THE HIDDEN PEARLS

Concerning the notables of the eighth Islamic century.

Ad-durar al-Kaminah (The Hidden Pearls) : thus Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalâni entitles his biographical dictionary of men and women of the eighth century of the Hijrah concerning whom he was able to obtain any information from many sources. Ibn Hajar, the author of several biographical dictionaries of traditionists, which have been published in India and especially at Hyderabad, is too well known for me to enlarge upon his own biography. He was born on the 12th of Sha'bân 773 at Askalon, lost his father early and was brought up by relations. As early as 784, when eleven years of age, he made his first pilgrimage to Mecca with his uncle, and stayed there till the following year. He was intended for the career of a merchant, but went to Cairo to study traditions. In 793, at the age of twenty, he went for the same purpose to Upper Egypt. Five years later in 798 he married the daughter of Karîm ad-Dîn-b. 'Abd al-'Azîz and the following year made a journey to the Yaman, where he made the acquaintance of al-Fîrûzabâdî, the author of the Qâmûs, in Zabîd. In 800 he made his second pilgrimage. He returned to Cairo and in 802 he went to Damascus where he stayed till the following year. Having returned to Cairo towards the end of 803 he shortly after undertook a second journey to the Yaman, to 'Aden and Zabîd, passing through Mecca. In 806 he appeared in Cairo for the first time as a teacher of Hadîth and Law. In 824 he was appointed lieutenant (Nâ'ib) of the chief Shâfi'î judge, al-Bulqînî, and three years later he himself was raised to the dignity of chief Qâdhî on the 27th of Muharram 827. Any position from the Sultân downwards during the rule of the Cherkess Mamlûks was never held for long, and this was also true in Ibn Hajar's case. He held the post of chief judge six times[1] and finally

(1) He was Qadhi of Egypt (1) Muharram 827 to Dhû'l Qa'dah 827; (2) Rajab 828 to Safar 830 ; (3) Jumâda 1.834 to Shawwâl 840 ; (4)

resigned at the end of Jumâdâ II. 852. He died soon after, on the 28th of Dhû'l-Hijjah 852 (21 February 1449) at Cairo.

It is not my purpose to enumerate his very numerous works, in the composition of which he must have employed a number of secretaries, as the arranging in order of them must have entailed a great amount of labour and absorbed much time.

Shams ad-Dîn adh-Dhahabî had ended his large historical work, the *Kitab al-'Ibar*, which is mainly biographical, with the year 700 of the Hijrah ; and the *Durar al-Kaminah* were intended to carry this work a century further. The difference, however, was that the work of Ibn Hajar was arranged in alphabetical order so as to make reference easier. With admirable industry all kinds of biographical works[1] were drawn upon to make the book as complete as possible. At the end of one of the manuscripts[2] the author tells us that he had completed his material by the year 730, but made continual additions till 737. He himself regrets that it is after all not to his satisfaction, because he had not been able to obtain all the information which he desired.

The work, which is one of the main sources for the biographies in Brockelmann's History of Arabic Literature, would no doubt have been published long ago, but for the lack of good manuscripts. Brockelmann has used the Vienna manuscript, which is complete in three volumes copied about 100 years ago in Constantinople. Though complete, this copy abounds in errors, not only in the spelling of names, but not infrequently in the dates, due to misreading of the original from which the copy was made.[3] A far better manuscript is preserved in the

Shawwâl 841 to Muharram 849 ; (5) Muharram 850 to Muharram 851 and (6) Rabî' II. 852 to Jumâda of the same year when he retired on account of illness.

(1) Ibn Hajar mentions the most important in the introduction of the *Durar*, but he used many other works, especially the so-called *Mashyakhah*, or lists of teachers drawn up by various scholars. These are often hurriedly written volumes, and one or two which I have seen, written in a hurried hand must have given the reader much trouble in using them for information. The hurried hand is no doubt responsible for many misreadings.

(2) The British Museum MS. The others have not got this information.

(3) The misreading of the numerals سبع and تسع is well-known, but as Ibn Hajar frequently, Sakhâwi practically always, uses figures, errors between the Arabic forms of 2 and 3 also 2 and 6 are not infrequent. The India Office MS. mixes up all figures.

