speak for themselves; these vestments are so simple that they have been adopted from the Greek period to the present time without the taint of sartorism which vulgarizes modern art. A very different thing is emotional drapery, such as the ancients only have been able to conceive and realize; this can be interpreted and understood only by acute and subtle minds. In some respects it may be compared to a dead language, for it has been little read since it ceased to be spoken.

There is no subject more important to the art-student than the interpretation of emotional drapery; it is to him what the symbolic characters found in Egypt or Nineveh are to the philologer. When it becomes recognized that there is a language of drapery the man of genius will reject taste; he will base his ideas on principles, by which means alone his motive can be expressed whether in marble, or color, or words.

In the interpretation of emotional drapery, the difficulty diminishes proportionately as the subject is known. But the best judges of Phidian sculpture have often failed to identify the story with the figure. In such instances there is much to be learnt by the mind placing itself in accord with what it sees, and eliciting a feeling which must be expressed in a manner dictated through the temperament of the spectator. Let us say Phidias is the Beethoven of sculpture; that his works have the suggestiveness of grand symphonies without words. Why should not the mind that can find a meaning in music discover one also in drapery that excites the deepest emotion?

Nothing in art, whether it be of painting, sculpture, poetry, or drama, is of the slightest value unless a motive pervades every part. For that reason an artist should think out fully and feel intensely whatever motive governs him. He should realize that, except the face, his whole work lies in the drapery, unless his figures are without representative covering. How, then, is he to become a master of others if he contents himself with wasting his technical skill on a drapery devoid of meaning, that tells no story, and that is often surpassed by the handicraft of our artisans, the *artistes* of a *beau monde?*—*Merry England.*

THE STORY OF THE BÂB.

BY MARY F. WILSON.

WHO or what is the Bâb? This question will probably be suggested by our title to not a few readers. The word—meaning, in Arabic, "a gate"—is the title of a hero of our own days, the founder, if not of a new religion, at least of a new phase of religious belief. His history, with that of his first followers, as told by M. le Comte de Gobineau in his "Religions et Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale," presents a picture of steadfast adherence to truth (as they held it), of self-denial, of joyful constancy in the face of bitterest suffering, torture and death, as vivid and touching as any that are found in the records of the heroic days of old. We have been accustomed to claim it as an argument for the truth of our Christianity that its believers have been strong to suffer martyrdom for its sake. But here we have not men only, but tender and delicate women and little children, joyfully enduring torture, "not accepting deliverance," for the sake of the faith that was in them. But our purpose is not to philosophize or to moralize, but to tell the story. Here it is.

Among the crowd of pilgrims who flocked to Mecca in the summer of 1843 was a youth who had then hardly completed his nineteenth year. He had come from the far distant city of Shiraz, where his family held an honorable position, claiming, indeed, to trace their descent from the great Prophet himself. Thoughtful and devout from his childhood, Mirza Ali Mohammed had zealously and regularly practised all religious duties considered binding on an orthodox Mussulman. He had received a liberal education, and while still a mere boy had eagerly examined and weighed every new set of ideas with which he

came in contact. Christians, Jews, Fire-worshippers—he conversed with them all, and studied their books. But the study which the young scholar pursued with special delight was one that seems to have a peculiar charm for the Asiatic mind—that of the occult sciences, and especially the philosophic theory of numbers, with the mysterious meanings attached to them. Up to the time of his visiting the shrine of the Prophet there had been no indication of any departure from the faith of his fathers. But this pilgrimage, instead of confirming his faith in Islam, had a quite contrary effect. While still in the holy city, and still more on the return journey, he had begun to confide to a select few views which attracted and delighted them, not more, perhaps, by their breadth and freedom than by the vague mystery in which they were still wrapped.

His decisive breach with the old faith was not far distant. Tarrying at Bagdad on his way home, he turned aside to visit Koufa, a shrine almost as sacred as Mecca itself. Here Ali, the brave and faithful son-in-law of the Prophet, had fallen by the hand of the assassin; and amid the silence and desolation of the ruined mosque the young Mirza passed many days in meditation and mental conflict. Should he proceed in the path that seemed opening before him, the fate of Ali might, most probably would, be his own. Were those new ideas that were filling his mind—was that place among his fellows to which perhaps he aspired—worth the risk? He must have judged that they were, for from that time he gave no sign of wavering or doubt.

Still journeying homewards, Mirza joined, at Bushire, a caravan in which he made many disciples.

Arrived at Shiraz, his first overt act was to present to his friends his earliest written works. These were two: a journal of his pilgrimage and a commentary on a part of the Korân. In the latter the readers were amazed and charmed to find meanings and teachings of which they had never dreamed before.

From this time he began to teach more publicly; and day by day larger crowds flocked around him. In public he still spoke with reverence of the Prophet and his laws; while in more private conferences he imparted to his disciples those new ideas which were, perhaps, not yet very clearly defined in his own mind. Very soon he had gathered round him a little band of devoted followers, ardently attached to himself, and ready to sacrifice wealth, life, all, in the cause of truth. And throughout the great empire men began everywhere to hear of the fame of Mirza Ali Mohammed.

There was much in the young teacher himself, apart from the subject of his teaching, to account for this rapid success. Of blameless life; simple in his habits; strict and regular in all pious observances, he had already a weight of character to which his extreme youth added a tenfold interest. But in addition to these things, he was gifted with striking beauty of person, and with that subtle, winning sweetness of manner so often possessed by leaders of men, and to which, more than to the most weighty arguments, they have often owed their power. Those who knew him say that he could not open his mouth without stirring hearts to their depths; and even those who remained unconvinced agree in saying that his eloquence was something beyond conception.

Ere long, Mirza assumed the title by which he has since been known throughout Persia—the Bâb—that is, the Door, the only one through which men can reach the knowledge of God. It may be well to give here an outline of what the Bâb did teach.

He believed in one God, eternal, unchangeable, Creator of all things, and into whom all shall finally be reabsorbed. He taught that God reveals His will to men by a series of messengers, who, while truly men, are not *mere* men, but also divine: that each of these messengers—Moses, Jesus, Mohammed—is the medium of some new truth, higher than that brought by the one who preceded him; that he himself, the Bâb, though claiming divine honors while he lived, was but the forerunner of one greater than he, the great Revealer—"He whom God shall manifest," who should complete the revelation of all truth, and preside at the final judgment, at which all the good shall be made one with God, and all evil annihilated.

