unto any is the destined share
Shall ere long befall him sans distress or care.
Mid the Mirk Iskender suffered mickle pain;
Pain it was his portion, Khizr's was the gain.
Ne'er may God's allotment change or turning bear.
Ne'er may any seize another's destined share.

1 The fabled gem known as Sheb-chirāgh 'the Night-lamp' is thus described in the famous Persian dictionary called Burhān-i Qātī: — 'Sheb-chirāgh (Night-lamp): This is a jewel which during the night-time shineth like a lamp. They say that on certain nights when the water-bull cometh up to land to graze, he bringeth this jewel with him in his mouth, and setteth it down on the place where he would graze, and by the light of it doth he graze.'
From the Iskender-Nâme. [42]

Alexander is forewarned of his Death by a Tree.

When the King set out from yonder region there
Came he to a plain with verdure filled and fair,
In the midst whereof there grew a shady tree,
Thou hadst deemed it was the Tûba, ¹ verily.
So he ordered that the camp should there be pight;
And beneath that tree the King lay down that night.

When that full a half the night was past and gone,
And asleep were all except the Unsleeping One, ²
Yonder tree began to moan and bitter wail,
Saying, "O much-suffering King who seekest bale!
How this lust hath made thee wander sans relief!
What availeth store of wealth if life be brief?
Now thy life hath touched its end, what makes thee then
Still so eager and so keen the world to gain?
E'en as thou hast seen, thy fortune waxed complete;
Know that still completion must declension meet.
Thou hast reigned as Sovran full four years and ten,
Yet for e'en one day thou hast not happy been.
All this hast thou won, yet had thereof no bliss.
Never saidst thou: "When I die, another's this."
Lo, thou goest, and thy hoards to others fall.
Vain thy travail and thy labour, vain it all!
Ah! the pity of thy weary stress and pain,
For that never shall thy hand the treasure gain!"

When the King heard from the tree those words of dole
'Twas as though his body had farewelled his soul.
Sick upon the morn from thence did he arise;
Dry his lips, but wet with bitter tears his eyes.
On they pushed a while alike by night and day,
Till that once again to Persia come were they.

The following ghazels are from Ahmedi's Diwân.

¹ For the Tûba Tree, see p. 36.
² i.e. God.
Ghazel. [43]

Bear greetings unto yonder belov'd dearling fair, O breeze:
My message give to yonder sweetheart debonair, O breeze.

Spread thou her tresses violet 1 all o'er her rosy cheek;
Waft ambergris and essences sweet through the air, O breeze. 2

Wouldst seek her dwelling? Privily go there, I pray of thee;
Take heed thou show thee not to the vile rival 3 there, O breeze.

My secret I've confided to thee, giving thee my trust;
For Heaven's sake to utter it do thou forbear, O breeze.

Do thou present my friendlessness 'fore yonder dearest one;
May be that she will medicine this ill I bear, O breeze.

Say, 'Wherefore still so cruelly wound Ahmedi forlorn?'
To her whose glances troubles bestrew everywhere, O breeze.

Ghazel. [44]

Drunk straight becometh he who to thine eyen falls a prey,
While turns the captive of thy locks from food and sleep away.

My night is through thy tresses the Assignment-Night or Power; 4
My day doth through thy face as the Sun's exaltation ray.

1 Violet, i.e. dark and sweet-scented tresses.
2 Playing with her sweet-scented hair, the breeze wafts abroad delightful odours.
3 The 'rival' is a constant figure in Eastern love-poetry.
4 Leylet-ul-Qadr 'the Night of Power,' and Leylet-ul-Berdt 'the Night of Assignments' are two of the most sacred nights of the Muslim year.

The Night of Power is that on which the Koran was sent down from Heaven. It is one of the ten last nights of the month of Ramazan, but opinions differ as to which; the eve of the 27th, is that held officially. The belief is that all this night angels are descending from Heaven bringing blessings to the righteous among the Faithful.

The Night of Assignments, which is the eve of the 15th of Sha'ban, is to the devout the most solemn night in the calendar; for it is held that on it is confirmed the fate of every living man for the ensuing year.
One crieth: 'Through thy promise shall I win to reach thy lip!' See how for him the Water of Life gleams mirage-like aye.

Within thy tresses waileth my heart sore at eventide; Alway the stranger's portion is sad sorrow, sad dismay.

Like tears from out mine eyen have I this existence shed; Nay, this beseems me not, that there be veil betwixt us tway.¹

E'en though they drain my blood, are my tears water of my face;² Through these the door is opened to my burning fire to-day.

So be it needful, bear with the Friend's rigour, Ahmedi; Since liver-blood³ is turned to pure musk by time in say.⁴

Ghazel. [45]

Thy face nor sun nor moon as rival oweth; And like thy mouth no pearl-filled casket gloweth.⁵

Thy hair, it is a handful basil,⁶ netheless In my sad lot to darsome snake it groweth.⁷

Thy glance hath ta'en my soul although I sinned not; What then my plight an I had sinned — who knoweth?

