

although his cave contained absolutely nothing. They told me also that this personage sometimes related histories of past times ; he would speak, for example, of the prophet (upon whom be peace !), and would say with reference to him : " If I had but been with him, I would have helped him." He would speak also with veneration of the two Khalifs, 'Omar son of Alkhattab and 'Ali son of Abu Tálib, and would praise them highly. But, on the other hand, he would curse Yazid the son of Mu'áwiyah, and would denounce Mu'áwiyah himself.<sup>1</sup> Many other things were told me about this shaikh by the persons named above.

Auhaduddin of Sinjar told me the following story about him : " I went once (said he) to see the shaikh in his cave. He took hold of my hand, and all at once I imagined myself to be in a great palace where this shaikh was seated on a throne. Methought he had a crown on his head ; on each side of him were beautiful handmaidens ; and there were canals about into which fruit was constantly dropping. I imagined that I took up an apple to eat it, and straightway as I did so I found myself again in the grotto with the shaikh before me, laughing and ridiculing me. I had a bad illness which lasted several months ; and I never would go again to see that strange being."<sup>2</sup>

The people of the country believe the shaikh to be a Musulman, but nobody ever saw him say his prayers. As regards abstinence from food, again, he may be said to fast perpetually. The kazi told me : " One day I spoke to him about prayer, and his answer was : ' Thinkest thou that thou knowest, thou ! what *I* do ? In truth, I trow my prayer is

<sup>1</sup> Omar and Ali, the second and fourth successors of Mahomed. Yazid Bin Mu'áwiyah, the second Khalif of the Omniades, who caused the death of Ali on the plain of Kerbela, is always mentioned with a curse by the Shias (*D'Herbelot*).

<sup>2</sup> A capital case of mesmeric influence in the Middle Ages.