One of the most marked and singular characteristics of his system is the prominence given in it to that mysterious and fanciful theory of numbers which had always had so great a charm for him. Taking various forms of the name of God—"ahyy," meaning "the giver of life;" "wahed," "the only One;" or that which is a most sacred formula, "Bismillah elemna elegdous." "in the name of God, highest and holiest"—he shows that the letters composing each of those names, taken by their numerical value, make up the number 19. This he therefore concludes is the number which lies at the foundation of all things in heaven and earth, the harmony of the universe, the number which must rule in all earthly arrangements. The year should have 19 months, and the month 19 days, the day 19 hours. Each college of priests of the new faith should consist of 18, with a president who should be the culminating point of this mysterious number. Men of all ranks and occupations—lawyers, doctors, tradesmen, mechanics—were to order their business with supreme regard to 19. The great book of the faith was to consist, when complete, of 19 chapters, each divided into 19 sections. Of this book the Bâb wrote only eleven chapters, leaving it to the great Revealer to complete the mystic number. And, most important of all his applications of this theory, he himself was not the sole medium of the new revelations; the full truth being embodied in the number of unity, of which he was the "point," a title by which he began at a very early stage to be designated by his followers.

But while giving forth his new doctrines as revelations from God, he earnestly pressed this consideration; that man can know but imperfectly till absorbed into the Creator, and that therefore his chief aim should be to love God and obey Him, and to aspire. The small amount of worship, strictly so called, which he enjoined, was to be performed in richly decked temples, with music and singing. Great faith was to be placed in talismans of prescribed forms, engraved with mystic numbers, and constantly worn. Like Mohammed, the Bâb strongly enjoins benevolence; but at the same time he strictly prohibits begging, and commands all to work. In his code there is no death penalty; offences being punished chiefly by fines calculated on the sacred number 19.

There are three points in particular in which the reforms proposed by the Bâb cannot fail, so far as they gain ground, to have a mighty effect on society. In the first place, he abolished polygamy; that is, he so strongly discountenanced it that his followers universally regard it as a prohibition. In close connection—almost as a necessary accompaniment of this—he forbade divorce; that festering sore which corrupts the mass of Persian society to its very heart, and makes pure family life almost impossible. His third revolutionary step was in the same direction. He abolished the veiling of the women; a custom which our author believes, from personal observation as well as on other grounds, to be also a source of incalculable evils. So far from encouraging their wonted seclusion, the Bâb will have women converse freely, though prudently, with men, and in enjoining the fitful to practise abundant hospitality, and to have daily at their table as many guests as their means will allow (always with due regard to the mystic number), he specifies that some of the guests should be women.

Some of these innovations were probably the result of his study of European books. But the considerate kindness of all his rules for women, and his invariable tenderness in everything that concerned children, must have had a deeper source. One can hardly fail to see that in these respects he had imbibed something of the spirit of the Gospel; and the regret arises irresistibly, that where he had seen and appreciated so much, he had not grasped the whole.

To return to the story. While the fame and popularity of the young preacher were daily increasing, his bold exposure of the vices of the clergy aroused against him their bitterest enmity. The magistrates of the city also began to take alarm; for if the people, never too amenable to lawful authority, should cast themselves at the feet of this irrepressible youth, and follow his lead, where would the thing end?

It was therefore agreed, after many

anxious consultations between rulers and clergy, to make a double representation and appeal to the Crown : on the one side in the interest of the State and civil order ; on the other in that of religion endangered.

The Bâb, aware of what was going on, despatched a counter-appeal. He represented the evil brought on the nation, and the hurt done to true religion, by the corrupt lives and teaching of the clergy ; told how he, sent by God with the remedy for these evils, had already triumphed over all the Moullas of Shiraz, and begged that he might be brought face to face in presence of the king, with all the Moullas of the Empire, professing his readiness to answer with his life if he did not put them also to silence.

This double appeal caused the king and his advisers some perplexity. The Government was bound, of course, to protect the orthodox religion ; but at the same time they had no objection to seeing a check given by any means to the power and pride of the clergy. The Prime Minister had almost decided on allowing Ali Mohammed to come to Teheran, but a far-seeing old Sheykh turned him from his purpose. He reminded him that they knew nothing of these new doctrines or of the aims of their author. He represented the danger of a religious war, if the Priests should be provoked to appeal to the people against the Government. The result was a compromise. The Prime Minister wrote to the Governor of Shiraz that there must be no more public discussions of the new doctrines, and that, until further orders, the Bâb should not leave his own house. The decision was received with indignant discontent by the Moullas, who declared, not without reason, that such protection of the true faith was a mere mockery. On the other side there was open triumph. The Bâb, indeed, gave prompt obedience to the order, and stayed at home ; but his followers felt no means bound either to follow his example in this respect or to keep silence. Conversions increased day by day among the educated class, and even from among the priests themselves.

And now the young enthusiast, who, like Paul at Rome, though confined to his own house, was not forbidden to receive any who came, began to bring forward much higher claims for himself. He was not, as he had at first thought, merely the Bâb—the gate into the knowledge of the truth ; but the POINT, the *source* of truth, a manifestation of God. And at this stage he received from his disciples a new title, "Sublime Highness." But his first title is that by which he continued to be known to the uninitiated, and by which he is still spoken of throughout Persia.

Leaving the leader of the movement meanwhile in his retirement, we are now to see how his cause spread by means of his first missionaries. The Bâb's chosen band of apostles—those who, with him, completed the circle of truth—numbered, of course, eighteen. Three of these fill a conspicuous place in the story.

The first was a Moulla, from Khorassan, Houssein Boushrewyeh, a man of strong, decided character, and studious, like his master, from his childhood. He had come from his distant home to see and hear for himself the great teacher ; had cautiously and slowly weighed all his arguments ; but, once convinced, had thrown himself into the cause with utter, unreserved devotion.

