

CHAPTER VI
CHARLES MARTEL AND PIPPIN

I. THE KORAN

Singular
origin of the
Koran, the
Bible of the
Mohamme-
dans.

Mohammed apparently suffered from a certain nervous disorder which is often accompanied by hallucinations. When about forty years of age, as he was engaged in meditation upon a solitary mountain near Mecca, the angel Gabriel appeared to him and uttered five verses, — the first of the revelations from heaven which were to compose the Koran. Similar messages came to him from time to time during his periods of nervous excitement. These he revealed to his friends and converts, who committed them to memory and, in some cases, wrote them down. It is probable that the prophet himself could neither read nor write.

At the time of his death no collection had as yet been made of these inspired utterances; they had only been recorded piecemeal on palm leaves, skins, shoulder blades of animals, and, above all, in the hearts of his followers. The early caliphs, realizing that the *Book of God* might otherwise be speedily lost, ordered that a man who had acted as Mohammed's amanuensis should collect and arrange the text. A second and more careful edition, made in 660, was sent to all the chief cities in the Mohammedan empire and has remained the authoritative text among all Mohammedans down to the present day.

The revelations were strung together without regard to the order in which Mohammed received them and with little or no attention to their contents. The longer *surahs* or chapters come first and then the short ones, although chronologically the shorter were the earlier. It is therefore not unnatural that the Koran should be confused and often obscure, and in an English version it is hard to perceive much of the marvelous eloquence which recommends it to the Arab mind.

It is chiefly made up of repeated assertions of God's unity and greatness and of the futility and wickedness of the worship of idols. There are frequent references to the last judgment, to heaven and its delights, to hell and the fate of those who stubbornly refuse to accept the Koran as the word of God, and Mohammed as his prophet. Many episodes from the Old and New Testaments are given here and there, such as the stories of Abraham, of Joseph, of Moses, of the birth of Jesus. Mohammed could hardly have been acquainted with the Bible at first hand, but must have gathered his knowledge of it from the Jews and Christians settled in Arabia. The Koran also embodies popular sayings and favorite legends current among the desert tribes long before the time of Mohammed. Some important rules of conduct are also laid down.

"Mohammed had not lived among the sheepfolds in vain, and spent long solitary nights gazing at the silent heaven and watching the dawn break over the mountains. This earliest portion of the Koran is one long blazonry of nature's beauty. How can you believe in aught but the One omnipotent God when you see this glorious world around you and this wondrous tent of heaven above you?

Lane-Poole's
view of
Mohammed's
character.

is Mohammed's frequent question to his countrymen. 'All things in heaven and earth supplicate him; then which of the bounties of the Lord will ye deny?' . . .

"In conclusion, let us banish from our minds any conception of the Koran as a code of laws, or a systematic exposition of a creed. It is neither of these. Let us only think of a simple enthusiast confronted with many and varied difficulties, and trying to meet them as best he could by the inward light that guided him. The guidance was not perfect, we know, and there is much that is blameworthy in Mohammed; but whatever we believe of him, let it be granted that his errors were not the result of premeditated imposition, but were the mistakes of an ignorant, impressible, superstitious, but nevertheless noble and great man."

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

48. Passages from the Koran. The opening prayer.

Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds!
The Compassionate, the Merciful!
King of the day of judgment!
Thee we worship, and Thee we ask for help.
Guide us in the straight way,
The way of those to whom Thou art gracious;
Not of those upon whom is Thy wrath, nor of the erring.

The angel Gabriel extols the divine Word, which he reveals to Mohammed, and denounces unbelievers.

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God. That is the book¹! there is no doubt therein; a guide to the pious, who believe in the unseen, and are steadfast in prayer, and of what we have given them expend in alms; who believe in what is revealed to thee, and what was revealed before thee, and of the hereafter they are sure. These are in guidance from their Lord, and these are the prosperous.

¹ Namely, the book which Gabriel, the speaker, is revealing.

Verily, those who misbelieve, it is the same to them if ye warn them or if ye warn them not, they will not believe. God has set a seal upon their hearts and on their hearing; and on their eyes is dimness, and for them is grievous woe. There are, indeed, those among men who say, "We believe in God and in the last day"; but they do not believe. They would deceive God and those who do believe; but they deceive only themselves and they do not perceive. In their hearts is a sickness, and God has made them still more sick, and for them is grievous woe because they lied. . . .

