connected more or less closely with birds, whence the peculiar title Tayyāra which, as we have seen, means Volant or Flying. In poetical value this ‘Volant’ qasīda is about on a par with its pendant the ‘Resonant’.

Vehbi’s powers as a poet were unequal to a sustained effort. Some of his qasidas are indeed of inordinate length, and are monuments to his industry and his conscientious study of the dictionary; but they are absolutely uninspired, and as pedestrian and prosaic as they are long-winded. He had a better chance with the ghazel where each couplet is a practically independent unit attached to its fellows by a purely formal bond. Here he is consequently more successful, and so we find in his ghazels, amongst much that is trivial and in bad taste, many couplets that are bright with wit or beauty, or embellished with fancies novel and picturesque. Yet on the whole we feel little difficulty in agreeing with Ziyā Pasha when he prettily and happily compares our author’s lyric poetry to the scentless mountain rose.

The same critic pronounces Vehbi to be as a mesnevi-writer second only to Nābī; and indeed this poet does to a certain extent remind us of the illustrious founder of the Third Persianist School, alike by his extraordinary facility in versifying whatever subject he chooses to take up and by the lack of genuine poetic feeling which pervades his work. Ziyā Pasha considers the mesnevis to be better than the ghazels; but they are so in one direction alone. Vehbi was a very learned man, and his learning is more in evidence in the former than in the latter, and so far there is a superiority. But erudition is not poetry; and, little poetical as are the lyrics, the mesnevis are still less so. The subjects alone of these last are almost sufficient to condemn them. A ribald story; a series of lectures to a youth as to what he should study and how, when grown up, he should rule...
his household; together with two riming vocabularies designed to serve students as a sort of memoria technica — could a more hopeless set of themes be presented to any poet? They were too much for poor Vehbi at any rate; but though he failed to make a poem out of any one of them, he none the less acquitted himself creditably with them all.

Let us look first at the Shevq-engiz or Mirth-Provoker. Here Vehbi has a subject with which, from the peculiar bent of his temperament, he was exceptionally fitted to deal. The poet whose love of fun and frolic of every sort made Shâni-zâde compare him to the old Turkish merryman Injili Chawush, 1 was in his true element in a field where restraint would have been a hindrance, and where audacity and ingenuity were the first conditions of success. The work is a mesnevi of nearly 800 lines. It is without date or dedication; the only piece of information concerning its genesis vouchsafed by the author is that it was composed in the town of Maghnsa when he himself was advanced in years. 2 It has been called a story, but that designation is somewhat misleading, as it contains very little action, being almost entirely descriptive. It is really nearer to the Munázara or ‘Contention’ of Classic times than to the ordinary narrative poem. In the opening lines we are introduced to the two personages whose dispute forms the occasion of the work. These are represented as the two most dissolute reprobates in Constantinople, the one a debaucher of women, the other a pederast, but each notorious for his devotion to and proficiency in his special form of wickedness. This worthy pair are then described, the one after the other, in great detail. These

1 Injili Chawush was a famous Turkish jester, concerning whom many stories are current. He flourished about the beginning of the seventeenth century.

2 The Shevq-engiz is usually printed and bound up along with Fâzîl Bey’s four mesnevis.
descriptions, which form the first part of the book, are much
in the manner of Sābit's humorous poems; they are amazingly
clever, almost every line contains some more or less sug-
gestive pun or allusion, or some ingenious and often amusing
simile; the proprieties are of course outraged at every turn,
but that is part of the game. The two scoundrels meet;
and the discussion which ensues between them regarding
their respective hobbies makes up the second part of the
book. Each in turn exalts his own and attacks the other's
ideas of beauty and pleasure, and attack and defence are
both conducted with as much wit and as little reticence as
are shown in the descriptions. Unable to come to any
conclusion as to which has the right on his side, they agree
to go to the Sheykh (or, as we might say, the High Priest)
of Love, argue their case before him, and pray his judgment.
This interview forms the third part of the poem. Having
sought out the Sheykh of Love, who is described as an
aged and pious man who has abandoned the world and
lives a life of holy contemplation, the pair lay their dispute
before him and ask him to pronounce whether girl or boy
is the more fitting object for the lover's devotion. After
listening patiently to all they have to say, the Sheykh
administers to each in turn a most severe rebuke, censuring
the baseness of their thoughts and the wickedness of their
lives. He tells them they know nothing of love, but only
of carnal desire, which they must leave behind if they would
understand what true love is. Then answering their question,
he says that it matters nothing whether the object of pure
love be girl or boy; noble love for either will eventually
lead to that higher, that true and absolute Love, to which
it is but the 'bridge'. The Sheykh then exHORTS them to

1 The names of the two blackguard are themselves suggestive: the one is
Su-Yolju-zade, the other Qazapi Yezem.
forsake their evil ways and pursue the True Love; and his wise and gentle words produce so deep an impression on the two libertines that they then and there abandon their sinful courses and enter the band of the holy man's disciples. And so even this book, for all the ribaldry with which it opens, closes with a tribute to the Love that is eternal and undefiled, which is the ultimate theme of nine-tenths of all the Eastern poetry in existence.

The Lutfiyya, which derives its name from the author's son Lutf-ullah, for whose behoof it was written and to whom it is dedicated, is confessedly modelled on the Khayriyya of Nâbî. It is, like its prototype, a versified book of counsels composed by the poet for the guidance of a beloved son. The general scheme of the two works is the same, though of course the advice given differs somewhat in each. Vehbi lays greater stress on educational points; he carefully indicates which sciences should be studied and which left aside. Among the former he recommends medicine, as most of the physicians of the time are untrustworthy, and logic, which he regards as the basis of every science; he would dissuade from mathematics, from philosophy, because of its futility, and from the astrological astronomy of his day, seeing that it deals with things impossible to be known. All the occult sciences come similarly under the ban. While he admits that music is pleasant to hear, he says it is unbecoming a gentleman to sing or play any instrument. History and literature ought to be studied; when speaking of poetry he gives his son the bad advice to cultivate the 'enigma', which he says is very popular in Persia. In prose the 'new style' is to be followed, that of Veysi and Nergisi being out of date. Calligraphy is recommended. Chess and draughts are discouraged as being too absorbing. Profligacy and debauchery are forbidden, as are hypocrisy, sanctimoniousness, and many
other vices and evil qualities, while the corresponding virtues are extolled and urged. Vehbi counsels his son, as Nabi did his, against seeking to attain the high offices of state, pointing out how precarious is the position of those who hold such, and how hard it is for a man so placed to live an honourable and upright life. Nabi had recommended a Khojaship (Master Clerkship); Vehbi does not, he had himself tried it and was but too pleased to give it up and return to his humbler calling of cadi; things, he declares, have changed since the days of the elder poet. Much sound practical advice is given as to the conduct of every day life, as to regulating expenses according to resources, and so on. Vehbi's advice in the matter of marriage is exactly the opposite of that of Nabi; the latter had recommended his son to abstain from burdening himself with a wife and to remain content with concubines as the law allows; Vehbi on the other hand advises Lutf-ullah to marry a well brought up lady of his own position, as slave-concubines are often unfaithful, besides being ignorant and ill-mannered; if, however, such are necessary, Vehbi recommends like Nabi that Georgians should be chosen in preference to any other nationality. Great care should be shown in selecting servants, and these ought to be treated kindly but without undue familiarity. All intoxicants, including opium and hemp, are to be eschewed, even coffee and tobacco are to be used sparingly. The poet winds up his admonitions by advising his son against the fashionable crazes of keeping birds and rearing flowers, which he regards as vain and frivolous pursuits, the former being moreover cruel, as it entails the imprisonment in cages of creatures that ought to be at liberty.

In an epilogue, still addressed to his son, Vehbi says that he wrote the whole poem within a week and at a time when he was very unwell, in consequence of which the style
is not so poetical or the composition so careful as might have been. In his time, he continues, he has seen much of the world, has travelled in many lands and mixed with all manner of people; he has known the ups and downs of fortune, and in the course of his career has found out most of what is to be found out. What he has embodied in this book is his own experience, he has himself tested most of the counsels given, and so he can with the greater confidence recommend them for his son’s guidance. An ‘enigmatic’ chronogram, in a different metre from the book, gives 1205 (1790—1) as the date of composition.

Although through being second in the field, the Lutfiyya necessarily lacks the quality of originality possessed by the Khayriyya, it is quite as interesting. It presents an equally faithful view of the age in which it was written, and the picture that it gives of the social life of the time is to the full as vivid, and is drawn with rather more detail. The personality of the author, too, is more in evidence, and the allusions to his own varied experiences which he is so fond of making lend an individual interest which is without counterpart in the earlier poem. But it is the work of a lesser man; regarded from a literary point of view it is far inferior, and, though the ill-health of the author may have been in some measure responsible for this, it is more than doubtful

'Aḥsan ʿajbāʾī fi ḵubāʾī Khīsāl
Wajibāʾī lutfīyāfalse; nū bawāʾī ḵumām
‘So the moles on the fair cheek of fancy are its chronogram:
‘In the best of fashions hath the fresh Lutfiyya been completed.’

By saying that the moles on the fair cheek of fancy are the chronogram of his book, the poet means to hint that the date of its composition will be found by adding together the numerical values of the dotted letters that occur in the following line, leaving out of count the undotted letters, which in the usual course would have been included.
whether Vehbi, even under the most favourable circumstances, could ever have rivalled his predecessor here.

From the whole tone of the book as well as from every definite precept it contains, it is evident that the poet desired and hoped for his beloved son a nobler and more creditable life than his own had been. But poor Lutf-ullah did not live for very long to put in practice his father's counsels. An obituary poem in Surúrí's Díwán tells us that he died of the plague in his twenty-seventh year, in 1210 (1795—6), that is five years after the Lutfiyya was written and ten years before Vehbi's own death. His mother had predeceased him, as Surúrí thus prettily indicates:

1 'Entering the grave beside her, he rejoiced his mother's heart:
2 'But he left his father bowed down with parting's weary woe'.