The second of the missionaries was Hadgy Mohammed Ali, of Balfouroush ; a man as learned, as devoted, as zealous as the first, and held in profound veneration as a saint of the first order.

The third is, next to the young leader himself, the most striking and interesting figure in this story : a woman, young, beautiful, gifted, learned ; full of an ardor as unquenchable, a courage as indomitable as that of her master ; a woman who, had she been born in Europe, would have ranked with our most honored heroines of this or of any age.

This Eastern heroine was born into a priestly family of high position in the town of Kazwyn. She received from her parents a name given by many a father and mother, in spirit, if not literally, to a baby daughter, Crown of Gold. From her earliest years the little Golden Crown proved no common child. Naturally gifted with mental powers of a very high order, she had in her own family the best possible opportunity for

cultivating them ; and she used it to the utmost ; pursuing, eagerly and successfully, paths of knowledge not very commonly trodden by women of any country. Her father, a distinguished lawyer ; her uncle, the leading man of the city ; and her cousin, Moulla Mohammed—all men eminent in learning—delighted in discussing abstruse questions on points of theology, philosophy, or law ; and Golden Crown, while still very young, was able to sustain her part in such discussions with a wonderful power and acuteness. She was not only the pride and delight of her own family ; not only the special pride and delight of the young Moulla Mohammed, to whom she was early married, but the whole city was proud of its Golden Crown ; and only wondered whether to praise most her surpassing beauty, her lovely character, or her wonderful mental gifts.

It was natural that, when the fame of the Bâb began to spread abroad, the new religion should be discussed with interest in this family. His wise and liberal views as to the social position and well-being of women at once commended themselves to the enlightened mind as well as to the womanly heart of Golden Crown. She opened communications with the new teacher, and very speedily became a thorough convert. But a nature like hers could not rest in mere beliefs. She felt constrained to communicate what she knew ; and ere long she was seen in public places, expounding, to ever-increasing and admiring crowds, the new doctrine, and giving to the views of the leader a more emphatic sanction than any arguments could have conveyed, by herself appearing unveiled. It was well for the cause of the Bâb that it was *such* a face that was the first to illustrate his theory. Converts multiplied in Kazwyn day by day.

But, alas ! for the pride of her house. Words fail to tell the horror and dismay with which father, husband, and uncle beheld this practical outcome of what had probably appeared to them harmless and interesting speculations. To them their Golden Crown was tarnished indeed, and had brought irretrievable disgrace on herself and on them. But in vain they spent themselves in entreaties, in remonstrances — even in threats. The young proselyte remained unshaken. How, indeed, could she draw back? For she was now numbered among the mysterious 19—herself a part of the embodied revelation. She had received a new name, Gourret-ûl-Ain, the Consolation-of-the-Eyes, and with it full powers to act as an accredited apostle of the new faith. It was no longer a matter of choice with her. As the Sent of God she must fulfil her mission, though in doing so she should wrench asunder the strongest and tenderest ties. She put an end to the conflict by bidding a final farewell to her family, and giving herself entirely to her sacred work.

Of course, Golden Crown was led away by her enthusiasm. No doubt it was a mistake for a young wife in the nineteenth century to make. Let those blame her who, with more enlightened understanding of the saying, " He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me," act as heartily according to its spirit.

While the Bâb, then, remained in a manner quiescent in his house at Shiraz, these three missionaries were spreading his principles far and wide through the empire. Moulla Houssein began his campaign at Ispahan ; where he speedily succeeded, even beyond his hopes. Next, at Kashan, crowds flocked to hear, and many disciples were made. From Kashan, following the orders of his master, he went to Teheran. But in the capital it was necessary to go to work more cautiously. He made no attempt to preach in public, but his days were occupied, from morning to night, in holding confidential interviews. Among the many whose curiosity was awakened were the king himself, Mohammed Shah, and his prime minister, Hadji Mirza Aghassy. This strange pair demand a word of notice.

The king, naturally gentle and somewhat feeble in character, and suffering constantly from wretched health since his childhood, was habitually tolerant of all manner of disorders—not of set purpose, but from utter lack of energy or interest. With spirits depressed by his almost incessant suffering, yet with a craving for love and sympathy, he found what met the need of his clinging and

feeble nature in Mirza Aghassy. His tutor in childhood, then his familiar friend and counsellor, and in process of time his Prime Minister, this man had become, in plain fact, his god. For Mohammed Shah's religious views were of a very loose and easy kind. He believed that Divinity with all its powers was embodied in the Sages; and as Aghassy was the greatest of all the sages, how could he but be good? It seems doubtful whether the Hadji himself did not share this belief of his patron. But surely never was there a stranger god than Mirza Aghassy. For the most outstanding feature of his character—the ruling principle ot his life—was his habit of turning everything into a joke. He made jokes at his own expense; he invariably used mocking epithets in speaking of his children and friends; and it was this persistent habit of refusing to take anything seriously—this easy-going tolerance of and indifference to all shades of opinion, religious or political, that determined the character of his administration, and formed a more serious obstacle in the way of the Bâbist apostle than declared opposition could have done.

Moulla Houssein brought a message of the utmost submission from the Bâb. His sincere desire, he said, was to add strength and glory to the throne. He represented that public opinion had already declared in favor of the new doctrine, and how desirable it was to support views in accord with those of most enlightened nations. He reminded the king how the greatest of his predecessors had labored to found a religion which should unite within its liberal pale Mussulman, Jew, and Christian. Just such a religion was that proposed by the Bâb; and the king had only to place himself at the head of the new movement to be crowned with the immortal glory which former monarchs had sought in vain.

But the argument that, with men of another stamp, might have been most effective, proved the very death-blow to the apostle's hopes of success when presented to Mohammed Shah and his Minister; for the promised glory was not to be gained without exertion, and exertion was a price too great for any object on earth or in heaven. Without argument or explanation, the ease-loving pair washed their hands of the whole matter, and Houssein was ordered to be gone at once from the capital.

The two other missionaries had meanwhile been no less diligent; Balfouroushy in his own native northern province, the Mazenderân, and Gourret-ûl-Ain in the region round her home in the West. It was agreed, therefore, that Houssein should now betake himself to the eastern province of Khorassan. From this point a mere outline of his movements must suffice. At the important city of Nishapoor he gained two great men; but at Meshed, the holy city of that region, the clergy met him with well-organized opposition.