British Museum, belonging at one time to Baron von Krämer. From this manuscript that of the State Library in Cairo is a copy. It is nearly complete, but in the second volume a whole Kurrâsah has been lost, containing 92 biographies, some of men of importance. By the kind assistance of Ahmad Taimûr Pasha I have been able to acquire from Damascus a third manuscript, copied apparently for Ibn Hajar himself, as it contains two or three marginal notes by him. Its chief value however lies in the numerous additions and corrections made in the margin by Shams ad-Dîn Muhammad ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmân as-Sakhâwî, who continued the *Durar al-Kaminah* in his large biographical dictionary "Adh-Dhau' al-Lâmi'. He has added about 200 lives, many of them those of Hanafi lawyers, because Ibn Hajar, as a fervent Shâfi'i, purposely either omitted them or gave inadequate information. This propensity of Ibn Hajar is pointed out by Sakhâwî on several occasions in the margins, and he also corrects at times bad errors of the author as regards names of persons and dates. This manuscript contains unfortunately only the first volume, while the second one is supplied by a later copyist who had a very good original, but made his work easy by leaving out many biographies and copying only part of those which he includes. He omits practically all poetical citations and the lives of Amîrs and women. Both the last two manuscripts are careful in vocalising uncommon names, but in many cases even in these two copies words remain unpointed, proving that the words have baffled the earliest copyists. In the British Museum MS. these words are generally indicated by a small *Ta'* written over the word denoting the word *Ghalat* "mistake." In Sakhâwî's copy Ibn Hajar himself has written in the margin on one occasion: "The book must be looked up again."

From many indications it appears that the original of the *Durar al-Kaminah* remained for a long time in loose sheets and the scribes who copied them could adjust any inconsistencies in the arrangement of the lives. They themselves have not always been consistent—as, for example, the scribe of the British Museum copy, who treats the word Allâh in the name 'Abd Allâh as beginning with *Lam* while in Sakhâwî's copy it is treated as beginning with *Alif*. Hence the biographies with the name 'Abd Allah in them appear earlier in the latter manuscript. At a very early period also the beginning of the biographies

under the letter *Kha'* had been lost, as all manuscripts have here a gap, indicated in Sakhâwî's copy by blank leaves. The latter has inserted these four biographies, but I have found from casual references in other parts of the work that several other biographies have also been lost, which were in the work originally. A fourth copy to which I have had access, and which I have compared throughout, is preserved in the Library of the India Office. It contains the first half of the work in two volumes, and has been copied in India. For incorrectness it could hardly find its equal. Not only has the scribe continually misread names, dates and even ordinary words, but on almost every page he has omitted lines and now and then skipped two or three pages, so that in the middle of a page we have under one heading the beginning of one biography running into the biography of another person mentioned, in the better manuscripts, pages further on. This copy instead of helping to settle the text could only cause confusion and errors, and any deviation from the other manuscripts must be accepted as mistakes of the copyist.

The work is most remarkable and, as the shadows of the persons who lived in the eighth century of the Hijrah pass before us in a curious medley, we get a fairly vivid picture of the life of the times such as chronological histories cannot give us. There are Sultans of Egypt, rebellious nobles, scholars of all sciences down to a poor dealer in old clothes at Damascus who asked a price from a customer and when the latter agreed to pay the price demanded would not accept it, because he had asked more than the worn trousers were worth. The longest biography is that of Ibn Taimîyyah with whom Ibn Hajar seems to sympathise to a great degree, as with the Hanbalis in general. The scope of the biographies is the whole extent of the Muslim world, Sultâns of Dihli, scholars and kings of Spain and Morocco, Tartar princes of distant Russia, conquerors in Somâli-land and Negro rulers on the banks of the Niger. Naturally the greater part of the work is devoted to scholars of Egypt and Syria. This is what one might expect because those countries had become the centre of the world of Islâm. The crusaders had finally been ejected from Syria, the last waves of the Mongol onslaught had burst upon Syria to be finally broken by the valour of the Mamlûks of Egypt, and with it the barrier between Egypt and the Eastern lands of Islâm. In Spain the Christians were steadily

advancing upon the Muslim kingdoms though some signal successes against them were still recorded. Men of all these lands came to Cairo as the fountain-head of learning, and the centre of the whole picture is the Mamlûk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria of which practically the first half of the century is occupied by the reign of the Malik an-Nâsir, while the second half presents the sad picture of eight descendants of an-Nâsir following one another in quick succession, mostly ending in their being murdered, till the Cherkess Barqûq establishes at the turn of the century the rule of his still more turbulent and unruly kinsmen.