And if ye are in doubt of what we have revealed unto our servant, then bring a chapter like it, and call your witnesses other than God if ye tell truth. But if ye do it not, and ye shall surely do it not, then fear the fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for misbelievers. But bear the glad tidings to those who believe and work righteousness, that for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow. Whenever they are provided with fruit therefrom they say, "This is what we were provided with before, and they shall be provided with the like; and there are pure wives for them therein, and they shall dwell therein for aye." . . .

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Have we not made the earth as a bed?
And the mountains as tent-pegs?
And created you in pairs,
And made you sleep for rest,
And made the night for a mantle,
And made the day for bread-winning,
And built above you seven firmaments,
And put therein a burning lamp,
And sent down water pouring from the squeezed clouds
To bring forth grain and herb withal,
And gardens thick with trees?

God's beautiful world.

Lo! the Day of Decision is appointed—
The day when there shall be a blowing of the trumpet, and ye shall come in troops,

And the heavens shall be opened, and be full of gates,
 And the mountains shall be removed, and turn into mist.
 Verily hell lieth in wait,
 The goal for rebels,
 To abide therein for ages;
 They shall not taste therein coolness nor drink,
 Save scalding water and running sores, —
 A meet reward!
 Verily they did not expect the reckoning,
 And they denied our signs with lies;
 But everything have we recorded in a book:—

Description
 of the bliss
 of heaven
 and the
 pains of hell.

When the earth shall be shaken in a shock,
 And the mountains shall be powdered in powder,
 And become like flying dust,
 And ye shall be three kinds.

Then the people of the right hand — what people of good
 omen!
 And the people of the left hand — what people of ill omen!
 And the outstrippers, still outstripping:—
 These are the nearest [to God],
 In gardens of delight;
 A crowd of the men of yore,
 And a few of the latter days;
 Upon inwrought couches,
 Reclining thereon face to face.
 Youths ever young shall go unto them round about
 With goblets and ewers and a cup of flowing wine,—
 Their heads shall not ache with it, neither shall they be
 confused;
 And fruits of their choice,
 And flesh of birds to their desire;
 And damsels with bright eyes like hidden pearls,—
 A reward for what they have wrought.
 They shall hear no folly therein, nor any sin,
 But only the greeting, "Peace! peace!"

And the people of the right hand — what people of good
 omen!
 Amid thornless lote-trees,
 And bananas laden with fruit,
 And shade outspread,
 And water flowing,
 And fruit abundant,
 Never failing, nor forbidden, . . .
 But the people of the left hand — what people of ill omen! —
 Amid burning wind and scalding water,
 And a shade of black smoke,
 Not cool or grateful!
 Verily before that they were prosperous;
 But they persisted in the most grievous sin,
 And used to say,
 "When we have died, and become dust and bones, shall we
 indeed be raised again,
 And our fathers, the men of yore,"
 Say: Verily those of yore and of the latter days
 Shall surely be gathered to the trysting-place of a day which
 is known.
 Then ye, O ye who err and call it a lie,
 Shall surely eat of the tree of Zakkum,
 And fill your bellies with it,
 And drink upon it scalding water,—
 Drink like the thirsty camel:—
 This shall be their entertainment on the Day of Judgment!

We came out with the prophet, with a part of the army,
 and a man passed by a cavern in which was water and ver-
 dure, and he said in his heart, "I shall stay here, and retire
 from the world." Then he asked the prophet's permission
 to live in the cavern; but he said, "Verily I have not been
 sent on the Jewish religion, nor the Christian, to quit the
 delights of society; but I have been sent on the religion
 inclining to truth, and that which is easy, wherein is no diffi-
 culty or austerity, I swear by God, in whose hand is my life,
 that marching about morning and evening to fight for religion

Fighting for
 the faith
 better than
 prayers.
 (From the
 traditional
 sayings of
 Mohammed
 not included
 in the
 Koran.)

is better than the world and everything that is in it: and verily the standing of one of you in the line of battle is better than supererogatory prayers performed in your house for sixty years.

II. HOW PIPPIN, THE FIRST OF THE CAROLINGIAN LINE, BECAME KING OF FRANCE

The Franks in olden times were wont to choose their kings from the family of the Merovingians. This royal line is considered to have come to an end in the person of Childeric III, who was deposed from the throne by command of Stephen, the Roman pontiff; his long hair was cut off and he was thrust into a monastery.