Returning to Nishapoor, he gathered round him a band of the faithful, and took up arms to be in readiness for the worst. In one town after another he gained powerful allies. He could not be said to seek a conflict, but in the state to which feeling on both sides was wrought, a conflict was inevitable. The orthodox, provoked beyond endurance by the insulting language of the zealous converts, struck the first blow. But just when this point was reached, tidings arrived that suddenly gave a new turn to the whole state of affairs. Mohammed Shah was dead.

In Persia the death of a king seems to be the signal for a state of mild anarchy, during which all laws are suspended, and every man does what is right in his own eyes. No one had any thought to bestow on Houssein or his doings. He therefore judged it his wisest course to join his fellow-apostle in the Mazenderân, where the cause had already made great progress. There he found not only Balfouroushy, but Gourret-ûl-Ain also. Calumny and persecution had been too much for her. She had fled from Kazwyn, and had for many months been in hiding in the forests of this wild country. With a crowd of enthusiastic adherents she joined the other Bâbist leaders.

The three bands encamped together; many strangers gathered round to see what this new thing might be. And the Consolation-of-the-Eyes harangued the multitude; the beautiful, unveiled face meeting their wondering gaze without boldness, but without shrinking, because

entirely without self-consciousness. Her fervid oratory, born of her own intense conviction, told on her audience with extraordinary power. They wept, as only Orientals can; they gave themselves up to raptures of emotion, and vowed, on the spot, unqualified devotion to the cause and to her.

And now Houssein planned and carried out a work which only the special circumstances of the time would have given him opportunity to accomplish undisturbed.

Every dignitary, great and small, was hastening to the capital to seek favor with the new powers. Houssein and his coadjutor selected a strong position among the mountain forests—a spot sacred to a certain Sheykh Tebersy; their eager followers worked with hand and heart, and almost with the speed of magic there arose a fortress in the desert to be the centre of their further operations. And here two thousand Bâbys, including wives and children, took up their position to await what might be the course of events.

From this point in their history a marked change took place in the character of the teaching of the Bâbist apostles. Hitherto it had been chiefly, if not solely, religious; now it became distinctly political. The Bâb, they said, should be without doubt, within a year, master of the world; and then, for his enemies, resistance or flight should be alike vain; while all his faithful followers should be amply rewarded with honors and delights suited to the tastes and capacities of each. They discovered in each of their leading men some mysterious resemblance to a former Imân or martyr or saint, marking him out as his successor, or, in a manner, his very self, returned to earth in a higher development; to whom, therefore, they gave his name, with all his honor and the hope of still higher. The common soldier, for whom such rewards were too costly, was assured that, dying in battle for the truth, not only was Paradise secure to him, but that, in the mean time, he should return to life after forty days to bear rule over some part of the conquered world. It is only fair to the Bâb to say that there is nothing in his writings to sanction such teaching. But his apostles used the means which seemed to them best fitted to win the popular mind; and he, if he was aware of it, did not forbid them. And the cause daily gained favor. The whole province was stirred. Crowds flocked to Castle Tebersy from far and near; whole families pitched their tents or spread their carpets on the little plain in front of the fortress, hanging on every word of the two leaders, as if they were very gods.

But this state of things could not last. With the young king a new order had come in. The old Prime Minister, with his cynical jokes and his easy indifference, had fled before the new power; and his successor, Mirza-Taghy-Khan, at once made it plain that he did not mean to be trifled with. He gave strict orders to the grandees of the Mazenderân to make an end at once with the Bâbys. Easy to command, and easy also to promise; as the chiefs promptly did. But less easy, as they speedily found, to carry out their orders.

The first to make the attempt was Aga Abdoullah, who, after a day spent in useless firing against the fortress, was slain, and his band utterly routed.

The rage of the Prime Minister at this failure, and at the fear that was paralyzing further efforts, knew no bounds. He despatched Prince Mehdy-Kouly-Mirza with full powers and new commands to make an end at once. Kouly-Mirza had all the will in the world to do so. Arrived in the Mazenderân, he summoned from the far north Abbas-Kouly-Khan, with a great swarm of wild Kurds, and with these joined to his own forces, took his way to Castle Tebersy. But an enemy on whom he had not counted lay in his path. In that broken, mountainous region, one passes, in a journey of a few hours, from sunny plains, where the orange and the pomegranate ripen, to barren slopes and frowning rocks and eternal snows. While toiling through the wild mountain defiles, the army was suddenly wrapped in a dense fog, that quickly gave place to a hurricane of blinding snow. The wearied general found himself at night, with a large part of his regular army, in the village of Daskès, where, with sentinels duly placed, he gladly lay down to rest.

And now Houssein, with a resolute

band of 300, steals forth from his fastness. The village is quickly and quietly occupied, and the 300 fall with wild shouts on the slumbering foe. A fierce, savage massacre followed, in which two princes of the blood and many other leaders fell. But the darkness, which hindered defence, favored flight, and many escaped — among them, Kouly-Mirza himself. In the early morning, the victorious Bâbys, wearied with slaughter and laden with immense booty, returned in triumph to their castle, inspiring such terror that a band of 600 men, who had only heard of the conflict of the night, fled at the news of their approach. The truth was, that the idea was more and more gaining ground that Houssein was a prophet, to fight against whom was to contend with God.

Many of the scattered forces quickly gathered again round their chief; but for a time Kouly-Mirza made no effort to renew the attack. The sight of his fear spread consternation and panic everywhere. But the wrath of the terrible Prime Minister was even more to be dreaded than the valor of the Bâbys; so the poor, perplexed general summoned fresh troops—not too readily obtained. Again the Kurd chief came to his aid, even sending him a message to give himself no further trouble, as he and his followers would speedily reduce the rebel fortress. The besieged now appear struck with terror. They even send out a messenger to propose terms. Several days are thus spent in useless talk. Then, once more, a sally in the dead of night, the enemy's tents fired, and a scene of wild carnage. A resolute little band, pushed to the very extremity of their encampment, hold their ground there. "Do you see," says one to his comrade, pointing where the flames light up the fiercest conflict, "do you see yonder man in the green turban? Aim at him;" and he suits the action to the word. Too fatal example, and too surely followed! The first shot enters Moulla Houssein's breast; he receives the second in his side. Calmly he continues his directions; conducts skilfully the return to the castle through fierce opposing bands, and then drops exhausted from his horse.