The historical accounts vary considerably in value and, as an example, one finds with surprise that, in the biography of the Malik al-Ashraf Sha'bân, the author has left all dates blank, yet they are scattered throughout the two volumes of the work. But in the same biography we get the information that Sha'bân hid in the house of a singer (a woman) before he was tracked by his rebellious Amîrs and strangled by them.

Valuable is the information concerning the last Mongol rulers of Persia and their nobles, because Persian historians who are our chief sources for their history generally composed their works for their Mongol masters, while Ibn Hajar had no fear of recriminations for speaking the truth. In other respects Persian historians are unreliable, and many have the bad habit of bringing many words and very little concrete information, like the history of Wassâf. India is too far away, but we get information from hearsay of the fabulous wealth and resources of the Sultans of Dihli. We also get some of the earliest information concerning the Turkish Empire but even Ibn Hajar does not realize that the Turkumân, as he calls them, are laying the foundations of a great Muslim Empire which in time will sweep away the Sultanate of the Mamlûks.

His information about Spain and Morocco is to a great extent derived from the "*Ihatah*" of Lisân ad-Dîn ibn al-Khatîb. He had a complete copy of this work brought by a son of the author to Egypt; but he had a number of other sources and, for the time after the composition of the *Ihatah*, his information is derived from reports of immigrants and pilgrims who came to Cairo. Comparing his dates with those of Maghribi historians, I have discovered not a few divergencies. Through embassies which arrived at Cairo he also obtained information about

the Sultanates of Central Africa and Abyssinia. On the other hand his information on nearer quarters is inadequate, as, for example, about the Urtuqi dynasty.

Wherever his sources are available in manuscript or printed editions we can ascertain that he condenses his information considerably, but retains the most valuable facts. At times he, or his secretaries, have misread the books from which they copied; and Sakhâwî, as already mentioned, has frequent occasion for correcting him; but on the other hand his extracts will be of use for future editions of the works used.

The main feature of the work are the biographies of learned men, traditionists foremost, lawyers, poets and occasionally physicians, mathematicians and makers of instruments; also a fair sprinkling of wealthy merchants and travellers to distant lands.

The flight of learned men before the Mongols had moved the centre of learning to Egypt and Syria, but it was not only learning which flowed to these countries. Egypt especially attained a height of prosperity unequalled before and after, as it had become an emporium for the trade from the lands of Christianity and also by the way of South Arabia to India, while other merchants carried on trade through the whole breadth of the Mongol empire to far away China. We learn that a merchant at Damascus had estates somewhere there in the care of trustworthy agents, and that he from time to time travelled thither and stayed away two or three years. When the troops of Ghazan entered Damascus there were a number of merchants and other persons well-known to the officers of the Mongol army and their property was spared. Many of them knew the Mongol language, besides Persian. The sums of money found in the possession of Amîrs, at the time of the fairly frequent confiscations of their property, appear even to us, who read of American millionaires, as fabulous, besides jewels and other property of inestimable value[1].

We are, through the "*Subh al-A'sha*," well acquainted with the organisation of the Mamlūk State, but here we get a vivid picture of the perpetual intriguing of Amîrs

(1) Baktût's property, after having been plundered by the servants, was sold for 1,200,000 Dînârs, though the goods only fetched very low prices. In addition, his armoury and cabinet of trinkets were given to Qusun and valued at no less than 600,000 Dînârs. The confiscated property of Sallâr, Tangiz and other Amîrs ran into higher figures than these.

and learned men one against another. Those of the Amîrs who succumbed in this struggle were generally sent to Alexandria and imprisoned there. A lighter punishment was exile to Damascus, and for influential nobles the post of governor of Safad appears to have been sufficient punishment. In cases of open rebellion against the Sultân, or treachery, a new method of execution of the culprit had been invented and more than one was halved, (cut through in the middle of his body), on the race-course of Damascus. Rizq b. Fadhl Allah, when arrested, committed suicide in prison rather than undergo the tortures practised at the trial. Jirjîn, the treasurer, was tortured to death in 715 because he was supposed to know the names of persons who had conspired against an-Nâsir. Jauhar ar-Rushdi and others suffered the old Byzantine punishment of being blinded. Baktût al-Fattâh was left eleven days without food and drink in prison till he died. Sallâr, who had been reputed to be the wealthiest man in Egypt, the owner of forty Tablkhanah with all the fiefs appertaining thereto, also was made to die of hunger.