¹ This couplet may be taken mystically, phenomenal existence being the veil between the Lover and the Beloved, i.e. between the soul and God.
² 'Water of the face' is a metaphor for honour or self-respect. Here the expression is used both literally and metaphorically. The tears are said to drain the blood in allusion to an idea already mentioned (p. 217, n. 1.) They open a door to the fire of love in the heart, as through them the anguish of passion finds vent. The juxtaposition of the names of the elements is reckoned a beauty in this style of poetry.
³ With the Oriental, as with the earlier European, poets the liver is the seat of passion, the heart being that of affection.
⁴ Alluding to the fact that musk is obtained from the fluid contained in a cyst or gland near the navel of the musk-deer. This fluid dries into the brown substance used as a perfume.
⁵ The mouth of a beauty is sometimes compared to a ruby casket filled with pearls, the pearls of course being the teeth.
⁶ The comparison of the hair to basil is not uncommon.
⁷ The comparison of the curl of a beauty to a deadly snake is a commonplace of Eastern poetry.
Attained had I the goal on thy Love’s pathway.
If so my luck had been a steed that goeth.

To talk of gems anent thy lip were shameful,
To talk of jet beside thy mode thus showeth.1

A-yearning ever for thy violet tresses.
My heart now moans and now its weeping floweth.

Be God alway the Guardian of thy beauty! —
Such blessing Ahmedi on thee bestoweth.

Ghazel. [46]

He who thy bright face the rose, thy locks the basil fair, hath made,
This my heart distraught and frenzied through thy love for e’er hath made.

Telleth each some different story of the nature of thy form:
Clear is this, that God the same of Him to witness bear hath made.

Know not I what way to bring to voice the story of thy mouth:2
For that God a hidden secret of that Essence3 rare hath made.

Troublous is thine eye and languishful this day; O may it be
Wonder witch black-hearted dire and fell a wound e’en there hath made?4

1 Thy lip is so much redder than the ruby, thy mode is so much blacker than jet.
2 The smallness of the beauty’s mouth has already been referred to (p. 217, n. 5.). It is hard to describe that which scarcely exists (being so small).
3 The word gevher (jevher) means the essential nature of a thing, and this of course cannot be described in words, but there is an ithy or amphibology here: gevher means also a jewel, and it is usual for the sake of security to keep jewels in some secret place. This same word gevher (in the Arabicised form of jevher) enters into the term jevher-i ferd or atom; the connection between the atom and the mouth of the beloved we have already seen (p. 217, n. 5.).
4 This couplet is obscure; it seems to mean: ‘thine eye, O beloved, is today more than usually full of languor: perhaps that black-hearted witch (itself) has stricken its eye (itself).’ The ‘black-hearted witch’ being of course the beloved’s black-pupiled eye which ensorcel lovers, the idea would be that her eye has bewitched itself, i.e. that she has looked upon and fallen in love with her own beauty, and is therefore filled with languishment.
Let them seek thee, thou art Khizr's and Iskender's goal; for God
That thy lip Life's Fount, the Darkness that thy dusky hair hath made.  
Loosed the west wind mid thy fragrant locks one tress at morning-tide;
Yea, 'tis yonder waft that ambergris-perfumed the air hath made.
He who decked thy face with hyacinth and basil and narcissus,
He 'tis Ahmedi that garden's praises to declare hath made.

Ghazal. 4  [47]

What vision Thou who 'rt in entirety light! 5
Who 'rt such that shows the sun less plenteously light.

To me full clear it is since I have seen Thee
That sun and moon win from Thy visnomy light.

A breath of Love from Thee reached dawn, and therefore
Are land and sea for joyous ecstasy light.

The eve 's a scantling darkness from Thy tresses,
The dawn is from Thy face a summary light.

Did but Thy beauty's sun shine out in splendour,
Were every atom in existency light.

If flash Thy Face unveiled at the Last Judgment,
Will hell-fire gleam in sheeny radiancy light.

For this 'tis Ahmedi for Thy Love burneth: —
By burning doth the taper come to be light.

1 We have not had to wait long for an example of the fancies suggested
by the story of Alexander and the Water of Life.
2 The fragrant hyacinth is the commonest of all the conventional com-
parisons for a beauty's curling tresses.
3 The narcissus is the most usual of the comparisons for the eye.
4 In imitation of the method followed in the original, a weak syllable
immediately preceding the redif (light) is made to bear the rhyme-stress in
the translation. To get the effect of the Turkish, the last syllable in the words
'entirety,' 'plenteously,' 'visnomy' etc. must be slightly accentuated, although
this being foreign to our usage, is unpleasing to the English ear.
5 This ghazel is throughout mystic in purport.
The ghazel that follows is given as an example of those written in praise of Mir Sulman, probably Prince Suleyman; and is no better than court-poetry is wont to be.

Ghazel. [48]

Mir Sulman (may God defend him!), when he drains the bowl of wine, From the fountain of his visage lustrous doth the radiance shine.