Houssein died exhorting his followers to unshaken fidelity to his Sublime Highness the Bâb, and bidding them not be discouraged by his death, seeing that, in one form or another, he should certainly return in a very few days to their aid. But neither resolution nor hope could compensate the garrison for the loss of such a leader.

About a hundred Bâbys had fallen in this encounter. With largely augmented forces, and with cannon brought from Teheran, Prince Kouly-Mirza resumed the siege of the devoted fortress; and still the brave, devoted little band held on. At the end of four months the wrath of the king and his ministers burst forth in terrible threatenings. The command was taken from Kouly-Mirza and given to Souleyman-Khan, a stern man, honored and feared throughout the army, who, with still added forces, at once prepared for a final attack. And now the end could not be doubtful; for famine also had begun its deadly work in the little community; and some, who had faced sword and cannon undaunted, yielded before this more terrible foe. One little band of deserters made their way through the sleeping camp, and took their various ways to their homes. Another, less fortunate, were cut to pieces, partly by the enemy, and partly by their indignant comrades, who discovered their treachery.

The famishing survivors had eaten every blade of grass to be found in their enclosure—they had stripped the trees of their bark—they had even boiled their sword-belts and sheaths. And now—most pathetic evidence both of their honest faith and of their extremity—the leaders held a council of war to consider if their distress would justify them in unburying and eating Houssein's horse, which, killed in the same night with his rider, had been buried with almost equal reverence. The proposal was sorrowfully agreed to, and the loathsome food eagerly consumed to the last morsel.

Still one attack after another was repulsed with ardor so unquenchable that many of the assailants regarded the Bâbys with a superstitious dread, as more than mere men; and one at least among them began to aim at the leaders with gold coins, as the only means of reaching their charmed lives.

At last the battered wall could hold out no longer. A fatal breach was made

—trees and planks were thrown across the trench, and besiegers and besieged grappled in deadly strife, savage yells of rage and hate adding to the horror and confusion of the darkness—dead and living together, from among the swaying, writhing mass, dropping in promiscuous ruin into the ditch below, and forming a ghastly bridge, across which swarmed ever fresh troops of assailants, more and yet more. The heroic little band, seeing their cause hopelessly lost, offered to capitulate, and were promised their lives on condition of laying down their arms and quitting their fortress. Amidst the curious, wondering looks of the soldiers, the emaciated remnant passed out, 214 out of the original 2,000 or more; among them some women, wasted to scarcely living skeletons, and children with no semblance of human babes but in their helplessness. The victors provided them with tents and food—all manner of kindly attentions were shown them—and then, next day, they were seized, men, women, and children, and slaughtered in cold blood, with unspeakable barbarities.

So the Prince Mehdy-Kouly-Mirza regained his lost baggage, and the cause of the Bâb was crushed, externally at least, in the Mazenderân.

It was very far from being so elsewhere. The province of Khorassan was full of the new doctrine. It had taken deep root in many important towns; at Ispahan, at Kashan, at Kazwyn and at Shiraz among others; and while the war in the Mazenderân was still in progress, the evil broke out in a still more alarming form in the town of Zendjân, in the province of Khamseh. The leader in this case was another Mohammed Ali, a Moulla in high position, who found himself at the head of 15,000 men from all ranks of society.

It is needless to enter into details of what would be substantially the same story as that of the struggle in the Mazenderân. On the part of the Bâbys there was the same absolute faith and fiery zeal and indomitable courage; men of all ranks—Ahmed the comb-maker, and Nedjef-Kouly the smith, and Abdoullah the baker, fighting in a way to put trained soldiers to shame. On the part of their assailants there was the same half-superstitious feeling regarding them; terror on the one side and religious frenzy on the other exciting the passions of both to the fiercest pitch, and inciting to acts of ferocious cruelty. There was the same story of repeated attacks heroically repulsed—of the alarm and rage at court—of the continual arrival of more and yet more royal troops; till the crushing, overwhelming preponderance of numbers made the end inevitable.

Mohammed Ali was dead, and many a brave leader besides. Those who remained, receiving written and sealed promises of life and liberty, laid down their arms. The promises were kept as they had been kept at Fort Tebersy. The mass of the prisoners were butchered by order of the commanders who had signed the promise; two of the chiefs were blown from the mouth of a cannon (an operation which, our author remarks in passing, has not been quite unknown in *British* warfare), and others were reserved to grace the triumph in Teheran. Three of them, the most distinguished, were condemned by the Prime Minister, Mirza Taghy, to die by having their veins opened. They received the sentence unmoved, but solemnly warned their judge that the breach of faith towards them and their companions was a crime that God would not be content to punish by any common visitation; that He would mark out the persecutor of His saints by a solemn and signal retribution; and that, therefore, as he had done to them, so should it very shortly be done to him. The prophecy might possibly enough be one of those which tend to work out their own fulfilment. However that may be, the fact remains, that no long time afterwards, in 1852, the Prime Minister did perish in this very manner by command of the king.

Though the risings in the Mazenderân and at Zendjân had thus been crushed, the king and his Minister were by no means satisfied that all danger was past. They felt that a hidden fire was smouldering throughout the provinces, which might at any moment burst forth with ruinous effect. For there were Bâbys everywhere, though unseen; and while it seems to be the manner of Asiatics to suffer all kinds of merely political abuses with fatalistic

apathy, it is very different when a strong religious conviction comes into play. And such a conviction was now in full force, for the faith and the principles of the Bâbys were quite untouched by the reverses of their brethren. Rather, they were stirred to emulate their heroism, and to long to share with them the glory of martyrdom.

Mirza Taghy, therefore, concluded that, in order to secure a thorough end of the evil, he must strike at its root; the Bâb must be disposed of, and then the cause would die of itself.