Of the two riming vocabularies, the one known as the Tuhfe-i Vehbi, or Vehbi's Offering, is an earlier production than the Lutfiyya, the other, the Nukhbe-i Vehbi, or Vehbi's selection, a later. Both belong to a class of works which has numerous representatives in Ottoman literature, and which has for object the assistance of the memory by presenting information embodied in easily remembered lines of verse. The Tuhfe contains a large number of Persian, the Nukhbe of Arabic, words and phrases along with their Turkish equivalents conveyed in lines of this description.

The Tuhfe, which, although Vehbi does not say so, is clearly modelled on the well-known work of the same name by the sixteenth-century writer Shahidi, was an outcome of the author's Persian journey. In the preface he tells us

1 Shahidi died in 957 (1550).
2 The Tuhfe-i Shahidi, or Shahidi's Offering, was written in 920 (1514). It is the best known work of the class after Vehbi's, which preceded it.
that when in Irán he paid much attention to the language, and found that there was often considerable difference in signification between the same words when used in Persia and in Turkey. He found two main dialects in the country, that of Isfahán, which he calls Derí, and that of Shíráz, which he calls Pehleví and which he regards as the better. Unwilling that the fruits of his observations should be lost, he resolved to embody them in a book, primarily for the benefit of his son Lutf-ulláh. The result is this Tuhfe, which is dedicated to the Grand Vezír Khalíl Hamíd and his two sons, and which, as a chronogram at the end informs us, was composed in 1197 (1782—3). In 1206 (1791—2) an accomplished scholar named Hayátí Efendi wrote an excellent commentary on the Tuhfe, which is still highly esteemed for the valuable information it contains on points connected with the Persian language.

In the Nukhbe, Vehbí does for Arabic what in the Tuhfe he had done for Persian. This second vocabulary was not written till many years later, as is shown by a fanciful chronogram such as the author loved, which gives 1214 (1799—1800) as the date of composition. In the preface,
after dilating on the success and popularity of his Tuhfe, and praising the skill with which Hayátí had expounded it, Vehbí says that as old age crept upon him he felt distressed at the thought that all his learning should die with him. He therefore resolved to complete his lexicographical labours by making an Arabic vocabulary which should be a companion, or as he calls it, a twin, to the Tuhfe. And so we have the Nukhbe, which is probably one of the last of its author's works. Hayátí commenced a commentary on this volume also, but as he died before he had finished it, the work had to be completed by his son Sheref.

From the account that has just been given of his works, it will be seen that Sunbul-záde Vehbí was a voluminous and versatile writer. As he shows us in many places, he was well up in most of the sciences of his time; in the Shevq-engíz he makes great display of his knowledge of logic, in the Lutfiyya he has the whole circle of the sciences for a theme, while the Tuhfe and the Nukhbe prove him to have been no ordinary master of the classic languages of Islám. He was moreover an enthusiastic student alike of Persian and Turkish poetry. Of the Iranian masters his favourite seems to have been Háfiz, whom he frequently quotes and sometimes imitates. He has many 'parallels', takhmíses, and so on to poems by Sá'íb, Shevket, and Sa'dí amongst the Persians, and Nefí, Baqí, Sabit, Nábi, Nedm, and Sání amongst the Turks.

Vehbí was one of the first Turkish poets to write what we should call 'occasional' verses. Thus, a girl passing in the street takes his fancy, so he records the circumstance and the thoughts it suggests to him, a young lady, Sara by name, comes with a petition to the Turkish camp outside Nessa in Servia, Vehbí sees and admires her, and the incident is versified and enshrined in his Diwan. Vehbí's poems of this
class are not numerous, but they are highly characteristic; they are always more or less humorous, and have for subject some beauty and his own feelings regarding her.

In the technicalities of his art Vehbi was well equipped; he rarely transgresses the formal rules of poetic composition, and his versification is in general more correct than that of some who were immeasurably greater poets than himself. It is impossible not to admire the skill and dexterity with which he manipulates the most unpromising material, and fashions it into forms which, if not beautiful, are at least ingenious. Had he possessed a sufficient measure of the critical faculty to enable him to choose and discard with wisdom and good taste, he would, with his great gifts of industry and skill, have left a more worthy legacy. As it is, Professor Nájí has to pronounce his work to be in all things save extent inferior to that of his name-giver Seyyid Vehbi.

The following ghazels from Sunbul-záde Vehbi's Díwán will give a fair idea of his usual manner.

Ghazel. [422]

How distant to the barque of yearning seemed the shore, alack!
This blast from furnace-fires to furnace-fires me bore, alack!

With parchéd heart hope-thirsty for a drop of heavenly dew
I bode; as tulip, many a scar my bosom wore, alack!

The ruthless flower-gath’rer plucked the rose and went his way;
A thousand times the mourning bulbul plainéd sore, alack!

Behind her o'er the waste of passion pressed the lover-throng;
Yon fair gazelle hath fall'n a hound in heart before, alack
For all that Vehbi is the mine of culture, like the gem,
He bides within the rock, unpraised, unprized, forlore, alack!

The next ghazel is an example of a curious practice very popular about this time; this consisted in choosing as redif some peculiar and poetically unpromising phrase and writing to this a number of couplets, on widely different subjects, but each closing with it in an appropriate and effective manner. Other poets, seeing such a ghazel, would endeavour to outdo it by themselves composing ‘parallels’ to it. As a result we find in many contemporary diwans ghazels having the same curious redif, and with the same rime and metre, though as a rule there is nothing to show which poet started the game. Ghazels of this sort cannot be satisfactorily translated, as the redif calls for a different rendering in nearly every couplet. Thus in the following ghazel, although the redif has been given throughout by ‘coil on coil’, such phrases as ‘curl on curl’, ‘fold on fold’, or ‘bend on bend’ would in some cases have been more suitable; but to have varied the translation in this way, would have been completely to ignore the purpose of the poet.

**Ghazel. [423]**

Within her cap are twined the locks of yonder fair in coil on coil,
In sooth as 'twere the snake at rest within his lair in coil on coil.

For hinting that his waist hath passed through the gauge-plate is the wire
In yonder wanton silver-drawer's fingers yare in coil on coil. ¹

¹ The hadda or 'gauge-plate' of the silver-wire drawer, is a steel instrument pierced with several holes of different sizes, through which the wire is drawn according to the degree of fineness desired. Vehbi here fancies that the silver wire which the fair young craftsman is twisting and turning about in the process of his filigree-work is being thus tortured for having suggested the idea that the slenderness of his waist may be owing to its likewise having passed through the gauge-plate, and for having in so doing presumed to set up a comparison between that slender waist and itself.
As 'twere the dragon keeping watch unceasing o'er the Shaygan hoard, 1
Her trouser-knot's a mighty talisman and rare in coil on coil. 2

By straight, uncrooked ways may any win the peak of high estate?
The road is like the mountain-path that windeth e'er in coil on coil. 3

The statesman is head-bounden aye unto the orders of the King,
And so he doth the Khorásání turban wear in coil on coil. 4

The zealot fain would show himself upright as yonder minaret;
But I have searched the caitiff's heart, and all is there in coil on coil.

This feeble body through the flame of absence from yon dearest one
Doth ever show, Vehbi, as 'twere a fire-scorched hair in coil on coil.

Ghazel. [424]

Wilt take thy lovers for thy union's festal sacrifice?
Wilt give one kiss, dear heart, and take the heart in me that lies?

In secret raising on thy shoulder yonder henna'd feet,
O zealot, dost e'en thou take blood upon thy neck this wise? 5

1 As has been said before, the Sháyagán hoard was one of the eight treasures of the old Persian king Khusraw Pervíz, and is in the legendary lore of the East what the Nibelung hoard is in that of the West. That hidden treasures were guarded by snakes or dragons is among the most ancient and wide-spread of traditions.

2 The trouser-knot is the knot of the string or cord by which the ample trousers of the old costume were fastened round the waist. In this characteristic couplet the loops of this knot are considered as the coils of the treasure-guarding dragon.

3 As it is by a winding road that one reaches the summit of a mountain, so lofty rank and high place can be attained only by tortuous and crooked ways.

4 'Head-bounden' means simply 'bound to obey', but Vehbi here keeps in view the literal meaning, whence the second line. The Khorásání turban, or rather bonnet, was the distinctive head-dress of the Khojas or Master Clerks. It contained more than an oqqa's weight (2. 83 lbs.) of cotton covered over with cloth of different colours, and round the foot of the cap ran a border of muslin folded in such a way as to form a row of diamond-shaped squares: it is probably this to which the poet here alludes. The Khorásání is scarcely distinguishable from the qafes or 'cage', which was worn by the Ke'lis-ul-Kuttáb.

5 To take blood upon one's neck, means to take upon one's self the guilt of some wicked action, i.e. to commit it. The henna-stained feet are, of
I've heard the tidings that the price thereof's the coin of life;
Dost think to buy for little cost her union's merchandise?

With them of understanding seek no traffic, O thou Sphere;
Wouldst buy, though for one groat they sold, the pearl of wisdom's prize?

Again hath Vehbi sought thy ward in strangerhood; 'Wilt thou Receive him for thy guest within thy secret court?' he cries.

Ghazel. [425]

At times the rival and at times her guardian grey doth hindrance be:
At yonder portal some vile wretch to us alway doth hindrance be.

Th'acacia blooms a rose for him who seeks the Ka'ba-shrine of Love:
No thorn unto the bare-foot throng who press that way doth hindrance be.¹

Although I loose her sash and drag yon wanton fair to union's couch,
Alack! her trouser-knot to fond desire's allay doth hindrance be.

I've fall'n on evil luck, the zealot's come and made his dwelling here,
And ever rising with his staff, he to my play doth hindrance be.

The premisses of hope yield no conclusion, have I found, Vehbi:
If but their statement I conceive, the same straightway doth hindrance be.²

course, red, hence the connection. This first line alludes to what is called in Turkish سیبکشی, which is much the same as what the French describe as "faire la crapaudine". Other varieties are: europea سیبکشیه; جابیرا سیبکشیه; شادروان سیبکشیه; قابلیه‌سیبکشی. In the Sheyq-engiz Vehbi repeats this fancy in almost identical words; when Qaziqi-yegeni is rating his opponent he says:

ئئید: پیای مکرم‌انی بدوش بیننده قاتنی الاز صاحب عموش
Raise not the henna'd foot upon thy shoulder:
Does the man of understanding take blood upon his neck.