Being officials in a foreign country, few of the officers ever hesitated to leave the service of their sovereigns and enter that of their deadly enemies. An example is that of al-Afram who, feeling that as governor of Syria he had forfeited his life, went over to the Mongol ruler Khurbanda with his kith and kin and a large following of trusty soldiers, to be rewarded with the governorship of Adharbaijan. This was, however, not always safe. When Abû Sa'îd, in his attempt to rid himself of the tutelage of his uncle the Noyan Chûpân, murdered one of his sons, Dimashq Khôja, the latter's brother Timûrtâsh fled to the court of An-Nâsir and rose to the highest military offices. Yet when, in 728, the two princes made peace and exchanged presents, Abû Sa'îd asked as a favour for the head of Timûrtâsh. An-Nâsir complied and the unfortunate prince was duly killed, though his conduct had been blameless, and his head was sent to Baghdad. With it An-Nâsir sent the request: "I have sent you the head of your enemy, send me the head of mine!" He referred to Qara Sunqur who had fled to the court of Abû Sa'îd. The latter replied that he would have gladly reciprocated but that Qara Sunqur had unfortunately died a natural death a short time before the request arrived. The Sultân, nay, every noble, was continually suspicious of those in whom he had placed his greatest trust. Tangiz had for many years (712—740) honestly

governed the province of Syria for An-Nâsir and the latter's confidence in him was so great that he even gave two of his daughters in marriage to two sons of Tangiz. This did not, however, prevent the Sultân a few years later from having him treacherously arrested and killed, simply because Al-Hasan ibn Timurtâsh, ruler of Asia Minor, had secretly sent a letter to An-Nâsir accusing Tangiz of having proposed, against suitable reward, to hand over Syria to him. Really this was only a ruse of Al-Hasan to rid himself of the powerful Amîr as he was contemplating an invasion of Syria, which was frustrated by his own death shortly after the murder of Tangiz. Sallâr, upon whom favour had been showered most lavishly, was allowed to die of hunger in prison. When Ibn Hajar tries to distinguish a high official he appears to have no more eloquent term of praise than: "He did little harm.[1]"

The enormous wealth was, however, in many cases used for public benefit, and the rich nobles vied with one other in erecting Madrasahs in Cairo, Damascus and other cities of the realm and also in endowing them munificently. Others collected valuable manuscripts and bequeathed them to the foundations they had made, to be of general use to scholars. The prices paid for valuable copies are far in excess of what even fine manuscripts obtain to-day. We are told that Baibugharus, during the terrible plague which raged in 749,[2] paid for the burial of 1,000,000 persons in Cairo alone.

In other cases the Amîrs used their wealth for open debauchery, like Bahâdur al-Mansûrî. Another Amîr, Bahâdur al-Karkari, actually had his own son bastonaded to make him drink wine. When one of the periodical confiscations of the property of an Amîr took place, the servants as a rule robbed everything they could lay hands on before the residue reverted to the treasury of the Sultân. The property then was sold and in the biography of Baktamur al-Mansûrî we are told that in consequence of the quantity of goods coming suddenly upon the market prices fell from a hundred to one. Morals were low; girls and boys were imported in quantities, and Ibn Hajar

(1) كان قليل الشر

(2) Nearly a third of the persons whose biographies are found in the *Durar* fell victims to the plague in the year named, and the year following when the scourge reached Morocco and Spain.

mentions it as a strange fact that the Amîr Jangli, a Mongol by birth, had no liking for girls and boys, but kept to his wife only, the mother of all his children.

As the military commanders became rich beyond the dreams of avarice and still strove for more, so we find the same greed with men of learning. Many were not satisfied with one lucrative office, but strove to snatch as many as possible. The Subki family were a striking example. On many occasions Ibn Hajar tells us that a man had given bribes to obtain the office of judge, inspector of the treasury, etc., but that it had not come off.[1] Of a son of the chief-judge, Ibn Daqîq al-'Id, he casually mentions that many people had found fault with him for taking bribes from persons who wanted appointments from his father. Another chief-judge Al Qazwînî, honest himself, was in the long run exiled to Damascus because his sons not only accepted bribes from unworthy people, but also appropriated the property of *Waqfs* (pious foundations) and behaved in Cairo openly in such manner as to cause a public scandal. It is a distinction of the highest order when Ibn Hajar can say of a judge or lawyer: " It was not known that he ever accepted a bribe or a present." We get, on the other hand, also accounts of men of the highest integrity, judges and lawyers who would go and investigate matters themselves and not favour high or low. These men generally remained poor.

