ART. XI.—*Notes on Prof. Tylor's "Arabian Matriarchate," propounded by him, as President of the Anthropological Section, British Association, Montreal, 1884.* By J. W. REDHOUSE, Esq., LL.D., M.R.A.S., Hon. Memb. R.S.L., etc.

IN p. 7, col. 5, of the *Times* newspaper for Saturday, 30th August, 1884, may be read the following paragraph of the opening Address of Prof. E. B. Tylor, President of the Anthropological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, delivered in Montreal, Canada, on the day before that date: "The comparison of peoples according to their social framework of family and tribe has been assuming more and more importance since it was brought forward by Bachofen, M'Lellan, and Morgan. One of its broadest distinctions comes into view within the Dominion of Canada. The Esquimaux are patriarchal, the father being head of the family, and descent and inheritance following the male line. But the Indian tribes further south are largely matriarchal, reckoning descent not on the father's but on the mother's side. In fact, it was through becoming an adopted Iroquois that Morgan became aware of this system, so foreign to European ideas, and which he supposed, at first, to be an isolated peculiarity. No less a person than Herodotus had fallen into the same mistake over two thousand years ago, when he thought the Lykians, in taking their names from their mothers, were unlike all other men. It is now, however, an accepted matter of anthropology, that in Herodotus's time, nations of the civilized world had passed through this matriarchal stage, as appears from the survivals of it retained in the midst of their newer patriarchal institutions. For instance, among the Arabs, to this day, strongly patriarchal as their society is in most respects, there survives that most matriarchal idea that one's nearest

relative is not one's father but one's maternal uncle: he is bound to his sister's children by a 'closer and holier tie' than paternity, as Tacitus says of the same conception among the ancient Germans."

The foregoing assertion as to the Arabs, "to this day," by Dr. Tylor, a prince of anthropologists, and a teacher whose words carry great weight, is startling. It appears to be founded on arguments that may be gathered from a treatise originally written in Dutch, by Professor G. A. Wilken, of the University of Leyden, and bearing as its title in a German translation, published by Schultze, of Leipzig, in 1884: "Das Matriarchat (das Mutterrecht) bei den Alten Arabern." This translation, "autorisirte," is a pamphlet in large octavo, of 72 pages, abounding with notes and references. It shows that the original Dutch work, which many times refers to a former treatise on a cognate subject by the same author, is a monument of patient and far-extending research; but it also leaves the impression that its title is somewhat of a misnomer. Far from establishing the thesis that the system of a matriarchate existed in olden time among the Arabians, it almost categorically proves the direct contrary.

It is a very interesting book, discussing as it does with great learning many traditional customs of the old pagan Arabians, in the "Time of Ignorance," before the advent of Muhammed and the promulgation of Islām. But it does not even attempt to prove (though it asserts as an *à priori* conception) that a matriarchate system was ever in existence among the Arabians in days of old; much less in modern times, as the words of Dr. Tylor, "to this day," would lead some readers to infer at a first glance. The President's discourse does not indeed mention this work, but refers by name to the earlier treatise by Professor Wilken.

From what this latter author says in his more recent work, it would appear that Professor Robertson Smith has stated in an article on the subject, that, according to his views, the "totem" system of the North American Indians can be traced among the old Hebrews and the cognate

Semitic peoples. Professor Wilken sets himself the task to work out this thesis in fuller detail, as applied more especially to the Arabians; but his discursive treatise, roving as it does over the whole world, almost, in search of parallels and illustrations, concludes with the irrelevant, though generally true proposition that women in Arabia were, as the more prevalent rule, free to marry any suitors that might chance to be agreeable to them, rejecting such as were otherwise.

He truly states (p. 4) that Arabian men and tribes not unfrequently bore the names of beasts and of gods: some of these latter being beasts also. Hence the American "totem" system is inferred by the Professor to have existed anciently among the Arabians. In a similar manner might it be contended that our modern English names of Bull, Steer, Stag, Lamb, Kidd, Fox, Bird, Chick, Jay, Salmon, etc., etc., are proof that the "totem" system is in full force among us now. Those Arabian beast-names, as applied to men, were at first merely nicknames, given or assumed, and serving to mark off sharply an individual each, who had his real name also. The nicknames, as did and do real names, sometimes passed on, as surnames, to the children and descendants of the individuals designated by them; and these descendants, under favouring or compulsory circumstances, thereby became sometimes a distinct tribe, clan, sept, family, branch, or offshoot, known by that name or nickname. In Arabian nomenclature, such a tribe, etc., is known as the "Children of Ḥasan" (Benū-Ḥasan), "Children of the Dog" (Benū-'l-Kelb), "Children of a Dog" (Benū-Kelb), etc., etc., something like our "Jacksons," "Johnsons," or the Scotch "Macphersons," etc. But it is self-evident that this question of a father's or ancestor's name or nickname has no connexion whatever with that of a matriarchate. The circumstance of a like use of the name or nickname of a mother is discussed further on (pp. 36-46) in the present paper.