¹ This, in the original, is a beautiful couplet. The mukhallat of the text is the Egyptian or Arabian thorn, the acacia or acacia which abounds in the desert, traversed by the Mekka pilgrims. When these enter the sacred territory they abandon their boots or shoes and assume a special sort of sandal which leaves the instep exposed. The meaning of the verse, of course, is that pain itself, far from being a deterrent, is a pleasure when encountered for the sake of love.

² This couplet is expressed in the technical term of haga.
The following is modelled on one of the best known of the ghazels of Háfiz. ¹

Ghazel. [426]

Here with the olden wine to me, freshly fresh and newly new:
Call up, cupbearer, our ancient glee, freshly fresh and newly new.

Though but a child, that wanton gay hath stolen my will and my wits away;
An elder needeth a youngling free freshly fresh and newly new.

E'en as the rosebud fresh and fair, they freshen the scar that our bosoms bear,
When they loose the veil on the flowery lea freshly fresh and newly new.

What do they do, these ancient lays, to call up again the olden days?
Minstrel, sing me in sweetest key freshly fresh and newly new.

Rosy-bright must be yon ghazel that is cast in an ancient mould known well;
Vehbi, it must for freshness be freshly fresh and newly new.

This is the ghazel included in the Resonant Qasída; the travels of the author form the subject of that poem, hence the list of place-names here; as is usual with qasída-ghazels, some real or fictitious beauty is addressed.

The Ghazel from the Qasída Resonant. [427]

What though for yonder musk-diffusing mole I gave Shiráz away? — ²
Nor India nor Cashmere nor Khoten such a grain might e'er purvey. ³

¹ That beginning:

Sweet-voiced minstrel, here, and sing freshly fresh and newly new;
The wine that is heart-expanding bring freshly fresh and newly new.

² An echo from Háfiz:

آگر آن ترک شیرازی بدلست آرد دل مارا
نخال عندلارش حشم که عراق و خمارا

"If yon Shirazian Turk would take this heart of ours within her hand,
I'd fain give for her Hindu mole Bokhárá, aye, and Samarcand!"

³ India, the country of the blacks, is mentioned because the mole is black;
Khoten, the native land of musk, because it is sweet-scented; Cashmere, perhaps to fill up the line.
In Aden never have I seen a pearl to match thy pearly teeth;
To Badakhshán I went, but found no rival to thy rubies' ray.¹

This beauty and these lovesome charms would lay the Moon of Canaan low; ²
I marvel, in that well, thy dimple, doth the Moon of Nakhsheb stay? ³

In Kábul met I not, nor yet in Sind, nor China, nor Ferkhár ⁴
A fair like thee with ruffled locks, so dark of hair and mole, and gay.

I've tendered the Red Apple for thine apple chin, but woe is me!⁵
Not Portugal itself might buy thy orange breasts, my winsome may.⁶

As thanks for all the sugared speech that floweth from thy candy lips
Hath Vehbi given Samarcand and Candahár with their array.⁷

Surúrí, the associate of Sunbul-záde Vehbi, occupies a unique position in Ottoman literature. From early times the chronogram had been a favourite field with the poets for the exercise and display of their ingenuity, and during the eighteenth century its popularity has, as we have seen, been continually on the increase, until the number of the chronogram-writers has practically come to be the number of the poets. But over all the mighty throng of poets and versifiers who have composed such things, whether among his precursors or his successors, Surúrí stands in unquestioned

¹ Aden is famous for pearls, Badakhshán for rubies. 'Thy rubies' are thy lips.
² The Moon of Canaan is a title of the beautiful Joseph.
³ The Moon of Nakhsheb was a false moon which the impostoral Maqanna
(Moore's 'Veiled Prophet of Khorassan') is reported to have made to arise from a well near the town now called Qarchi, but formerly Nakhsheb, in Transoxiana.
⁴ Ferkhár is one of these semi-legendary cities of the Far East that were renowned for the beauty of their inhabitants.
⁵ The 'Red Apple' i.e. Rome, as we have seen before.
⁶ In Turkish the word 'portugol' means both an orange and the kingdom of Portugal, hence its employment here. On account of its shape and size the orange is a favourite figure with the poet, for the term 'orange' of a well-developed girl.
⁷ In this verse it has been possible to retain the puns of the original in 'candy', 'Samarcand', and 'Candahár'.
and unapproached pre-eminence, by virtue alike of the vast number of his chronograms, and of the skill and felicity with which so many of them are expressed. And so he has come to be known emphatically as Surúrí-i Mu’errikh or Surúrí the Chronogrammatist.

Seyyid 'Osmán, such was the poet’s personal name, was born in the town of Adana in 1165 (1751—2). In 1187 (1773—4), when about twenty-two years of age, he began seriously to work at the art of chronogram-writing. It is said that his taste for this was awakened by the singularly simple and happy way in which he managed to introduce into a chronogrammatic line the names of six Adana students who had died of the plague.

‘Veil, Ahmed, Hasan, Músá, Suleyman, Mustafá are gone.’ Nothing could be more simple, more natural than that, yet the numerical values of the letters in this line, on being added together, give the sum 1187, which is the year in which the young men died. It is to the absence of anything like forcing, to, one might almost say, a seeming inevitability like this, that Surúrí’s great fame as a chronogrammatist is chiefly due.

The abilities of the young poet, who had devoted much of his time to the study of Arabic and Persian, attracted the notice of Tevfiq Efendi, the deputy-judge of Adana; and when this official was promoted, he persuaded the poet, who was then twenty-eight years old, to accompany him to Constantinople. They arrived in the capital in 1193 (1779—8), and in the same year the poet, on the recommendation of his patron, discarded the pseudonym of Huznî, which he had hitherto used, in favour of that of Surúrí, under

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1 That Fatín Efendi is mistaken in saying it was Mustafá, is proved by a verse of Surúrí’s quoted by Professor Nájí.

2 ﴾اء ﺎ ﺮ٦ ﻣﻮ ﻃﻮ ﺳﻠﯿﻤﺎن ﻣﺼﺘﻔﯽ ﻙﻨﺪی"
which it is that he has acquired his reputation. On their arrival in Constantinople Surûrî lived as the guest of Tevfîq Efendi, through whose influence he was appointed a cadi, and by whom he was introduced to many of the great men of the day. But though Tevfîq eventually became Sheykh-ul-Islâm, he did little more for his protégé, who never attained any position beyond his cadiship.

As we have already seen, Surûrî served at one time as assistant to Sunbul-zâde Vehbi, whose junior he was by some forty years, and when they were at Eski-Zaghra was made, though innocent, to share the punishment inflicted on his superior by the scandalised citizens. The facts of the case are not very clear, but it would seem that on his return to Constantinople, Vehbi accused Surûrî of having incited the Eski-Zaghra people against him, and that this (presumably false) accusation was the cause of the younger poet attacking the elder in the series of lampoons which inaugurated the long scolding-match that ensued between them.

As Surûrî wrote chronograms on every possible occasion, we get from his Diwân several isolated fragments of information concerning himself and his doings. Thus we are told that in 1193, the year of his arrival in Constantinople, he heard of the death at Adana of his father, Hafiz Musa, through whom he had inherited his sayyidship. Then he tells us that in 1200 (1785-6) he married a lady called Nefise Qadin, whom he soon afterwards divorced, and who died in 1208 (1793-4). Another wife, 'Ayishe Qadin, died in 1222 (1807-8). In 1206 (1791-2) he built himself a house in Constantinople. In the following year he lost his mother. But as his career was an uneventful one, he has little of interest to chronicle in this connection. He died in Constantinople on the 11th of Safer 1229 (2nd February 1814), and was buried by the side of his old friend Vehbi outside the Cannon Gate.
Surūrī’s death had been the cause of anguish to his friends.’

Such is the obituary chronogram written for this greatest of Turkish chronogrammatists by the poet ‘Izzet Molla. Ebu-z-Ziyā Tevfiq Bey, in an excellent little monograph on ‘Surūrī the Chronogrammatist’, says that he has heard from some persons who remembered the poet that he was a man of tall stature and stout build, whose appearance struck those who saw him for the first time as being little in keeping with the wit and culture for which he was renowned. He was, moreover, according to the same reporters, quiet and silent when in society, rarely speaking unless spoken to, but always expressing himself when he did speak in correct and well chosen language.

Surūrī was not a poet as Nedîm and Ghâlib were poets, he was hardly even a poet as his friend Vehbî was a poet; he was a chronogrammatist, but as Turkish chronograms are practically always in verse, he was of necessity a versifier. With him the composition of chronograms was a passion almost amounting to a mania. He must have written many hundreds, possibly thousands, of these. He has a large Divân, as bulky as that of Vehbî, filled almost entirely with chronogrammatic poems of all lengths from qasîda-like productions of forty or fifty couplets down to single distichs, the real ghazels being all huddled away into a little corner near the end. Every kind of event, important or unimportant, public or private, was seized upon by this insatiable versifier as material for one or more of his beloved chronograms. Not content, like any other chronogrammatist, with the occurrences of his own day, he went back into the past and wrote chronograms for all the Sultans from old ‘Osman downwards. Displeased with the work of contemporary poets,
he composed new chronograms for events that had happened before his birth or during his childhood.

Even more extraordinary than the immense number of Surúrí's chronograms — although there too he is facile princeps — is the truly marvellous felicity of so many among them. To write a good chronogram must obviously be no easy task; seeing that in addition to the universal rules of the poetic art as to rime, metre and so on, which must be observed here as strictly as in any qasídá or ghazal, the sum of the numerical values of the letters in the line (or that part of it which forms the actual chronogram) must of course be neither more nor less than the date required. To do all this, and yet to preserve the crucial line from all appearance of being forced, to keep it natural, and still more to make it telling and impressive, requires a skill, which, though not necessarily indicative of poetic power, is surely neither to be despised nor ignored. That it is painfully conscious art is true; but seeing how five-sixths of the poetry of the East is little else than painfully conscious art, we are in no way surprised that most of the Turkish poets should have tried their hand at this particular feat of literary legerdemain, and that success in it should have been accounted no mean achievement.