We find some curious information concerning the intercourse of Muslims with Christians and Jews. Apparently non-Muslims were on fairly equal terms under the Mamlûk rule, but Baibars al-Burji caused them to be considerably restricted; they were not allowed to wear fine clothes or ride horses; Christians had to wear a blue turban, Jews a yellow one. Also a number of churches were destroyed. Like so many ordinances, these were soon broken along with many others, which were periodically renewed. We get a curious account of the loan of some chandeliers from the mosque of 'Amr to the Christian church, called al-Mu'allaqah, in the biography of 'Alî ibn Ya'qûb al-Bakrî. The loan was for a special festival and when 'Alî al-Bakrî heard of this he collected a mob, which entered the church, ill-treated those present at the celebration and carried the chandeliers back to the mosque of 'Amr, where 'Alî upbraided the Imâm and the Khatîb. The Inspector of the Army, whose position was analogous.

(1) quite frequently لم يتفق

to that of a head of the police, heard of it and sent troops to disperse the rioters. 'Alî al-Bakrî had meanwhile gone to the house of the Amîr Arghûn and insulted him, saying that the wazîr, Karîm ad-Dīn, who was a Copt, was responsible for this scandal. Then the affair was brought before the Sultân an-Nâsir, and 'Alî was cited before a council of judges and Amîrs. The pomp of the council did not deter 'Alî, and, in the presence of all the notables of the realm, after reciting suitable passages from the Qurân and tradition, he said: "The best Jihâd is to speak the truth before a tyrannous Sultân." The Sultân in wrath shouted: "Am I a tyrant"? He rejoined: "You are! You have placed the Copts over the Muslims and have favoured their religion!" At this the Sultân could not suppress his anger and grasped his sword to strike him down, but the Amîr Tughâî stepped forward and held the Sultân back. Then, turning to the Qâdhî Ibn al-Wakîl, the Sultân said: 'Qâdhi! Shall this fellow insult me? Answer him!" Ibn al-Wakîl, trying to appease the Sultân, replied: "He has really done nothing to deserve punishment." Then the Sultan shouted at 'Alî: "Get out of my sight!" The latter left the council quickly. In the consultation which followed the Qâdhî Ibn Jamâ'ah agreed that 'Alî al-Bakrî had insulted the Sultân, and the latter commanded that the offender's tongue should be cut out. 'Alî was brought in again and the Amîr Tughâî was on the point of carrying out the command, when, upon the appeal of 'Alî to the Amîrs, they had pity upon him and the execution of the sentence was deferred to a later time. This was the chance for Ibn al-Wakîl. He went up to the castle and asked for an audience with the Sultân who had returned from the Council. When he was admitted Ibn al-Wakîl was weeping and the Sultân, thinking that something had happened to him or his family, said: "*Khair! Khair!*" ("Goodness! What is the matter?") He made answer: "'Alî al-Bakrî is a learned man, but hot-headed." The Sultan rejoined: "That is quite true." Then, with persuasion, Ibn al-Wakîl appeased the Sultan's anger and he commanded 'Alî to be released and exiled to Syria. This 'Alî was also one of the fiercest antagonists of Ibn Taimiyyah during his trials.

The chief portion of the work, however, is occupied by biographies of traditionists, lawyers and learned men in general. We are told the names of their teachers and pupils, also the title of the books which they studied

and composed. The books studied are many of the well known works on tradition, but now and then mention is made of rare works which have since been lost or have up to the present not been re-discovered. It is well-known the value traditionists laid upon a high *Isnad*, or chain of transmitters, containing as few links as possible. The principle was good as long as it was carried out with common sense, as the introduction of errors was minimised; but even this depends upon the trustworthiness of each transmitter. In the eighth century this was carried to a point of absurdity. Ibn 'Abd al-Dâ'im for example was a very old man, had heard traditions at an early age and now parents brought to him their boys and girls one year old (or up to the fifth year) and he granted them permission to teach in after life traditions he was reading at that moment to his audience. Sometimes permission was granted for a big book even if only the first chapter had been read. In two different places the author tells us of the inestimable value in later life it had been to the Imâm Shams ad-Dîn adh-Dhahabi that he was granted by an aged relation such an universal permission to teach (Ijâzah) *the day he was born*. Yet Ibn Hajar tells us in the biography of Ibn 'Abd ad-Dâ'im that the latter copied lean and fat (*i. e.* good and bad) always in a hurry, which caused him to make many mistakes, and that in his later years he even mixed these up.