We left the Bâb a sort of prisoner on parole in his own house at Shiraz, surrounded by admiring friends, and daily making new converts. But when the Court became alarmed by the rising in the Mazenderân, he was arrested and removed to the fortress of Tjehrig, still, however, without being subjected to any severe restraint. Here he remained for about a year and a half, filling up his days with prayer and writing and study, often referring to his death as an event probably near, and of which the prospect was not unwelcome. And here, as elsewhere, few who came into personal contact with him were able to withstand the winning charm of his manners and appearance, and the persuasive eloquence of his words.

When Mirza Taghy had decided on making an end of the Bâb, and by that means an end of his influence and of his sect, it occurred to him that the mere fact of his death would hardly be likely to produce such results. For, secluded in his prison, unseen and unheard, the Bâb was surrounded in the imagination of his disciples with a halo of sanctity, of suffering—above all, of mystery, to which his death, even if the fact were believed, would only add the glory of martyrdom. But if he could be exhibited as a moral ruin—if he were seen in city after city, not only in chains, insulted, humiliated, but put to shameful defeat in public discussion by the moullas—in craven fear retracting all his heresies and abjectly pleading for the mercy that should certainly be denied him,—then the charm would be broken; people would see what a delusion they had followed, and things would at once return to their ordinary and quiet course. For the Prime Minister had never seen the young reformer. He believed him to be a vulgar impostor; too ignorant to have planned the measures taken by his three apostles, too cowardly to have carried them out, and owing all his power to the fact that the mass of his disciples did not know him. But a very little inquiry showed Mirza Taghy that this plan, ingenious enough had he had suitable material to work on, would not do in this case; that the Bâb was much more likely to confound his antagonists in argument than to be confounded by them; and that, instead of being demoralized and broken down, he might show himself serenely superior to circumstances, good or evil, and so mightily confirm the faith and heighten the enthusiasm of his disciples, as well as add largely to their numbers. The risk was too great. The dangerous prisoner was therefore removed, closely guarded, to the citadel of Tabreez. With him were brought two of his disciples who had before begged to share his imprisonment. One was the Seyd Houssein, the other, named like his master, Mohammed Ali, belonged to a very rich and influential family of Tabreez. The governor in charge, Prince Hamzé Mirza, by the instructions of the Prime Minister, who could not quite give up his first idea, summoned the moullas to meet and confound the heretic. But the moullas wisely declined the meeting. Then the prince himself and three other high dignitaries essayed the task. But after a vehement discussion, in which even Mussulman writers admit that the royal officials were far from having cause to be proud of their part, Hamzé Mirza abruptly closed the scene by using the one conclusive argument in his power. He announced to the young prophet that he must die.

It signified nothing to the Prime Minister or to Hamzé Mirza that such a sentence was, according to all precedent, utterly unjust. The Korân does, indeed, doom heretics to death. But the secular powers had always refused to interfere with religious beliefs. They had, on this principle, protected the Bâb himself for several years. But now the Minister regarded him as a cause of danger to the State. Not the slightest proof existed that he had either insti-

suspended, and he dropped unwounded to the ground. A few moments of terrible suspense followed; moments on which probably hung the fate of the reigning dynasty. For it is universally agreed, even by orthodox Mahometans, that had the Bâb, at that moment, while the multitude stood awe-struck by the seeming miracle, thrown himself on their sympathies, not a hand would have been raised against him, and the great mass of the population would have risen in his cause. And this in Tabreez, the second capital, and the most populous city of the empire, would have been a very different affair from any former rising. But, utterly exhausted in body and mind with the long agony of the day, bewildered, stupefied, with the instinct of a hunted creature to seek a covert, he turned, hardly knowing what he did, into the nearest building. It was a guard-house. A captain of infantry followed and struck down the unresisting victim with his sabre, and his soldiers, cautiously following, made the work sure with their muskets.

Thus, in eight years, Mirza-Ali-Mohammed had run his short and brilliant career. He had now just reached his twenty-seventh year.

The shattered corpse was dragged for several successive days through the streets, and then flung outside the walls to the dogs. And now the Prime Minister could sleep in peace, and trusted that peace, universal and profound, would at once settle on the nation. Never was hope more delusive. The Minister's own act in ordering the death of the Bâb had put peace out of the question. When the young prophet began his reforms he had shown no desire to give any political bearing to his teaching. He had quietly submitted to the command imposing silence on him. But now his followers founded their policy of defence on the universally acknowledged theory that, whatever might be the actual ruling power, the Seyds—that is, the family of Ali—alone were legitimate sovereigns. The Bâb was, by both lines of descent, a Seyd. And besides this claim, which might be disputed with him by many others, he was also the Bâb, and therefore the one man in Persia to whom, in their view, the throne of right belonged. Not that they had any desire to press this point. Had the State given a kindly recognition to the new religion, it might either have died out, or more probably have become, in the course of years, just one more form of belief among the many. But this judicial murder of their leader stung the Bâbys to the last point of exasperation, and severed the last bond of their allegiance to the reigning house. The Kadjar dynasty were kings only on sufferance; and now that Nûreddin Shah had intermeddled with matters which Asia prohibits her princes from touching, his subjects were no longer bound to keep faith with him.

The indignant chiefs gathered from all the provinces, and held a council in Teheran. There they recognized by certain signs the divinely indicated successor to the spirit and power, and therefore to the office, of their slain leader. The new Bâb was Mirza-Yahya, a youth of noble family. His mother had died at his birth, and he was brought up by a lady whose husband was a leading Bâby, named Djenâb-Beha, "The precious Excellence." He was at this time only sixteen, but already possessed of an extraordinary amount of learning, and, to judge by results, not ill-qualified, young as he was, for the difficult post he was called to occupy. Immediately after his election he left the capital, where it would have been unsafe for him to stay. He went from town to town, exhorting his adherents to apply themselves closely to the study of religion and to practical duties; and he prohibited utterly, for the time being, the use of carnal weapons; saying that the time for insurrection, if it should ever come, was certainly not yet. At length the search for the youthful leader became so keen that he passed beyond the boundaries of Persia, and established himself at Bagdad. Here, besides being safe from the pursuit of his enemy, he had the advantage of being able to see and converse with the multitudes of Persian pilgrims who annually pass through the city.

