

al character of this people in every age, and the predicted personal character of their progenitor—"And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him"—and the fact, that the Ishmaelitic origin of the Arabs has ever been the constant and unvarying tradition of that people themselves, the subject scarcely admits of a more irrefragable proof. There are certainly few landmarks of history more universal or more permanent than the names of countries affixed by original settlers, or flowing from them, and we may as justly question the derivation of Hungary from the Huns, France from the Franks, Turkey from the Turks, or Judea from Judah and the Jews, as those of the several districts of Arabia from the respective sons of Ishmael.\*

\* The argument in this chapter is condensed from a more ample discussion of the subject in the Appendix to "Forster's Mahometanism Unveiled."

## CHAPTER II.

*Birth and Parentage of Mohammed—Loses his Parents in early Childhood—Is placed under the care of his uncle Abu Taleb—Goes into Syria on a trading expedition with his uncle at the age of thirteen—Enters the service of Cadijal, a widow of Mecca, whom he afterwards marries.*

MOHAMMED, the Legislator of Arabia, the Founder of the Moslem or Mohammedan religion, and thence dignified by himself and by his followers with the title of Prophet and Apostle of God, was born at Mecca, a city of Arabia, A. D. 569.\* His lineage, notwithstanding that many of the earlier Christian writers, under the influence of inveterate prejudice against the prophet and his religion, have represented his origin as base and ignoble, is clearly shown to have been honourable and illustrious; at least, when rated by the common standard of distinction among his countrymen. The ancient Arabians, deriving their pedigree from Ishmael, and inheriting the nomadic habits of their ancestors, had from time immemorial been divided into a number of separate independent tribes, roving at large over the immense sandy regions of which their country is composed, except where here and there a few thousands of them were gathered into cities, and engaged in merchandise. Some of these tribes, from various causes, were more numerous, powerful, and renowned than others. That of Koreish, from the founder of which Mohammed was in a direct line descended, had long been accounted

\* Other authorities place his birth in A. D. 571. The precise year cannot be determined with certainty.