But while it was with others but an interlude or a pastime, this was with Surúrí the main business of his life; and so here, on his own ground, he meets and overcomes men of far higher literary standing than himself, and fully deserves, as Ebru-z-Ziyá Bey says, to be described, so far as this particular art is concerned, as the Imam of the poets of Turkey. Most men when they write a chronogram, even a bad one, have to sit down and work it out with no little care and labour, but Surúrí had the extraordinary power of improvising such things on the spur of the moment, a most marvellous gift
which would suggest that the numerical value of a word or phrase was as obvious to his perception as its sound or signification, and which may perhaps bear some relation to those abnormal faculties which enable the possessor to play at once half a dozen games of chess without seeing the boards.

It so happens that the numerical values of the letters in the word Tārikh, which means 'chronogram,' and of those in the name Seyyid ʿOsmān Surūrī, alike give the sum 1211, a curious coincidence which naturally filled the poet with delight, and which made him declare that chronogram-writing was manifestly the special gift of God to himself. When the year of the Hijre 1211 (7 July, 1796—26 June, 1797) came in, Surūrī is reported to have said, 'This is 'chronogram' year, so it is my year; during it I shall hold the field of literature.' But as Jevdet Pasha says when telling the story, in the art of chronogram-writing this poet holds the field in every year. That he is the greatest chronogram-writer in all Turkish literature is beyond dispute; does there exist in any literature one greater or as great as he?

Surūrī is famous not only as a chronogrammatist, but as a humorist. Had he never written a single chronogram, he would yet have made his mark in Ottoman literature by his comic poems. It is as writer of humorous verses alone that Von Hammer knows him. So strong was the bias of his temperament towards humour that even in his professedly serious poems the comic element is continually coming to the fore. Many of his best chronograms are wholly humorous, some even of those that he wrote on the deaths of friends cannot be read without a smile.

The avowedly comic poems, which are grouped together under the title of Hezeliyyat or Facetiae, are not included in the Dīwān, but form a volume apart. In this volume the author hardly ever employs his usual pseudonym of Surūrī,
but almost invariably calls himself Hewá’í. There is much that is clever and a good deal that is really amusing in these Facetiae of Surúrí, but for the most part they are exceedingly offensive to modern taste, depending for their point but too often upon the most filthy ideas and language. Vehbi is frequently licentious; Surúrí is less licentious than obscene. In this direction Rabelais himself would have had to own that here he had met his master. ‘Intolerable evils’ is how Professor Nájí describes these verses, while he adds that no censure passed upon the author for having produced such things can be too severe. In this volume, the proper title of which is Mudhikát-i Surúrí-i Hezzál or The Drolleries of Surúrí the Wag, are collected the lampoons on Vehbi along with a number of similar pasquinades directed against others among the author’s contemporaries, but none of these other victims are of any note, save perhaps Ḥâyíní the poet.

One might be inclined to marvel on reading some of the many scurrilous jests here made at his expense, how Vehbi could ever again address a friendly word to the lampooner; but apart from the consideration that an immeasurably greater licence of speech was not only permissible, but customary, in those days, it is easy to perceive that, at any rate in the vast majority of instances, the writer was inspired, not by any feeling of malice or ill-will, but by sheer love of fun and a desire to outdo his rival. Many of the things Surúrí says are too preposterous ever to have been taken seriously; had such been his intention, the very extravagance of his statements would have inevitably defeated it. Again, in many of his comic verses he speaks of himself in terms to the full as disrespectful as any that he employs in connection with Vehbi. Indeed it is impossible to regard some of those ghazels where he speaks in the first person as anything beyond mere whimsical conceits and sardonically thrown
into this particular form in order to give them more point and force; and exactly the same thing may be said of the lampoons. And therein lies the great difference between the pasquinades of Surúrí and the satires of Nef'í; the later poet is even coarser and grosser than the older, but he has none of that venom which turned every one of the "Shafts of Doom" into a poisoned arrow that rankled in its victim's breast, so that, whereas Nef'í roused in those whom he attacked a hatred to be quenched only in his blood, Surúrí, Vehbí and ʿAyní remained good comrades to the end. None the less it is, as Ebu-z-Ziýá Bey puts it, a matter for sincere congratulation that contests such as that between Surúrí and Vehbí are no longer possible amongst men of letters.

It is worthy of note that several of Surúrí's humorous ghazels are comic 'parallels' to professedly serious ones that occur in his Díwán, having the same metre, rime, and redif as these; and as these themselves are most often 'parallels' to similar works of contemporary poets, those facetious ghazels of Surúrí may be looked upon as burlesques on the whole series.

Surúrí's gift of humour made him a popular guest at many great houses. In those times the jests and jokes of a humorist like the poet were all, as the author recently quoted says, that men had to fill the place of the comic papers of to-day. And so Surúrí was an ever welcome addition to a party. His appearance would be greeted with such questions as, 'Well, what is new with you to-day?' or 'Have you had another row with Sunbul-záde Vehbí?' and he, partly to amuse the assembly, and partly because he himself enjoyed a joke, would say something which would set the whole company laughing.

But neither the buffoonery of Surúrí nor his chronograms, which were eagerly sought after by all manner of persons
anxious to obtain such memorials of incidents in their private lives, did much towards advancing his material prosperity. Alike from the grandees whom he entertained and from the people for whom he wrote chronogrammatic verses he never received anything beyond the little presents with which from time immemorial it had been the custom to reward such services. But Surúrí was a man easily contented; and though, as he often lets us see, he naturally preferred a full purse to an empty one, he seems to have gone happily enough through life, making jokes and chronograms, and not allowing his want of professional success to weigh too heavily on his mind.

It is, of course, impossible to give by means of a translation any just or satisfactory idea of Surúrí's chronograms, for although the verbal meaning of the lines might be adequately rendered, there would necessarily be lacking the numerical values of the letters, the real raison d'être of the composition. Moreover, that very simplicity and naturalness, which in the original is rightly regarded as so great a merit, could hardly fail in a translation, whence every suggestion of its real purpose has vanished, to appear bald and uninteresting, if not indeed trivial and prosaic.

I shall therefore not attempt to represent this, the most important side of Surúrí's work, by more than one example,

\[\text{النور إلى الشام، من معبد.} \]

(1) [The difficulty of making chronograms in the European languages (excepting Greek) is increased by the fact that only seven of the Latin letters (E, H, V, X, C, D, and M) have recognized numerical equivalents; but such chronograms were not uncommon in England in Elizabethan times, and several very good ones are given in Pattenham's \text{Art of Poetry}. Hermann Bicknell ("Haji ‘Abdul Wahid") has some very neat translations of chronograms by Hâdz of Shiraz. The well-known chronogram on the death of that illustrious poet \( \text{ ألله أطيب} \) he renders:

"Thrice take thou from 'MOOLTAYA', EARTH; '11,811' years", when \( \text{M.D.L} \ (= 1100) \) minus three times \( \text{C.M.D} \ (= 300) \) gives the same date, 791 791.
the obituary chronogram which he wrote for the poet and humorist Kání who, as we have seen, was noted alike for his wit and for his devotion to all sorts of amusements. The verses appear both in the Díwán and in the 'Drolleries'.

Chronogram on the Death of Kání. [428]

Let the gay forego their laughter, let them vaunt their tears, for now
Gone is yonder mine ¹ of merriment the silent feast to share.

Round the town he'd go a-tambourining as at wedding-feasts,
And he'd dance as none had ever danced before him anywhere. ²

Many were his jaunts and junkets, so that were they all described,
Of their stock were very many scores of ink-shops emptied bare.

He would have made even Avicenna his toad-eater be,
Though the Toqat Turks are most-wise dolts and simpletons full rare ³.

Free and easy he in converse, yet when he did silence keep
Would his courtesy and bearing put to shame the people there.

Little recked he of this filthy carrion they call 'the world';
In the Everlasting Mansions may he find a home for e'er!

Stricken with death's ague, passed he from his place on earth away;
May the Lord make Heaven's eternal bowers to be his blest repair!

Lo, his bowèd form was e'en the bandy in the hand of Fate,
So she smote him 'gainst that ball, the globe of earth, in wrath contraire. ⁴

¹ An allusion to the name Kání, which means 'he of the mine'.
² This couplet is a humorous and doubtless exaggerated allusion to Kání's predilection for merry-making.
³ Kání was a native of Toqat; the Turks from many parts of Asia Minor are looked upon as country bumpkins by the Constantinopolitans.
⁴ The bowed form of the aged Kání is here very curiously compared to a curved bandy or polo-stick with which Fate or Death is supposed to strike the earth. The metaphor is not good, as Fate did not strike the earth with this crook, but struck it into the earth; in other words, the worn-out body of the old poet was buried.
Whensoe'er we sight the stone that standeth there to mark his tomb,
Strike our arrow-sighs yon marble mark for sadness and despair.

O Surúrí, for his chronogram let wits and poets say: —
"Gone is Kání, he whose every word's a mine of jewels fair."¹

This ghazel occurs in the Diwán, so we must presume that it is to be considered as 'serious'.

Ghazel. [429]

The purse of gold's appearance makes the pious beggar wight to smile²:
What virtue doth the saffron boast to make the sad of spright to smile?³

How should the masters⁴ not rejoice and laugh for fill of earthly gear?
A toy doth make the child whose play is all of his delight to smile.

¹ Another reference to the meaning of Kání. This is the chronogrammatic line and yields the sum 1206.
² Poor devotees go round to the houses of great men during Ramazán, when they get a meal (within the lawful hours) and often a present of money.
³ This alludes to an old notion that saffron possesses the virtue of making the eater smile, a notion to which Nábi refers in a well-known passage in one of his ghazels:

رَوْى زَرْدَم يَسْتَنَدُ لِبِسْتِسِن خُنْدَان اَيَّدَر
زَعْفِرَانَ جَنَس نَمَاسَكَ خَوَاجَهُ نَصْر الْدِّينِبَدِر
'My sallow face maketh her lip-bounden pistachio (i.e. closed mouth) to smile:
'Saffron is the Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín of the vegetable world.'

