THE LEARNED MEN.

MOLLAHS OF THE INDIAN FRONTIER AND THEIR INFLUENCE.

Expenditure of the Mohammedan Law. Gives Credit For Supernatural Powers. Jealous of the Dignity of Their Profession. How a Village Got a Sacred Shrine.

During the spring of 1897 I accompanied a young friend of mine whose duties seem to penetrate the country north of the Khyber and examine such sites as would be available in the event of the pass being held by a powerful enemy. During that time I had many opportunities of studying the manners and methods of the mollahs—those remarkable men who are there influence over their baneful fellows to drive them to revolt against the commandments of the Feringhees.

The sides to the forts of the independent tribes will ever be a valuable help, thus keeping the Afridis, followed by a crowd of young Pathans, who show every sign of respect to their leader. In his weight lent the invisible figure serves as a shield and in its left a large volume of the law according to Mohammed. When the procession reaches a public place, the leader rests himself on his dirk-pole stand round or sit on his feet, and the assembly joins reverently in a little distance in front the gems of wisdom that fall from the holy man's lips, so to speak, the wonderful "whenever," and always of the most necessary character, which he sometimes unbends sufficiently to tell. Such a man is a mullah, one of a class that exercises no influence over the inhabitants of the Afghan hills so passionate and wide that to Europeans it is to be called belief.

The mullahs are collectively known as the ulmas, or learned. They are the schoolmasters, lawyers, judges, as well as the priests, many of them being men of great ability and scholarship, and as they are all passionately devoted to their order it cannot be said that their interests are altogether evil. They are great peacemakers to a land where fighting is the business of a man's life. I once saw one of them in Lalpocrah rock between two bodies of Mohmunds who were drawn up to battle each other, and, by pacificate prayers to them, to remember their duty to God and their common country, make those desperate men forgive their grievances and go away as quietly as frightened schoolboys.

The position of mullah is conferred on such candidates as have undergone a special course of study in the intricate Mohammedan law and successfully passed an examination therein. The principal part of the ceremony consists of the most solemn mullah present investing the novice with the white flowing gown of white cotton and the peculiarly shaped turban.

The mullahs marry and live like the laity in most particulars, though some of them assume the most ridiculous austerity, frowning on the simplest amusements and even condemning all music, except the warlike drum and trumpet, as being effeminate. To such men the merry fiddle or the sighing lute is as the horns of the evil one.

One rich source of revenue with the priesthood is its fine collection of charms and incantations. It is no uncommon sight to see an ancient Afridi or Mohmund sitting with a mullah, and vigorously repeating a charm or performing a subtle incantation to enable him to fix the affections of some fair lady who is not enamored of his gray hairs.

A mullah's name is sensitive point to the dignity of his office. Were that to outweigh, there is trouble in the land. He calls the brethren to a council. They argued all the time of public worship, and manner their enemy as a dog and an infidel, enter him, and his people with their malisons and sometimes excommunicate some him. If the place has bring the unhappy man to his senses, the mullahs don their sacred robes, and, carrying the green standard of the prophet, go up and down throughout the land proclaiming the Mohammedan anarcy and calling on the faithful to avenge the honor of the apostle of the prophet. To those who flock to their side they promise eternal bliss, to those who ignore their appeals, everlasting torture. The mullah's voice is not raised in vain. He soon has a fourth army following the green flag, ready to go anywhere and do anything the leader plumes.

When a mullah dies the place of his death becomes a sacred shrine at which miracles are worked. There is not a village throughout the whole Pathan country which has not its holy spot to which the sick, the halt and the blind resort for relief. In this connection a curious story is told of one of the sections of Bonerwals.

It had long been a source of grief to the inhabitants of the village that no holy man had ever been good enough to bless them. The consequent absence of a miracle working shrine had degraded them in the eyes of their neighbors, who looked on them as a set of swindlers and abominations that no saint would end his days in their midst. The men of the village determined to put an end to this disgusting condition in a characteristic oriental method. There was living in a distant town a mullah with the highest reputation for holiness. A deputation from the benighted village waited on this mullah and implored him to take the light of his countenance in their for a few days. The priest, seeing a chance of being honored by his party that is ghostly connection, he was entertained to his arrival, to a sumptuous feast. The following morning, had sated, the other was seen solemnly informed their guest of the sad condition of the villagers through no holy man ever having come to their midst, adding that they intend a to end so unfortunate a state of things by killing their shrine. As his host was a man of great holiness and as the source of his death would be such a miracle working shrine they did not consider he had anything to complain of.—St. Louis Courier.

A MAID OF WINCHESTER.

Her Recital on Epithalamium Before Queen Mary and Philip of Spain.

Virginia Cobell Gouldner writes a story of "A Maid of Winchester" dealing with the marriage of Queen Mary and Philip of Spain. The following is an extract from it:

"I begin to avoid, scarcely believe it, when Sebastian pushing in and told her that she must, must, and worse, before the sun, the sun, shine through the arrows with her lutes and, Sol, shine like a dream in her. So, too, did the arrival of the bishop's robes and the great hall in which the wedding feast was held where the English and Spanish courtiers, the French mingling the best of each other's English books and ways.

"Then the Bonnerwal had marched the girl and her lutes and her lute and her strings and of the King of Naples Ferrante, but Father Philip then turned to the bishop, saying, 'Let us talk about that lutening to the maiden.'

"'The maiden, my little maiden?' the bishop's deep voice was rolling.

"'Yes, my little maiden,' the priest replied, 'the maiden Virginia, surely brought the musical her over lutes.'

"'Why, bless her soul! Good lute! Surely! Bonnerwal, surely brought the musical her over lutes.'

"'Why, bless her soul! Good lute! Surely! Bonnerwal, surely brought the musical her over lutes.'

"'Yes, yes, I know, I know,