About a year after the death of the Bâb, the king was spending the summer in his country palace at Niaveran, a lovely village on the lower slopes of the Elburz, a few miles from the capital One morning, while out on horseback he was suddenly assailed by three men

who all at once discharged pistols. But the king received only a very slight wound: one of the assailants was at once struck down, and the other two secured and bound. They at once proudly avowed themselves Bâbys. Measures were taken accordingly. The governor of the city was ordered at once to close and watch the gates, and then quietly to arrest all suspected of Bâbism. On this special evening a considerable company were met in the house of a rich and influential citizen. The whole party were arrested; among them several women and children. But after this first evening, though the Bâbys were known to be many, no more arrests were made. The suspected were on their guard, and as their chief had prohibited insurrection, they made no sign.

Among the prisoners was the beautiful Consolation-of-the-Eyes. On the outbreak of the troubles in the Mazenderân, when her fellow-apostles had shut themselves up in Castle Tebersy, she had travelled through many towns, exerting a powerful influence wherever she went. Then she had disappeared from public view, and was supposed to be secretly at work in the capital. She was too distinguished a prisoner to be treated like the common crowd. Mahmoud Khan, the chief of police, had taken her to his own house, and placed her under the kind care of his wife. Irresistibly charmed, like all who approached her, by her marvellous beauty and her eloquent words, and filled with respect and admiration for her noble character, they used every means in their power to make her captivity as little irksome as possible; wondering the while at the buoyant cheerfulness that made their efforts almost superfluous.

The rest of the prisoners, numbering about forty, were taken out to Niaveran. The two first arrested had been questioned with the most ingenious refinements of torture, in order that they might betray the names of supposed accomplices; but in vain. Their defence was singular. They declared that they were not responsible to the king and his court; that they had no accomplices, but had simply acted in obedience to the command of their chiefs, who were not in Persia, but whose sacred authority justified any act which they might command; that, in any case, the man whose hands were stained with the blood of so many martyrs, and above all with that of his Sublime Highness the Bâb himself, must have amply merited death; but that they had no personal enmity to the king: on the contrary, he had shown them kindness, and they were grateful; but they could only obey orders; and, finally, that they could say nothing different though they should be tortured till the Day of Judgment.

Baffled in this direction, the judges turned hopefully to the other prisoners. Here were women, and even children, from whom torture or the mere fear of it would draw everything. Equally in vain. This strange new religion made fragile women and timid children inflexible as iron. They gloried in their faith; they would die for it with joy; but they had nothing to tell of any but themselves. The situation thus became, in the eyes of the judges, very serious. Here, in their power, were forty mute captives, but who could tell how many shared their faith—and where? In the cities, in the country, in the army, in the very court itself, perhaps. Who could tell where, or how soon, or how universally, a conflagration might break out? Distrust and suspicion were everywhere. Each man in power felt as if walking on a smouldering volcano; each feared his nearest neighbor and friend.

In these circumstances it was felt that the wisest course would be a policy of conciliation. If the dangerous class was so numerous, it would be most unwise to provoke them to insurrection. The Ministers therefore decided that no further search should be made, and that though, of course, the prisoners already taken must either recant or die, as many of them as should simply deny the fact of their being Bâbys should be freed at once without further question.

The experiment was made first with Gourret-ûl-Aîn, as it was supposed her example would tell powerfully on the rest. Mahmoud Khan came cheerfully home from Niaveran one morning, and told her he had good news for her. "You are to be sent for to Niaveran," said he. "The question will be put, Gourret-ûl-Aîn, are you a Bâby? You will simply answer, No. It is a mere

formality. Everybody knows you are one; but nothing more will be asked, and you will at once be free." "You do not know the real news for to-morrow," said the Consolation-of-the-Eyes. "It is far better for me than what you say. For to-morrow at noon, you yourself, my friend, will preside at my burning, and I shall thus have the honor of publicly witnessing for God and for his Sublime Highness. And now, Mahmoud Khan, mark what I say; and let my death to-morrow be a sign to you that I speak truth. The master whom you serve will not reward you for your zeal. Ere long you will die a cruel death by his order. I entreat you, therefore, before that hour comes, as come it will, to set your mind earnestly to search out and know the truth."

It may be said in this case, as in that of the Zendjân martyrs, that under such a government it needed little insight to utter such a prophecy. Be that as it may, the Bâbys and the orthodox alike universally relate it and believe in it; and some years later it became fact in the experience of poor Mahmoud Khan.

And with the young prophetess herself, of course, it also befel as she had said. She was taken on the following day to Niaveran. In the presence of the king and his counsellors, the officers of state, her fellow-prisoners and a promiscuous crowd, the question was put in the most respectful and conciliatory manner, and was met by an unqualified and exultant avowal of her faith. There was therefore, in the view of her judges, no alternative. Regretfully the sentence was pronounced, and she was led away to death. No lamentations were uttered, no tearful adieus spoken by her fellow-prisoners. They heard with calm cheerfulness, as matters of course, both the avowal and the sentence; regarding the fact of either her death or their own as of too trifling significance to move them. Gourret-ûl-Aîn was taken back to Teheran, in the charge of her sorrowful friend, Mahmoud Khan. They placed her on a pile of straw-matting; they covered the beautiful head with the long-abandoned veil; as a last act of mercy, they strangled her; then the lifeless body was reduced to ashes, and the ashes scattered to the winds.

It is almost superfluous to say that the other prisoners were equally impracticable. Conspicuous among them was Seyd Houssein, the disciple who, on the fatal day at Tabreez, had denied and insulted his master. On that day, when he had come to himself, he made his way to Teheran. There he sought out the leading Bâbys, related to them the events of the day, and avowed his crimes with such bitter, passionate repentance, that they received him back into favor. But pardon had not brought peace; he passionately longed for martyrdom to seal his repentance; and now that his desire was on the point of fulfilment, was not merely calm, like the others, but triumphant. Many of the sect, with whom Seyd Houssein is held in great reverence, maintain that his treason was only in seeming, and an act of obedience to the master; that being the Bâb's secretary, and carrying with him important papers, this was the only means of having them conveyed in safety to his friends.