Khoja Nasr-ud-DíN is the famous old merryman mentioned a little further on. Suruí here associates the present of gold with saffron because (1) of their yellow colour, (2) of their power to evoke a smile. [The following citation from the Notting Hill High School Magazine of March, 1899, copied in pencil by the author, was found attached to this page: "Saffron has a sweetish, penetrating odour, and a warm, pungent, slightly bitter taste. It is possessed of stimulant qualities, though in no marked degree, and was much used in the early days of medical science in conjunction with other drugs. An Elizabethan herbalist asserts that 'the moderate use of it is good for the head, and maketh the senses more quick and lively. It haleth off heavy and drowsy sleep, and maketh a man merry.' Its virtue was assigned to it in consumption, and it was highly valued in case of surfeit.']

⁴ 'Masters' is here used, in imitation of the word in the original, to mean both 'great men' and 'boys belonging to the upper classes.
What though in union's night the lover weep for very stress of joy,
When tickling her, he makes the darling fair he clasped tight to smile

Why should they not invoke God's ruth thereon when mentioning the heart?
Its doings, like to Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín's, the folk incite to smile.¹

My genius laughs at those who fain would follow it along these ways;
The crow's deporture makes the pacing partridge for despite to smile.²

The Khoja Nesh'et at these fancies of Surūrī deigned to laugh;
A Solomon is he the meanest ant's harangues excite to smile.³

The next two ghazels are from the 'Drolleries', and, as is usual with works in that collection, are signed Hewā'í in place of Surūrī.

¹ When mentioning the name of a dead person held in esteem it is customary to add the phrase 'the mercy of God on him!' Surūrī here anticipates his own death, and implies that he has afforded his contemporaries so much amusement that when his heart (i.e. he himself) comes to be mentioned, he will be as much entitled to the benedictory phrase as Khoja Nasr-ud-Dín, the Turkish Joe Miller, who is credited with endless comical sayings and doings.

² Referring to the proverb قارعه ككلكه تقليله ابدر دن بوريشي شاشرمش 'the crow lost his own walk while imitating the partridge,' which in its turn is taken from the fable of the crow who, admiring the gait of the partridge (the type of a graceful walker), sought to imitate it, but did so in a fashion so awkward and ungainly as to call forth the derision of his model, while he forgot his own proper walk into the bargain. Beligh cleverly applies this fable in the following couplet:

فارسي شعر ينشر رومده شاعر مشا
روش زاغلونودر كيکه ابدرکن تقليل

'The poet in Turkey who writes Persian verse is even as
'The crow that forgets his own walk while imitating the partridge.'

³ Khoja Nesh'et, the well-known poet and Persian teacher whose life and work have been considered in the last chapter. The Khoja's personal name was Suleimán (i.e. Solomon); hence the allusion to the legend of King Solomon's conversation with the ants, the ant here being of course Surūrī himself.
Ghazel. [430]

We ever roam the world's expanse, a-sighing, passing dolefully;
A vagrant strange are we, in truth the wind-chaser of earth we be. 1

Not once hath wit or understanding deigned to stop and lodge with us,
Although on earth's high-road we ever stand like any hostelry.

No dealings have we in the market-place of learning and of skill,
But day and night we stone the hounds without the city's boundary. 2

The carnal mind 3 doth never cease to seek to make our head to reel:
We're like the sling in children's hands who play therewith full merrily. 4

What wonder if thy savour's strong, Hewâ'î, to the cultured folk?
Since we're an onion grown in ignorance's field in verity.

Ghazel. [431]

It will not bide, to liquid streams will turn this snow full quietly,
'Twill melt before the fiery sun's caloric glow full quietly.

Deliberation e'en in quarrels needful is, so ere the dog
To bark and bite begins he snarlth hoarse and low full quietly.

So tired am I upon the road of dole that had I e'en an ass,
Right gladly would I mount thereon and ride him now full quietly. 5

That ne'er the Sheykh Efendi hear within his convent fast asleep,
Upon his tender pupil fair a kiss bestow full quietly.

1 The 'wind-chaser' (in Turkish, yel-qowan), the Bosphorus shear-water, a bird which flies in large flocks up and down the Bosphorus without appearing ever to rest.

2 Vagrants and others, who find themselves outside the wall, of Eastern cities have sometimes to throw stones at the dog, that prowl around, in order to keep them off.

3 The 'carnal mind', that is the 'commanding the h' (Net command) is the technical term in Muslim ethic, for that state of the soul when the lust of the flesh rule unrestrained.

4 Children in the East sometimes play with a sling which they swing round, thus, as it were, making it hoard to reel.

5 It was held beneath the dignity of a man of consideration to ride in a
Hewâ'i, lest the spying rival see and come upon thee, off
And speed thee after yonder darling sweet to go full quietly.

Ghazel. [432]

Like nightingales the rivals sang, for all that crows are they,
For all they are the biggest owls that nest midst earth's deray.
The heart beheld yon partridge fair and from its love it flew,
Alack! although an eagle strong it failed to catch its prey!

Doth e'er the buzzing in our house grow less or cease, although
The spider weaves his web intent the flies to snare and slay?

O trickster, how should any deal with thee in the bazaar
When all thy work is but to cheat and swindle night and day?

“Here, Master, buy me hose!” the 'prentice plants his foot and cries,
And yet but battered shoon and tattered socks his old array. ¹

Again I've had a tussle with Hewâ'i the buffoon,
When yonder clown, for all his wit, was silenced straight away.

¹ That is, in spite of his former poverty and misery, no sooner does the apprentice find himself in service than he begins to make all sorts of demands.
CHAPTER VIII.

THE POETS OF THE LATER ROMANTICISM.

Wásif. — Izzet Mollá.

The literary tendencies of this critical period are well exemplified in the writings of the celebrated poet Enderûnî 'Osmân Wásif Bey. As the term Enderûnî, which is often associated with his name, implies, Wásif Bey was brought up in the Imperial Seraglio, his admission to which he probably owed to his connection with the family of Khalîl Pasha, the Albanian Grand Vezîr of Ahmed the Third. The greater part of his life was spent in the Palace, where he latterly held the post of Kilar Kyahyasi, or Comptroller of the Buttery, an office of considerable importance in the Sultan’s household. He finally retired on a pension, and lived quietly at his private residence till 1240 (1824-5) when his uneventful life came to a close.¹

Wásif Bey, besides being one of the most characteristic writers of his time, is among the most generally popular of the older poets. Like his famous contemporary, Izzet Molla,

¹ Von Hammer has confounded the poet 'Osman Wásif Bey with the Imperial Historiographer Ahmed Wásit Efendi who died in 1221 (1806-7) I find in the margin of the manuscript a pencilled note by the author to the effect that, from a passage in the Mihnet-kehan of Izzet Mollá (p. 38 of the edition used by him), it appears that Wásif lived at Topkâhiye we burned in a conflagration during the week in which the Mollá left Constantinople for Keshán, that is in Jumada II, 1248 (February 1824) 4.'
he endeavoured to write verse in a simpler and more natural manner than had hitherto been accounted literary, and to use by preference native Turkish idioms, when this could be done without offence. Wásif indeed went so far as to attempt to write verses in the language as it was actually spoken in Constantinople.

That this bold venture was not wholly unsuccessful is proved by the favour with which the public has ever since regarded his sharqís, that section of his work where it is most in evidence. That he did not achieve a more sure success and win for himself an undying name as one of the great leaders in the development of Turkish poetry, is probably, as Kemál Bey suggests, due to his lack of courage in not substituting for the Persian metres that purely syl labic system of scansion which the Turks call parmaq hisábí or ‘finger counting’, and which alone is really in harmony with the Turkish language, where, properly speaking, there is neither quantity nor accentuation.

Wásif’s sharqís, which are very numerous, form the most important division of his work. On reading through them we are struck by two points: the one, the extreme prettiness of the verses as a whole; the other, the astonishing inaccuracies of the writer. Many of these little poems are appropriately written in unusually short metres, which imparts a charming lightness and lilt to the lines so that it seems at once easier and more natural to sing than to read them. Few poets, again, have so happy a gift of stringing together pretty words. In many of the sharqís we get line after line consisting entirely of words pretty alike in themselves and in their associations, till the little song comes to resemble a dainty nosegay composed of delicate and sweet-scented flowers. His favourite, indeed almost exclusive, subjects are love and beauty; and his treatment of
these, if without much depth or spirituality, is at least free
from the voluptuousness that tinges so much contemporary
work. In short, it may be truly said that the sharqis of
Wásif form delightful reading so long as we are content to
be lulled by pleasant cadence and harmonies of sweet-
sounding words, and are satisfied with a vague, dream-like
consciousness that the vision suggested is a thing of beauty.
But so soon as we look below the surface, the charm
vanishes. Technical faults of every description, feeble con-
ceptions, and incoherent ideas confront us in nearly every
poem; beneath the wakeful eye of criticism the whole en-
chanted fabric melts away. And so the popularity of Wásif,
great as it has been and is, is a popularity confined to the
half-educated and the very young, that is, to those classes
who are incompetent to judge critically. The poet wrote
in a dialect easy to understand, he wrote in it with much
grace, composers set his songs to music, and hence his
name is a household word.
But the critics see him in a very different light. Ziya
Pasha allows him to be a graceful poet, and admits that
he wrote with much ease and fluency, adding that he did
so entirely through the force of native talent. This criticism
is controverted by Kemál Bey who holds, surely some-
what unwarrantably, that while there is not in Wásif's
verses a single word which would point to absence of cul-
ture, more than half his Diwan is disfigured with lines
which betray nothing else than downright poverty of lan-
guage. Professor Náji goes a step further and denotes to
Wásif fluency and learning alike, quoting passage after
passage from the Diwan to make good his words. The
Professor is in general a just critic, but it seems to me
that in this instance he has allowed his zeal for accuracy
of workmanship somewhat to prejudice his judgment. H
cannot, indeed, seriously be disputed, notwithstanding the remark of Kemal Bey, that there is much in Wasisf's work that looks like either imperfect education or gross carelessness, but this ought not to blind us to the real merit that is no less certainly there. The extraordinarily felicitous selection of metres for the sharqis is evidence of true artistic instinct, as is also the rare and exquisite taste with which the poet has chosen his vocabulary. The charge of poverty of language has no basis, unless it be that having found the words which best suggest the idea he wishes to evoke, he uses them again and again in poem after poem. This, which is the result of constantly playing upon the same string, might justly bring upon the poet a charge of monotony; but seeing that he has elected to say the same thing over and over again, it is surely less his fault than that of the dictionary that he is unable to find a new set of equally suitable words for each occasion. The poetry of Wasisf may be likened to the work of a decorative artist of good feeling but limited range and very uncertain craftsmanship.