If we review the biographies of learned men, over 6,000 in number, we find among them very many of the most celebrated authors of Arabic literature and it is difficult to single out names. There is Ibn Fadhl Allâh the author of the *Masalik al-Absar*; Dhahabi, author of many historical books on biography; Nuwairi, the author of the large encyclopaedia of Islamic learning; the historian and poet, Ibn al-Wardî; the Shâfi'î lawyer Taqī ad-Dīn as-Subkī; as-Safadī, the author of the largest biographical work in the Arabic language, the *Wafi-l-Wafayat*: the traveller Ibn Batûtah, and so many more, some of whom have been casually mentioned in the preceding pages.

Another feature is the mention of women—not only of such as had studied traditions, and there were many, but also of princesses and even of such as earned a livelihood by entertaining by their singing and playing musical instruments. One of the latter —Ittifāq by name— though not pretty (as Ibn Hajar informs us), by her manners fascinated several of the sons of the Sultân an-Nâsir, and had children by two of them certainly. Over-

whelmed at times with treasures, which again were confiscated after the death of the donors, she ended finally by marrying the Wazîr Muwaffaq ad-Dîn, who made her an allowance of 700,000 Dirhams a year till the time of his death. Ibn Hajar apparently does not know what became of her in the end.

A sad feature is the open hostility towards one another of the various Muslim sects and classes of lawyers. The trials and disputations of Ibn Taimiyyah fill much space in the work, not in the biography of Ibn Taimiyyah only but in those of his adherents and adversaries. The prosecution of Shî'ahs is a special feature. They were principally found in the Mongol provinces, but Al-Medînah also was one of their centres, and it was only after An-Nâsir got safely established on the throne that a Sunni Qâdhî could be appointed in the City of the Prophet (whom God bless) and even then he had a very hard task with the ruler Tufail. Since Salâh ad-Dîn had made an end of the Fatimid Caliphate in Egypt many Shî'ahs quietly kept to their tenets, but others were more foolish and took a special delight in reviling Abu Bakr and 'Omar publicly. This was an offence for which the Mâlikî lawyers especially found no other punishment adequate than death, and in spite of the appeals for mercy such sentences were carried out, as they would not believe in the repentance of the offender. The protests of the Hanafî lawyers in several cases were of no avail, as they had certainly the Shâfi'î lawyer against them to support the Mâlikî ; and the Shâfi'î Madhhab was predominant in the Mamlûk dominions. But even in Mecca Egyptian troops had to establish order when the rulers, favouring Zaidî doctrines, plundered not only the pilgrims but their own subjects as well. The biographies of the Meccan Sharîfs, Thaqabah, Utaifah, Rumaithah, Ajlan, etc., make very sad reading.

The work contains a large number of Turkish, Mongol and other names, which are not always, but very frequently, in the older manuscripts, carefully vocalised ; and wherever this is not done I have taken great pains to ascertain the correct spelling. Considering the importance of the *Durar al-Kaminah* as a source for history, it is imperative that these correct spellings should be carefully indicated in the planned edition. It is further important that the edition should be furnished with good indices of places and persons mentioned casually. I have prepared a list of the Madrasahs and titles of offices

which should form a special appendix so as to be of easy reference, because these recur continually and are no longer intelligible to all readers.

The poetry cited in the *Durar* is comparatively small in quantity, and all bad in quality. Ibn Hajar has written a Dîwân, but whenever he attempts criticism he does not give me the impression of excelling in this branch so much as in others. The verses which he calls at times *barid* are in my opinion often much superior to those verses which he calls middling good (*wasat* or *mutawassit*). In addition nearly all verses are very badly copied in all copies and have given more trouble than they are worth. Many do not conform to any metres, or one verse is correct and the following all wrong.

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