On this day a spectacle was witnessed in Teheran, the memory of which is not likely soon to fade from the minds of the people. A band of women and children, as well as men, their bodies bathed in blood from fresh, gaping wounds, in which were fixed bunches of blazing tow, were dragged with ropes through the streets and squares to the place of execution. Amid the awe-struck silence of the crowd they sang in joyful tones, "Truly we belong to God; we came from God, and are returning to Him." Some of the little ones, less strong in body than in spirit, died on the progress. The corpses were thrown in the way of the procession, and parents and sisters walked on calmly. Arrived at the appointed place, the offer of life, on condition of abjuration, was once more made and rejected. It might have seemed that measures of intimidation were exhausted; but it occurred to a soldier to try something new. "If you do not yield," he said to a father, "I will cut the throats of your two sons on your own breast." At once the father sits down on the ground with outstretched arms, and a bright-eyed little lad of fourteen, with blood-stained body and half-charred flesh, but his face glowing with love and faith, throws himself on his breast, exclaiming, "Father, I

If thou would'st hear the Nameless, and wilt dive
Into the Temple-cave of thine own self,
There, brooding by the central altar, thou
May'st haply learn the Nameless hath a voice,
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise,
As if thou knewest, tho' thou canst not know;
For Knowledge is the swallow on the lake
That sees and stirs the surface-shadow there
But never yet hath dipt into the abysm,
The Abysm of all Abysms, beneath, within
The blue of sky and sea, the green of earth,
And in the million-millionth of a grain
Which cleft and cleft again for evermore,
And ever vanishing, never vanishes,
To me, my son, more mystic than myself,
Or even than the Nameless is to me.
And when thou sendest thy free soul thro' heaven,
Nor understandest bound nor boundlessness,
Thou seest the Nameless of the hundred names.
And if the Nameless should withdraw from all
Thy frailty counts most real, all thy world
Might vanish like thy shadow in the dark.

'And since—from when this earth began—
The Nameless never came
Among us, never spake with man,
And never named the Name'—

Thou canst not prove the Nameless, O my son,
Nor canst thou prove the world thou movest in,
Thou canst not prove that thou art body alone,
Nor canst thou prove that thou art spirit alone,
Nor canst thou prove that thou art both in one:
Thou canst not proye thou art immortal, no
Nor yet that thou art mortal—nay my son,
Thou canst not prove that I, who speak with thee,
Am not thyself in converse with thyself,
For nothing worthy proving can be proven,
Nor yet disproven: wherefore thou be wise,
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt,
And cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!
She reels not in the storm of warring words,
She brightens at the clash of 'Yes' and 'No,'
She seems the Best that glimmers thro' the Worst,
She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,
She spies the summer through the winter bud,
She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,
She hears the lark within the songless egg,
She finds the fountain where they wail'd 'Mirage'!

'What Power? aught akin to Mind,
The mind in me and you?
Or power as of the Gods gone blind
Who see not what they do?'

But some in yonder city hold, my son,
That none but Gods could build this house of ours,
So beautiful, vast, various, so beyond
All work of man, yet, like all work of man,
A beauty with defect—till That which knows,
And is not known, but felt thro' what we feel
Within ourselves is highest, shall descend
On this half-deed, and shape it at the last
According to the Highest in the Highest."

No one has bejewelled our literature with more perfect gems than has the Laureate during his long career, yet we fancy there are few who do not recognize Tennyson's highest poetic power in just such poems as these, dealing with subjects that touch the deepest and most unsearchable shadows of the spirit. No one has so crystallized speculation in his music, till it shines like the mystic Urim and Thummim on the breast of the high priest. In this, we think, will be found the ultimate test of Tennyson's fitness to sit on so lofty a throne in the poetic Pantheon.

A good specimen of the poet's power in a field which he has cultivated with no little success—that of dialect poems—is found in a highly humorous sketch of the old-maid, who recalls her love adventures by naming her various cats after her sweethearts of auld lang syne. The way in which the spinster in her meditations confounds the cats with the humans has a touch of pathos mixed with its humor—not an unusual union, by the way. The picture, homely as it is, is truly dramatic:

"Robby, git down wi' tha, wilt tha? let Steevie coom oop o' my knee.
Steevie, my lad, thou 'ed very nigh been the Steevie fur me!
Robby wur fust to be sewer, 'e wur burn an' bred i' the 'ouse,
But thou be es 'ansom a taddy as iver patted a mouse.
An' I beänt not vaïnin, but I knaws I 'ed led tha a quieter life
Nor her wi' the hepitaph yonder! 'A faäithful an' loovin' wife!'
An' 'cos o' thy farm by the beck, an' thy windmill oop o' the croft,
Tha thowt tha would marry ma, did tha? but that wur a bit ower soft,
Thaw thou was es soäber as daäy, wi' a niced red faäce, an' es cleän
Es a shillin' fresh fro' the mint wi' a bran-new 'eäd o' the Queeän,
An' thy farmin' es cleän as thysen, fur, Steevie, tha kep' it sa neät
That I niver not spied sa much as a poppy along wi' the wheät,
An' the wool of a thistle a-flyin' an' seeädin' tha haäted to see;
'Twur as bad as a battle-twig 'ere i' my oän blue chaumber to me.
Ay, roob thy whiskers ageän ma, fur I could 'a taäen to tha well,
But fur thy bairns, poor Steevie, a bouncin' boy an' a gell.
An' thou was es fond o' thy bairns es I be mysen o' my cats,
But I niver not wish'd fur childer, I hevn't naw likin' fur brats;
Pretty anew when ya dresses 'em oop, an' they goäs fur a walk,
Or sits wi' their 'ands afoor 'em, an' doesn't not 'inder the talk!
But their bottles o' pap, an' their mucky bibs, an' the clats an' the clouts,
An' their mashin' their toys to pieäces an' maäkin' ma deäf wi' their shouts,
An' hallus a-joompin' about ma as if they was set upo' springs,
An' a haxin' ma hawkard questions, an' saäyin' ondecent