It may be that the Turkicising spirit, which had been gathering strength ever since the days of Sabit and which is so potent in the writings of Wasisf, had something to do with that poet's neglect of the technicalities of his art. It may be that he thought that by disregarding the conventional rules he was taking a step towards making poetry more truly national. Much might have been said in favour of this, had he only had the hardihood to go to the root of the matter and wholly ignore the Persian metres which are essentially alien to the genius of the Turkish language. So long as he retains these artificial metres, a poet must needs observe the artificial laws which regulate their use, on pain of giving to the world a hybrid production offensive to every student of literature.
Although the foregoing remarks are made more particularly with regard to Wâsîf's sharqîs, they apply in greater or less degree to his whole Diwân. The qasîdas, ghazels, chronograms, and so on, are all distinguished by the same general features, beauty of language marred by slovenliness of workmanship and sometimes by feebleness of thought.

Besides the sharqîs and those other poems of the usual conventional type, there are in Wâsîf's Diwân two works of an altogether unique character and of very great interest. There are two poems, consisting respectively of thirty-three and thirty-two five-line stanzas, composed in the harem dialect used by women of the middle classes in Constantinople in the author's time. Although these two pieces, being wholly humorous in intention, are greatly exaggerated, they are of much value as offering what is probably the only written example of the Turkish language as it was actually spoken in the harems in old times, and as throwing considerable light upon the ideas and beliefs as well as upon the home-life of Turkish women before the days of high-heeled boots and western education. The two poems are supposed to form a dialogue between a mother and her daughter who is just emerging from childhood into womanhood. In the first the elder woman counsels the girl as to how she must conduct herself now that she is growing up; and the advice she gives is on the whole excellent, though sometimes conveyed in terms that are harsh even to grossness. In the second the daughter makes reply, and proves herself to have a will of her own. She revolts savagely against the social custom which compels her to pass her life quietly within doors, whether the house be that of her parents or of a future husband, the mere thought of such imprisonment renders her incapable of speaking to her mother or about a husband without bitterness and abuse.
she is determined to assert her freedom in defiance of them all. The whole of her so-called answer is little else than one long tirade against her mother, whom she looks upon as embodying the principle she detests, broken here and there by remarks addressed to friends or relatives supposed to be present. A good deal of dramatic power is shown in the alternations between tenderness and anger in the mother's tone as the daughter is supposed to listen with attention or impatience to her words, as well as in the way in which the girl works herself up into fury, imagining every one to be in league against what she regards as her natural freedom. In this, as in his subject and his manner of treating it, Wásif gives evidence of true originality, and makes us regret that his work of this nature is so limited. Wásif's mother and daughter are not to be taken as types of Turkish ladies; they are women of the lower middle class, as is shown by the fact of their doing their own cooking, washing and so on; this accounts for many of the things they say and in great measure for the coarseness of the language they employ. Like all Turkish women, they are constantly quoting proverbs, of which they have an inexhaustible store at their fingers' ends. These verses do not make the slightest pretence to be poetry; they are the veriest doggerel, and were written partly by way of a joke, partly as a tour de force. And so, although faithful in the outlines, the picture they present must, as I have already hinted, be toned down considerably if we wish to catch a glimpse of things as they really were.

On account of the exceptional interest of these two works I have endeavoured to translate them both. This has proved no easy task, since so many of the words and expressions belong neither to the literary dialect nor to the language as it is generally spoken. They are consequently
entered in no dictionary; and had it not been for the assistance of a well-informed Turkish friend, I should have been compelled to abandon the attempt as hopeless. Even as it is, there are a few passages the true meaning of which remains doubtful; for the feminine phraseology of a by-gone generation is not always readily comprehensible. The form of both works is the mukhammes with recurrent refrain.

Here are five of Wāsīf's sharqis.

**Sharqí. [433]**

Whoe'er her ruby lips hath known
Doth, bounden by her tresses, groan
'Tis meet her nightingale I moan
A lovesome Scian Rose is blown.  

Unrivalled she with waist so spare,
With fashions sweet beyond compare,
With ways than e'en herself more fair:
A lovesome Scian Rose is blown.

The roses like her cheeks are few,
To rosy pink inclines their hue;
This summer ere the roses blew
A lovesome Scian Rose is blown.

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1 A metrical translation of these two poems along with a preface and the text as it appears in the printed edition of Wāsīf's Diwan was issued anonymously in 1881 by the late Sir James W. Redhouse. The pamphlet is lengthily entitled: A Mother's | Advice to her Daughter | and | the wild Daughter's | Unblatful Reply; | Two Humorous Turkish Poems, | in the Harem Dialect of Women, | and in Pentastich Strophes, | with Recurrent Chorus. | by Wāsīf Enderun. | Metrically translated into English. | Privately Printed. | 1881. | The translation, which is very free and was made without any assistance, is in many instances mere guess-work, and consequently often defective.

2 The Rose of Saqiz or Scio is the name of a choice variety of the flower. Here the allusion is to some girl from that island, possibly the same to whom the poet refers in another sharqi the refrain of which is:

دانا بنات اسدي بسوفر كلي

"A Scian Rose hath bound my heart."
The bulbul to the rose is thrall,
The bulbul weeps the rose withal.
Her smile were worth the world and all:
A lovesome Scian Rose is blown.

O Wásif, on the rosy lea
Yestreen the bulbul sang to me: —
'Be gladsome tidings now to thee:
'A lovesome Scian Rose is blown.'

Sharqí. [434]

Fair a Moonbeam hath unveiled her face to-night,
With her cloudy hair had she her visage dight;
Never have I seen her peer, a sun of light;
Like a brilliant gleams and glows her beauty bright.

As the garden-land her night, her cheek is day.
While her crimson lips a ruddy ruby ray;
I have seen yon wanton darling blithe and gay:
Like a brilliant gleams and glows her beauty bright.

She had her kerchief wrought with golden lace
And hath set it as a foil to grace her face. ²
Yesterday I watched her all a goodly space:
Like a brilliant gleams and glows her beauty bright.

Silver-wristed, like a diamond flashing sheen,
Such art thou that ne'er the sphere thy like hath seen.
Winsome darling, she's a jewel-flower, I ween.³
Like a brilliant gleams and glows her beauty bright.

¹ This phrase probably means that she has adorned her dark hair with flowers.
² That is, like the thin leaf of metal sometimes placed beneath precious stones to increase their brilliancy.
³ The 'jewel-flower', jevher chichegi, is what we call the dahlia, but its more common Turkish name is yildiz chichegi, 'star-flower'; the former name is chosen here because the girl is compared to a brilliant.
She hath donned a robe of rich smaragdine shawl,
So her lissom form is grown a cypress tall.
Wāṣif, graceful in their grace her motions all.
Like a brilliant gleams and glows her beauty bright.

Sharqī. [435]

With waist so spare;
Beyond compare;
Meet praises rare;
So passing fair.

Thy visage glows;
Thy face, the rose;
Thy like who knows?
So passing fair.

Come, sweetest, best,
Enterwine my breast,
By naught distrest;
So passing fair.

With winsome ways,
Thou charm’st always,
Most worthy praise;
So passing fair.

O figure slight
Of beauty bright,
My eyes’ delight;
So passing fair.

Sharqī. [436]

Since, O wanton bright and gay
Thou hast led my heart astray,
Cast these wantful airs away
Blithe and merry let us play
When thou drinkest of the wine,
And thy cheeks as roses shine,
Like the nightingale I pine,
   Wailing for my sad dismay.

What, O jasmine-bosomed one,
Cam'st thou to the feast alone? —
Thou wilt list not, — I'm undone, —
   Gad-about, howe'er I pray.

Yea, the festal robe for thee
Of the rose's leaves must be;
For to thee, O fair and free,
   Heavy were the broidered say.

See thy lover Wásif, sweet;
Pity him and kindly greet.
Were this cruel usage meet
   Any lover any day?

Sharqí. [437]

A charmer full of mirth and glee
I've chosen for my dear to be.
The wine her lips doth jealous see.
   A moonbeam passing bright is she.

Her neck is white, her bosom clear;
If thou would have yon bosom clear,
Then give thy gold, words weigh not here.
   A moonbeam passing bright is she.

Who gives yon slender waist his sprite
Shall burn as doth the flambeau-light;
So I'm become her servant wight.
   A moonbeam passing bright is she.

Her clapping castanets resound;
In ever heart is oped a wound,
May any balm there-for be found?
   A moonbeam passing bright is she.
Were’t not for yonder Grecian fair,  
Of life the wedding-feasts were bare;  
So oft to her the folk repair.¹  
A moonbeam passing bright is she.

The quatrain of which the following is a translation is a good example of Wâsif’s happy knack of bringing together a collection of pretty words.

Rubâ‘î. [438]

Around her let yon rosy-frame a shawl of crimson bind;  
And let the ends, e’en like my heart, be trailed her steps behind.  
Ay, he may vaunt who clips in his alcove yon slender waist,  
He, Wâsif, who his arms around yon cypress-shape may wind.

The following is the translation of the two humorous pieces written in the harem dialect which have been described.

Mukhammes. [439]

The Mother’s Advice and Counsel,  
the same being written in the phraseology peculiar to women.