49. The weakness of the later Merovingian kings. (From Einhard's *Life of the Emperor Charles*.)

Although the line of the Merovingians actually ended with Childeric, it had nevertheless for some time previously been so utterly wanting in power that it had displayed no mark of royalty except the empty kingly title.

All the resources and power of the kingdom had passed into the control of the prefects of the palace, who were called the "mayors of the palace,"¹ and who employed the supreme authority. Nothing was left to the king. He had to content himself with his royal title, his flowing locks, and long beard. Seated in a chair of state, he was wont to display an appearance of power by receiving foreign ambassadors on their arrival, and, on their departure, giving them, as if on his own authority, those answers which he had been taught or commanded to give.

Thus, except for his empty title, and an uncertain allowance for his subsistence, which the prefect of the palace used to furnish at his pleasure, there was nothing that the king could call his own, unless it were the income from a single farm, and that a very small one, where he made his home, and where such servants as were needful to wait on him constituted his scanty household. When he went anywhere he traveled in a wagon drawn by a yoke of oxen, with a rustic

¹ *Maiores domus*.

oxherd for charioteer. In this manner he proceeded to the palace, and to the public assemblies of the people held every year for the dispatch of the business of the kingdom, and he returned home again in the same sort of state. The administration of the kingdom, and every matter which had to be undertaken and carried through, both at home and abroad, was managed by the mayor of the palace.

In the year of the Incarnation of our Lord, 750,¹ Pippin sent ambassadors to Pope Zacharias to ask his opinion in the matter of the kings of the Franks, who, though of the royal line, and called kings, enjoyed in truth no power in the realm except that official documents were issued in their name. Otherwise they were destitute of power, and did only what the mayor of the palace told them.

Only upon the day when the people, according to ancient usage, were wont to bring gifts to their sovereign on the March Field, did the king, surrounded by the army, sit in his chair, the mayor of the palace standing before him, and proclaim such laws as had been established by the Franks. The next day he returned home, and stayed there during the remainder of the year.

Pope Zacharias, therefore, in virtue of apostolic authority, told the ambassadors that he judged it better and more advantageous that he should be king and be called king who had the power rather than he who was falsely called king.

The said pontiff accordingly enjoined the king and the people of the Franks that Pippin, who already exercised the regal power, should be called king and raised to the throne.

And this was done by St. Boniface, the archbishop, who anointed him king in the city of Soissons. And so it came about that Pippin was called king, while Childeric, falsely called king, was shaven and sent to the monastery.

¹ It appears from other sources that it was in 752—not 750—that Pippin received the kingly crown from the hand of Boniface.

50. Pope Zacharias authorizes the coronation of Pippin. (From *The Lesser Annals of Lorsch*.)

51. The coronation of Pippin by the pope. (From Einhard's *Annals*.)

(753) . . . In this year Pope Stephen [the successor of Zacharias] came to King Pippin in the town which is called Kiersey, to beg protection for himself and the Roman church from the attacks of the Lombards. . . .

(754) Pope Stephen, after King Pippin had assured him that he would defend the Roman church, consecrated him to the honor of the royal dignity, and with him his two sons, Karl and Carloman; and the pope spent that winter in Francia.

III. THE LOMBARDS, POPE STEPHEN, AND KING PIPPIN

Pope Stephen was driven, as we have seen, by the threatening attitude of the Lombards to visit the court of Pippin in search of help. The Frankish king, with the approbation of his councilors, made an expedition to Italy in 755, defeated the Lombards, and forced Aistulf, their king, to promise that he would return all the territory about Rome and never invade the region again. Yet Pippin had hardly recrossed the Alps when Aistulf broke his treaty and attacked Rome. The pope then appealed to Pippin, in successive letters, describing the devastation wrought by the Lombards and the desperate plight of the city. Of these letters the following is a sample:

52. A letter of Pope Stephen III describing the atrocities of the Lombards (756).

Pope Stephen to the most excellent lord, Pippin, our son and kinsman in the spirit, King of the Franks and Patrician of the Romans:

Woeful and bitter is the distress in which we find ourselves; our difficulties and anxieties are constantly increasing and call forth floods of tears. "Who could witness such tribulations and not mourn? Who could listen to our calamities and not bewail? . . .

We must believe, however, most Christian and excellent son, that all our sorrows are known to your Highness: how the treaties of peace have been broken by the accursed King Aistulf, how none of the stipulations have been observed even

when confirmed by the most solemn oath, how the Lombards have desolated all our lands and committed many murders. And now thou knowest, O most excellent son and spiritual kinsman, thou knowest what we would say with many tears and much sorrow of heart.