Clear as noontide is the purport of ‘Their Lord shall give them drink,’ 1 Whensoe’er unto his servants proffers he the bowl of wine.

When the Drinker lights the beaker, 2 from the Unseen World a voice Soundeth through the skies proclaiming, ‘Hail to thee! Sultan benign.’

Lo, his feast is Paradisal, here be Rizwán’s 3 houris fair; Yea, and fruit and wine and taper, harp and rebeck, all as digne.

Who is he who quaffs the wine with him? One draught of such an one Straightway would a thousand senses unto drunkenness consign.

Howsoever much he drink, his understanding clearer grows; Sugar is ’t he drinks, or water from Life’s Stream, I can’t divine.

Whoso meeteth him in battle Mars or Saturn 4 would declare; Whoso seeth him in banquet would the sun-bright Moon opine.

Rolling thunder is his slogan, and a lightning-flash his whip, Vea, a thunderbolt his sabre, and his shafts do meteors shine.

1 In the Koran, lxxvi, 21, it is written concerning the blessed in Paradise: ‘On them shall he garments of green embroidered satin and brocade; and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver; and their Lord shall give them to drink pure drink’ Here the last phrase is detached from the context and audaciously applied to the entertainment of his boon-companions by the Prince.
2 i.e. when the Prince fills it with bright wine.
3 Rizwán, the angel who has charge of Paradise, has already been mentioned.
4 Saturn and Mars are the two malefic planets in astrology.
Sheen of battle and of banquet, Ornament of crown and throne; 
Such is he among the people, 'and God knoweth best' in fine.

Ahmedí, and so thou seek thee fortune, never absent be
From yon Prince’s feast, for this the saying, ‘tis the absent time.’

أَلْلَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِالْصَّوَابُ ‘and God knoweth best,’ a constantly quoted
Arabic phrase.

مَنْ غَابَ حَاشَبَ ‘whoso is absent suffereth loss,’ a well-known Arabic proverb.
CHAPTER VI.

THE ROMANCISTS (CONTINUED)

Sheykhi.

Sheykhi, whose name, as we have seen, Latifi couples in a somewhat suspicious story with that of Ahmed, is a figure of considerable importance in the history of Turkish literature; for it is by him that the Persian artistic mesnevi was introduced among the Western Turks. This poet, whose personal name was Sinan, was born in Kutahya the capital of the little state of Germiyan, the birthplace of so many of the poets of those days. If we are to trust the Crimson Peony, Sheykhi studied first under Ahmed. Somewhat later, according to all the authorities, he became a disciple of the famous mystic teacher and saint Hajji Beyram of Angora,¹ under whose tuition he attained a high point in Sufistic lore. Latifi speaks of a journey to Persia undertaken in early life for the purpose of visiting the saints and sages of that land; but none of the other biographers refers to any such expe-

¹ Hajji Beyram is a celebrated saint and the Pir or spiritual chief of the Beyrimi dervish-order. He was born at a village near Angora, in which city he spent most part of his life, dying there in 833 (1429-30). He needed, we are told, to supply his needs by the labour of his own hands, giving away in charity whatever was offered to him by the rich. Certain traducers having misrepresented him to Murad II, he was summoned to Adrianople, where the Sultan then was, when his gentle and holy demeanour so won the heart of the monarch that he implored his blessing. His tomb in Angora is still a place of pious visitation.
dition. Indeed, according to the Crimson Peony, after his studies with Hajji Beyrám, Sheykhi settled in a place near his native Kutahiya whence he never stirred during the rest of his life. Here too he died and was buried; and here his tomb was visited by the author Tash-köpri-záde who, as the reader may have observed, had a great fondness for visiting the last resting-places of learned and holy men. Assuming the account in the Crimson Peony to be correct (and its simplicity commends it), if there be any truth in Latifi's statement that Sheykhi made the acquaintance at Brusa of the gifted and intrepid poet Nesimi (of whom more in the next chapter), this must have occurred before the former settled down at Kutahiya.

According to Tash-köpri-záde, who quotes the authority of his teacher ʿAlá-ud-Din ʿArebí, Sheykhi was mean-looking in person, and was moreover bleary-eyed. In the latter connection the same author tells the following story, which has been copied by ʿAshiq, Hasan and ʿAlí. In order to eke out his living, Sheykhi, who was of great repute as a physician, and especially as an oculist, was in the habit of preparing a powder which he sold at a small price to those whose eyes were weak. One day a man of some intelligence and wit happened to pass by the place where the poet was dispensing his simples, and gathering from the inflamed state of the vender's own eyes that he was but 'throwing dust in the eyes' 1 of the people, he asked for an asper's worth of the powder, on receiving which he handed Sheykhi two aspers, saying sarcastically, 'Buy some of your powder with this second asper and annoint your own eyes therewith; it may be that through the grace of God they will be healed!'

1 This expression represents both the literal and figurative senses of the analogous Turkish phrase used in the original: khalqîn gozlerini boyardi, 'he was painting the eyes of the folk,' i.e. cheating them.