List, girl, to my advice; in all thy words be true, my sweet:  
Win thou thy husband’s father, be his handmaid duteous and feat.  
Who’d bid thee go a draggle-tail through mud and mire and wet?  
Be not a cunting prude, but neither be thou indiscreet.  
A street-broom² be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Someone will see thee; go not out with girlish vaunting heed:³

¹ She is a Greek public dancing-girl whose performances are in much request for weddings and similar entertainment.
² Sircâ supungesi, ‘street broom’, is a common term for a prostitute.
³ The qiz yashmaghi or ‘girl’, ved’i or wot’i or we’d of two-sleeving worn by young girls. Vehbi, when describing the women seen in the Shevâ’engiz, says:
Play not the flirt: but honour every visitor and guest,
Or with their looks they'll eat thee up alive, thou plaguy pest!

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Get not with child by Bikr Basha, gadding at the spring;
A maiden pure art thou, do not from thee thy virtue fling;
He'd enter and defile, but never midwife to thee bring.
Befoul thee not, but hang my counsel in thine ear as ring.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

And cling not, like a baby's pot, to every youthful beau;
Nor cur-like fawn on everyone thou seest high or low:
Nor lay thee, like a bed, before each dandy thou mayst know;
Nor, slut, to henna-nights, as to a perch, for ever go.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

He would observe the girl's veil on her head,
And bow down and kiss her shoes.'

The second line of this verse is a puzzle. In the printed edition it stands thus:

So far as this is comprehensible, it appears to repeat the injunction of the preceding line. The girl seems to be told not to pass over (her head) (the usual meaning of which is 'girth', through apparently it here refers to the 'girl's veil'), but to pass over it something else. The perhaps here a vituperative term.

Bikr Basha: this is a proper name and perhaps conveys an allusion to some story; in any case it stands here to typify a rake.

The festivities in connection with a Turkish wedding extend over five days, from Monday to Friday, each one of which is devoted to some special function. It is always on the Thursday evening that the bride and bridegroom meet for the first time; and the term 'henna night' is applied to the evening which immediately precedes this, that is of course the Wednesday evening. It is so named because on it the hands of the bride are stained with henna, and this performance is made the occasion of a great gathering of the female friends of the bride's family who usually indulge in so much fun and merry-making as to have given rise to the proverb 'to laugh as on the henna-night.'
Get married to a youth and do whate’er he biddeth thee;
And give him trotters five or six to feast on merrily: 1
The husband will supply the lack of them that lacking be.
With indoor slippers rushing out, O hussy, hark to me, —
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

O girl, thy lover were dumbfoundered should he see thee so;
Who once should clasp thy waist would live a thousand years, I trow.
So sit not idle, but be up the household work to do;
Thy husband will divorce thee else, though but a beggar low.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Weave no deceits, a-taking youthful slave-boy of thine own;
Undo thy cloth at need 2, but see thou loose thy sash for none;
For woe betide thee, if thou turn with yielding face to one;
For then, my maiden fair, thou wilt most surely be undone.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

See now thy eldest sister is became a blooming bride: 3
Came thou too with thy sister and they nurse and maid aside,
And all united, to the chaperones thy hand confide, 4
And seek some youthful lord and let him hug thee to his side.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

On seeing others finely dressed, O stupid, do not fret;
Thy dad, — long life to him! — for thee the same will surely get.
So be not naughty, thou’rt no longer little, O my pet;
To them be thanks who nurtured thee, thou’rt now quite tall and great.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

1 Sheep’s trotters, cooked in various ways, are a favourite dish, and are supposed to have an invigorating effect. This line has further a figurative sense depending on the double meaning of the word pacha, which signifies both ‘trotters’ and ‘trousers’.

2 The original has, “The reign of the ‘trousers’.” Here is for كوشخان چپ، which stands for "Kooshkan چپ."

3 The original has, “Thy elder sister has become a bride at (or on) my Kooshkan چپ.” I do not understand.

4 The ‘chaperones’ (دنده دامن) are the old women who in Islam take the place, up to a certain point, of our bridesmaids.
See, 'Atike 1 is wedded now, — her millet on thy head! — 2
There by the Maiden's Pillar 3 she has entered someone's bed.
See that thy thoughts be not with tambourines and dancers fed; 4
For now into thy thirteenth year, my flirt, thou'st entered.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

I would that to some wealthy judge thy dad had given thee,
Then we'd have gone to visit at thy villa by the sea.
Shun bare-legged rogue, nor seat upon thy carpet such as he;
Let not thy fancy after either fop or sloven flee.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

With silken thread the spangles bright sew not thy cap about
To hook to thee, heed what thou dost, some worthless drunken lout.
Slip off, nor snatch another's handkerchief good cause without. 5
Let be, thy head will turn, this running round will tire thee out.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Thou dolt, in cambic fringe that jangles not what good is there? 6
I'll get for thee a silken dress that thou shalt joyous wear.
So stray not out at night, like to a prowling thief, my fair;
The neighbours will thy father tell, so stop at home, my dear.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

1 'Atike is the name of some girl friend.
2 Darisi bashine! May his (on her) millet fall on thy head! is a common expression meaning 'may thy turn come next!'
3 Qiz Tashi, the Maiden's Pillar, is the name given by the Turks to the ruined column of Marcian in Constantinople. It gives its name (Qiz Tashi) to the ward in the parish of Shâhzâde where it is situated.
4 Referring to the musicians and dancers who perform at wedding feasts. The line means: Do not be always thinking of gaieties and frivolities.
5 Youths and girls sometimes try playfully to snatch one another's handkerchief, the idea being that he or she who does so wishes the owner as lover. The mother here warns her daughter not to do this unless she really wishes to marry the young man.
6 There is here a side reference to the gold or silver fringe which usually forms part of the nishán or engagement-present sent by the bridegroom to his fiancée, or to the veil of narrow threads of gold or silver worn by new-made brides; other fringes being in the mother's opinion profitless for a girl. The word translated 'dolt' is literally 'camel', and is generally applied to a heavy and slow person.
Yield not to stranger men, for such thy corset ne'er unlace;
Nor cast thy hapless husband on his bed to weep thy case.
So ere before the eyes of all thou dost thyself disgrace,
The hand of neighbour Daddy kiss and hearken what he says,—
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Learn broidery, nor be by wiles of others led astray,
That those who see thy work may still 'How sweetly pretty!' say.
If warping looms suits not thy taste, my Pembe Khanim gay,
Then union-tissue "weave and therewithal thy hub array.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Now, girl, be off, nor buzz like a mosquito round me so,
Nor like a dancing slave-girl swing thy body to and fro.
For very shame would thy goodman hide like a mole, I trow,
Then tethered like a donkey thou wouldst bide, full well I know.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Were't seemly thou should'st go and beg from neighbours bread and meat,
Be sure thy lad will hear of it, and soundly he'll thee beat.
So hie thee to the kitchen in God's name, and cook as meet,
And set thee to prepare for supper something nice to eat.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Thou'st got thy due, thou would'st not listen to advice from me!
Well, let him whack thee, hussy, he will pay my debts to thee.
For others, whoso'er they be, my cares for thee can see.
So let my counsels in thine ear as pretty earrings be.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

---

1 Pembe Khanim, Miss (or Madame) Cotton, is a proper name for ladies;
it is also used as a pet name or nick-name for any plump little girl or woman.
It seems here to be really the name of the girl, as in her Reply she calls herself by it. [It is also used as a woman's name or sobriquet in Persia, see my 'Year amongst the Persians', p. 461, in.]

2 Hadafi, 'union-tissue', is a tissue of silk warp and cotton, flaxen, or woollen wool, canonically lawful to be worn by men to whom pure silk is forbidden, — a prohibition to which little attention is paid.

3 When thy husband beats thee
O tender rose-bush mine, let not thy tears like dewdrops flow;
'Wherever the school-mistress strikes do fragrant roses grow.'

Be studious. lest the monitor should beat thee harder though.
Nor idle sit, my learned madam, come now, that will do.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Soil not thy name. Time better than the present there is none.
Get dad to buy thee sky-blue silken stuff to make a gown.
High time it is that thou Wert wedded to some lad, my own;
'Tis shame that still in prayer-cloth wrapped, thou runnest up and down.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

My God! mayst thou not live, O girl, so good-for-naught to be!
Thou'rt now grown up and big, thou baggage, sit thou still a wee.
Rampageous hast thou broken loose, thou minx, O woe is me!
Thou art a parrot; keep the house, lest hawks should seize on thee.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

From windows see thou chaffer not with men, my girl, I say;
But help thy nurse at times by working thou too, blithe and gay.
So let the fat thy mammy's heart in fold on fold o'erlay;
And learn from childhood's years within thy home content to stay.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Because thou show'st thyself, though but for once, behind the door,
Behold how every day there come the viewers score on score.

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1 This is a proverb (slightly modified in the text) خواجعنة: اورديغيم ‘where the school-master strikes, roses grow,’ meaning that good comes from the reprimand of the good, or that a severe experience may have good results. There is perhaps in the proverb an echo of the well-known fancy of comparing wounds to flowers.

2 Little girls, instead of wearing the regular yashmaq or veil, sometimes run about in the cloths that women place over their heads when at prayer. يويكی قارش قارش بیغ باغلاگی ‘Fat has enclosed the heart fold on fold,’ is a popular phrase.

3 Yetishme or yetishmesi, 'mayst thou not grow up!' is an expression often used by women to naughty children.

4 We have many times seen the term 'parrot' applied to a pretty woman.

5 That is: make her happy and content.

6 The 'viewers' are female relatives or friends of would-be bridegrooms, who go round to the houses where there are known to be marriageable girls,
With shifts and towels and prints and painted handkerchiefs galore
Cram full thy chest of cypress-wood, thy wedding-trousseau store.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

To pleat it, let the tailor have thy crimson satiin rare;
Around thy dainty fez entwine a spangled kerchief square.
'According to his measure give not cloth to each,' my dear.
At times sing ballads, and at times embroider purses fair.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

On baby's head black cummin seeds and garlic see thou tie,
And get the charm for sleep, and fasten it the cradle by;
Put out the charcoal, that afar may bide the Evil Eye.
Sit down, thou plague, and work, what shouldst thou do a-gadding? — fie
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Invite not to thy house the fortune-tellers' lying crew;
Ne'er look from folk like these, thou trull, to learn the future true;
With cheats like these inside and outside tally not as due;
Take care a slave-girl's bastard drive thee not ill deeds to do.
A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Now trim with fringe of golden thread thy flowered robe so gay,
And go and see thy friends and mates upon the trotters' day,

inspect them, and report upon them to the man in whose interest they made their inspection.