The very first of January all the army of this same Aistulf, king of the Lombards, gathered from the confines of Tuscany, against the city of Rome, and encamped close to the gate of the blessed apostle Peter and the gate of St. Pancratius and the Ostian gate. Then Aistulf himself joined his army, with further reinforcements, and pitched his tents beside the Salarian gate and other gates. And he drew up his army and said to us Romans: "Open to me the Salarian gate that I may enter the city; and deliver your pontiff into my hands. Then I will have mercy upon you. If you do not these things, I will destroy your walls, and put you to the sword. And I will see who can deliver you out of my hands." . . .

They have wasted with fire and sword, far and wide, all the lands outside the city, and have burned the churches of God, and have cast the most holy images of the saints into the fire, and destroyed them. And they have put that holy treasure, the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, into their own polluted vessels and, sated with abundance of meat, they ate this blessed treasure. The altar cloths and other ornaments of the churches of God—oh, too infamous to tell!—they bore away and used for their own purposes.

The monks, servants of God, who dwelt in mountains for the praise of God, they beat with many blows, and many of them they cut to pieces. And they seized nuns and recluses, dedicated from their earliest years to the cloister, and subjected them to the most cruel abuses, so that some of them were seen to perish. They have cut off vines well-nigh to the roots, and have altogether destroyed the harvests. There is no chance of safety for the household of our holy church, nor for any one indeed who remains in the city of Rome. . . .

Now for five and fifty days they have besieged and surrounded on every side this afflicted city of Rome; and this

wicked Aistulf will kill us all with one sword. For so he has sworn with rage, and has cast this in our teeth: "Behold, you were surrounded by us and could not escape out of our clutches. Now let the Franks come and wrest you from our grasp." . . . Therefore hear me, O son—hear and help us. Behold, now is the time to save us. Save us lest we perish, O most Christian king!

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 ADAMS, *Civilization*, pp. 146-154.
 Charles Martel: EMERTON, *Introduction*, Chapter X, pp. 114-134;
 HENDERSON, *Germany in the Middle Ages*, pp. 40-46; OMAN, Chapter XVII, pp. 289-299.
 The Arabs—their Original Character: GIBBON, Vol. V, Chapter L, first part, pp. 311-332.
 Mohammed: BÉMONT and MONOD, Chapter X, pp. 135-147; GIBBON, Vol. V, Chapter L, latter part, pp. 333-396.
 Arab Conquests and Civilization: GIBBON, Vol. V, Chapter LI, pp. 397-494; MUNRO, *History of the Middle Ages*, Chapter IX, pp. 86-94.
 Pippin: EMERTON, Chapter XII, pp. 150-179; HENDERSON, pp. 46-56; OMAN, Chapter XIX, pp. 322-334.

B. Additional reading in English.

GILMAN, *The Saracens* (with an excellent bibliography at the end); AMEER ALI, *The Life and Teachings of Mohammed and A Short History of the Saracens*. Two recent and interesting studies from the point of view of an enlightened Oriental writer. MUIR, *Life of Mahomet and Annals of the Early Caliphate*. The former is the most thorough treatment in English; the latter deals with the fifty years following Mohammed's death.

MILMAN, Book IV, Chapters I-II.

The whole Koran has been carefully translated by E. H. PALMER, 2 vols., 1880; but most readers will derive far more pleasure and profit from the extracts given in STANLEY LANE-POOLE, *Speeches and Table Talk of the Prophet Mohammad*,—a most charming little book, which helps one to feel the beauty of the poetical passages of the Koran.

HODGKIN, *Italy and her Invaders*, Vol. VII, Book VIII, Chapters III-XI.

GREGOROVIVS, Vol. II, Book IV, Chapters I-III.

KITCHIN, *History of France*, Vol. I, Book II, Part I, Chapters I-II.

The history of Mohammed and the movements of the Arabs hardly belong to the field of European history, and the sources are in general available only for those who read Arabic. Three recent foreign works may be added to the list given above.

MÜLLER, A., *Der Islam im Morgen- und Abendland*, 2 vols., Berlin, 1885-1887 (Oncken Series).

OELSNER, *König Pippin in Jahrbücher der deutschen Geschichte*, 1882.

GUYARD, STANISLAS, *La Civilisation Musulmane*.

For the sources of the history of the early Carolingian rulers, see bibliography at the close of the following chapter.

C. Materials for advanced study.