The English translation of a few expressions demands to correct the edition as follows:

Page 15, line 4 18 instead of 16
" 18 " 16
" 18 " 18 " 19

Those who are interested in Arabic texts related to Political Science will however hail this treatise and will surely be grateful to Dr. S. M. Khan for placing this rare text of Ibn Miskawaih into their hands with such a beautiful translation and useful introduction.

KARACHI

M. S. H. MAŞʿUMI

Notices


The book under notice, written in Arabic, is the introductory part of a much larger work entitled ʾlʿā al-Sunan which had been published earlier in litho but which is now being reprinted in type, beginning with the present introductory volume.

The chief characteristic of the main work is that it provides the Ḥadīth-bases, with lengthy discussions, for all the legal decisions associated with the name of Abū Ḥanīfah, thus seeking to refute the common charge brought against the Ḥanafi school by other schools that the former has little or no Ḥadīth-foundation. It should be pointed out that the findings of modern research confirm that it was, indeed, the “Ḥanafi school” or, rather the ʿĪraqī legal tradition which developed the concept of Ḥadīth as a theoretical basis for law—as distinguished from the Ḥijāzī or the Syrian schools which laid greater emphasis on Sunnah or the practical tradition.

The present volume is a treatise on the “science of Ḥadīth” with a more or less Ḥanafi point of view. Generally speaking, the book pleads for a more liberal attitude towards the rijāl or the authorities of the Ḥadīth. A special attempt is made on page 96 to rehabilitate Muhammad ibn ʿIṣḥāq, the author of the first extant biography of the Prophet, who has been much maligned by the Traditionists as unreliable. Muhammad ibn ʿIṣḥāq is, of course, quoted by and relied upon by the highest Ḥanafi authorities. The abundant learning of the author is obvious from the pages of the book. The author also advocates and represents a liberal and catholic attitude towards the subject and in this connection describes Ibn Ḥazm and Ibn Ḥibbān as “too severe”. But the basic limitations of the work are the limitations from which the “science of Ḥadīth” does obviously suffer as it has been developed traditionally. Its most fundamental limitation is its concentration on the rijāl or the authorities and its neglect of internal criticism. The present work, accordingly contains no trace of internal or historical criticism. Under the circumstances, a much more radical change in our attitude towards
the appraisal of Hadith is required than attempting to rehabilitate this authority and discrediting that. The most spectacular claim of the Ahl al-Hadith incredibly pressed to success in Muslim history has been that Hadith is of an altogether higher standard of credibility than pure history. Pure history, say, the biography of the Prophet, is undoubtedly exposed to normal hazards of history-writing. But the basic redeeming feature about history—as distinguished from Hadith—is that it consists in a connected narrative with largely built-in criteria of texts and standards of objective criticism and judgement. History is, indeed, a "field" wherein what has gone before largely constitutes a matrix for what is to come. Every Hadith, on the other hand, is a story by itself—short or somewhat long—but neither organically related to one another nor to known history. Whatever "background" is sought to be supplied here and there is transparently pseudo-history. For example, "I came to the Prophet and he was sleeping with a white cloth on him; I came again and he was sitting. He said ..." To crown this all, almost all legal Hadith is patently contradictory. In face of all this, what degree of credibility can Hadith claim merely on the basis of a formal preoccupation with the "authorities"—even assuming that authorities did exist from the earliest times, which is not the case? This certainly does not imply that all Hadith is therefore incredible but it does mean that every Hadith has to be examined, so far as this is possible, also, and more fundamentally, on grounds other than those of riṣāl.

KARACHI

FAZLUR RAHMAN


The author of this monograph, a Lecturer in Turkish at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, has described the sources of Neshri's famous history of the Ottoman Empire "Jihan Numa" which continued to serve as the main source of reference by the Ottoman chroniclers and European historians, through the Codex Hanivaleanus, for a long time. He has tried to show how Neshri's work was revised and expanded by himself and then by copyists and editors.

Neshri wrote his history during the early years of the reign of Sultan Bayezid (1481-1512). The number of his manuscripts known until 1927 was three. But at present the number has risen to fourteen. Professor P. Wittek demonstrated the dependence of Neshri's History on 'Ashikpāshazāde's History. Professor Halil İnalick of Turkey and the author of this monograph have concluded that Neshri followed a text closely related to an anonymous Turkish history of the Ottomans, available at the Bodleian Library. The author is of the view that the two literary traditions followed by Ottoman writers were interwoven by Neshri (pp. xiv-xv).

The author has provided an interesting and critical account of Neshri's life. Neshri was a nome de plume used by the historian for poetry, and his original name, on the evidence of the Bursa register, may have been Huseyn b. Eyne Beg. But he was a minor poet who lived at Bursa and enjoyed very little fame among his contemporaries (pp. 1-5).