1 Wedding-cheests are often made of cypress-wood, which is durable and sweet-scented.

2 This may perhaps refer to the red silk which the bridegroom's mother presents to the bride, and which the latter gets made into a pair of trousers.

3 Alluding to the proverbs 'cloth is not given to each according to his measure,' i.e. every one does not get all he asks for.

4 As charms against the Evil Eye.

5 The 'trotters' day' is the day immediately following the actual wedding day (and therefore always a Friday), when it is the custom for the newly married couple to partake of a dish made from sheep's trotters, whence the name. It is the occasion of a gathering of the relatives and friends of both bride and bridegroom at the house of the latter, and is the last of the wedding festivities.
Thy tresses bind, and off, and at the money-throwing play; 
Perhaps some youth may see and fancy thee in such a way.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Begrime thee, laughing merrily, then wash thee fair and clean; 2
To-morrow the old lady’s son will send the ring, I ween; 3
Put on thy jewels, don thy trousers, O my diamond sheen; 4
Thank God, through generations seven good our house hath been. 5

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

And hang around thy neck thy strings of coins in row on row;
And send the rakes away heart-sick with many a bitter throe,
But heed thee, daughter fair, to tribade’s tricks no leaning show;
Elsewise thy aunt will see and run a knife through thee, I know.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Ha! ha! just let me laugh a while at thy sublime conceit!
I’ll squeeze a radish, 6 baggage, for thy mincing ways so sweet.
I’ll salt thee, stink not. 1 O poor goose, I’ll settle thee as meet!
A thousand times thy foster-mother prayed of thee, I weet, —

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

Thou stiff-necked whore! draw not thyself up in defiance there;
To shower abuse like ‘Stones upon my mammy’s head!’ forbear,
Alack for all the toil and labour that for thee I bare!
If now the lads should shoulder thee, why, who, I pray, need care?

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

1 Part of the Wednesday’s function consists in showering small coins, millet, and so on, over the bride.

2 ‘Get thyself dirty laughing the whole,’ is an expression used by female attendants at public baths to their lady clients, the implication being of course that the latter may soon have occasion to re-visit the bath. The phrase is here used merely playfully, without any distinct meaning.

3 The ring which usually forms part of the engagement-present.

4 ‘My diamond’ is a common term of endearment to apply to a girl.

5 i.e. We can trace our family through seven generations.

6 ‘I’ll squeeze a radish!’ is an expression of contempt something like ‘a fig for you!’

7 ‘I’ll salt you that you stink not!’ is another impolite speech sometimes addressed to persons who talk impudent nonsense.
Stand not like statue, loose thy tongue, but do not rant and rave!
I'm worried! hush that dotard, may he bellow in his grave!
'O David, cozen thine own heart;' good deeds from no one crave;
From others learn to work and win the food thy life to save.

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.
Before that Wásif breaks the string of abstinence, I say,
Put on thy drawers, nor show thy legs unto the folk, my may.
Now cease to prate, shut down the lid upon the box, I pray.
Hast thou not heard the order which was issued yesterday?

A street-broom be not thou, my girl, be lady-like and neat.

The Pearl of a Girl's
Most Dutiful Reply. [440.]

If once again she preach at me, I'll bind her to a stake,
And with a stick burnt in the fire her head and eyes I'll break.
And then upon my own account a job I'll undertake,
I'll first go pray a friend to aid, and then my course I'll take,

I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

Old dotard, may I ne'er grow up if I attend thy screed!
Thou sleep'st each night with dad, but I'm to have no love indeed!
No more I'll roast myself within the kitchen, that's agreed.
I'm not to chat with any pal, or any comrade heed!
I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

1 I. e. silent.
2 The 'dotard' is probably the speaker's husband and the girl's father.
'May he bellow in his grave!' is an imprecation, and alludes to the belief concerning the examination of the dead in the grave by the two angels Munkar and Nekir who, if the answers they receive are not satisfactory, beat the sinner on the temples with iron maces so that he roars out so loudly that he is heard by all beings except men and genies.

3 'David, dandle (or soothe) thy heart!' is a proverbial expression addressed to one who hopes for something he is not likely to get.

4 By the curious term 'string of abstinence' Wásif probably means the udqar, that is, the string by which the trousers are fastened round the waist.

5 This title is of course ironical.
Just hear her speak! well might one cry, — a fig for her, the scum!
When thou wast young, didst thou for ne'er a reason stop at home?
The neighbours all are gone in coaches forth to ride and roam. 1
O nurse, whene'er Sha'bán is here, nay, ere Rejeb is come, 2
I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

Instead of droning, babbler, like a spinning-wheel all day,
Go work thy loom and weave thy web and make some coin, I pray.
'The bastard 'tis who spoils the market,' 3 so at least they say;
So what if all the pots and pans to sell I sneak away,
And seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make?

Once in a way, 'Here, girl, thy husband comes,' she says to me.
The measles take thee! shriek not like a wench who wails for fee. 4
Burn up, thou and my husband too, like withered corn-cob be! 5
While life is in my body left I'll to the streets, thou'lt see,
And seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

With washing greasy rags and clouts my nails are worn away.
May daddy crack his boxwood spoons upon thy pate, I pray. 6
Thou mak'st me stuff thy cronies first who come here day by day,
And then clear up the litter after they have gone their way,
I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

1 In old times coaches were reserved almost exclusively for the use of women, who sometimes went in them to the Valley of the Sweet Waters and other places of resort.
2 Rejeb is the name of the seventh, Sha'bán that of the eighth month of the Muhammedan year. The girl is supposed to be speaking in some earlier month, perhaps in the sixth, the Latter Jemáíi, and to say that she means to be off and enjoy herself before Sha'bán, before even Rejeb, comes, — i. e. immediately.
3 The proverb in full is حرامزاده بپازار بپازار حلنزاىادة بپازار بھار 'the bastard spoils the bargain, the lawfully born makes the bargain.' The first phrase is used of one who causes any project or arrangement to fall through; the second, of one who causes such to succeed.
4 That is, a hired mourner.
5 There is a popular expression فروق بیت قویجان کمی لولیش 'he (she, it,) is dried up and become like a corn-cob,' i. e. is become very feeble.
6 Spoons made of boxwood are very hard; they used to be highly esteemed. [They often bore suitable inscriptions, such as the following on a spoon of this kind which I bought in Constantinople in 1882: —
My summers and my winters have in tittle-tattle past.  
'The plaintiff's off to Brusa gone,' and so I'm free at last. 
With sitting still at home my thighs are stuck together fast. 
Before my wisdom-teeth are cut I'll make thee stand aghast, —
I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make. 

The viewer, if she comes, will make me fifty times too old; 
She'll say, 'Her nose and mouth are big, her teeth are wide and bold; 
'No, no, her age, I see full well she's fifty summers told.' 
So now for once I'll off and squander whatsoe'er I hold,
And seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make. 

Shall I as nightly task four hanks assort, I wonder, eh? 
And work instead of sleep, forsooth? Go, lick thy palm! I say. 
If I've turned out light-headed, look at yonder drab, I pray. 
Now, auntie dear, let go my hand and hold me not, nay, nay, —
I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make. 

If e'er I ask a pretty thing as Bayram gift; saith she: —
'Thou whore, a pity for the salt they sprinkled over thee!' 
See yonder mopsy! pity on my youth! O woe is me! 
O sister mine, before I'm thirty years, as thou shalt see,
I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make. 

'Twould seem she'd bought me with her coin, like any slave-girl fag; 
She'd like to shove me down into the kitchen, filthy hag.

There is a proverb 'he (or she) passes his (or her) life in tittle-tattle,' i.e. in silly or frivolous pursuits.

'Thy accuser (at law) is gone to Brusa,' is another proverb, meaning that one is free to go or do as one likes, there being none to hinder. 

'Liik thy palm,' a popular expression meaning, 'don't you wish you may get it?'

That is, her scold of a mother; the girl is here supposed to be addressing some third party, perhaps her 'auntie dear.'

Bayram is the great festival; a Bayram gift is equivalent to a Christmas present with us. 

It used to be, and perhaps in some out of the way places still is, a custom to sprinkle salt over new-born infants.
But I, I'll throw thee off as though thou wast a greasy rag.

At dawn upon the morrow I'll be up, nor ever lag,

To seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

Is't needful I should learn to wash those dirty clouts of thine?
I cannot wind the balk up with these cotton hands of mine. ¹

Is't fitting me to weave at looms, and threads of silk to twine?
Go now and to the cupboard comb and distaff both consign.

I'll seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

Of making wafer-cakes and macaroni do not blare;

Of pastry-work and cakes and sweets I know naught whatsoever.
But one or two wee dishes rough and ready I'll prepare,

And to invite him to the feast to-morrow forth I'll fare,

And seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

'Is't he who longest lives or travels most who most doth know?' ²
Unless I move about a bit, I'll never learn, I trow.

Both men and women, when they see my face, do praise it so.
I'll give myself a touch up in my glass, then off I'll go

And seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

'The orphan cuts its navel-string itself,' ³ so stand aside,

Nor meddle with thy chatter — Babbler, shall I mateless bide?
I'll serve thee that thou'lt tear thy hair with rage, thyself beside;
I'll softly ope the neighbour's door, and slyly in I'll slide,

And seek a romp of fifteen years and him my sweetheart make.

Just see, to spite thee, I'll be off with some right gallant beau;

Who seeth, needeth not to carp at sun and moon, I trow; ⁴

¹ 'Cotton hands,' i. e. white and delicate hands; 'lily hands,' as we might say.

² This again refers to a proverb, i.e. 'he knows not much who lives long, he knows much who goes about much.' Sometimes this is quoted in metrical form:

³ 'The orphan itself cuts its navel-string,' is a proverb meaning that those who have none to help them must help themselves.

⁴ By the sun and moon the girl here means herself and her lovers.