That polyandry of various kinds may have existed here and there at one period or another among the old Arabians, as is asserted of them by ancient and classical authors

(pp. 7-9), as also by comparatively modern writers (pp. 29-30), may, perhaps, be true; but the assertions of foreigners, travellers, and non-contemporary compilers, require great caution and scrutiny ere they be finally accepted. And even then, polyandry does not constitute or necessarily establish a matriarchate. Professor Wilken's own examples (pp. 25-39) prove the contrary;—the children of polyandry are, somehow or other, according to his authorities quoted, all dealt out to their fathers when old enough to be independent of a mother's fostering care.

It appears fairly well established (pp. 9-21) that before Muhammed and Islām, at least among certain Arabian tribes, women, probably widows (by death or divorce), used to contract a kind of temporary marriages for a fixed period variously defined, such as a day, two days, a week, month, or year, the duration of a market or fair, of a commercial or other visit to a place, etc., etc., and in consideration of some kind of present mutually agreed on, in money or chattel property. Muhammed is reported by tradition to have allowed such temporary marriages to his followers at one time, and to have forbidden them subsequently for ever. But tradition is somewhat contradictory on that point; and the Qur'ān is not so clear and unequivocal on both points of permission and prohibition, but that the Shī'a schismatics of Islām continue to practise such marriages on similar occasions of temporary convenience, down to the present time.

Such temporary marriages, held in detestation by orthodox Sunnī Muslims, are well known in the law-books of Islām by the names of *mut'a* (usufruct), or *nikāhu-'l-mut'a* (usufruct marriage). This is perfectly true; but can it be upheld that such temporary marriages of fugitive convenience, a kind of schismatically legalized form of adultery, has any connexion with the system of a matriarchate?

In p. 43 Professor Wilken returns, after a digression, to the subject of those *mut'a* marriages, and mentions the legal dictum of their conferring no right of inheritance; namely, *lā mirātha fī-hā* لَا مِيرَاثَ فِيهَا; rendered in the German, "dabei kein Erbrecht bestand." But he inadequately explains this,

by a gloss, as meaning no inheritance on the father's side, "kein Erbrecht nach der väterlichen Seite hin."

To understand correctly what is meant in reality by this laconic Arabic absolute law-phrase: "(there is) no inheritance therein" (the expression "right" being understood; or a preferable rendering being: "no inheritance ensues thereby"), one should know that in respect to a father, mother, and child, under the ordinary laws of Islām as to marriage and inheritance, there are three pairs of reciprocal inheritances possible: 1, inheritance between the husband and wife; for a wife in Islām retains the whole of her own property, accrued or accruing: 2, inheritance between the father and child; for a child may be or become possessed of property independently of his father: and, 3, inheritance between the mother and child in the same manner; according to which factor of each pair survives the other. In *mut'a* marriage, on the contrary, no right of inheritance whatever ensues, whether to or from the husband or father (should a child be born), to or from the wife or mother, to or from the child as regards either father or mother. Should no other heir be forthcoming on the demise of either of the three, the estate of the deceased would lapse to the public fisc, and neither of the survivors would inherit. Such is a true conception of the full scope of the absolute negation of all and any inheritance ensuing, as covered by the foregoing laconic legal definition of the *mut'a* marriage, said to have been for a short time allowed in Islām, and still commonly practised on occasions by Shī'a schismatic Muslims. It is evident that such marriages have no more relation to a matriarchate than has an ordinary marriage, of which it is but a modified variety.

Professor Wilken next proceeds, pp. 22, 23, to show that ordinary marriage could be dissolved among the old Arabians by the mere will of the wife, and cites from Arabian authors some well-known tales on the subject. They appear to be about as authentic as the veracious story of Jack and the Beanstalk, and similar nursery tales. But even if admitted, what bearing have they on the subject of a matriarchate?

All those Arabian dames of story had to be wooed ere they could accept a suitor and dismiss a husband who was not to their liking, as the apocryphal narratives relate.

The wonderful stories from Lane, Burckhardt, Burton, and Palgrave, have no manner of bearing on the question of a matriarchate. Marriage and divorce in Islām is very expensive. A man may legally pronounce a divorce of all his wives at once; but it would not appear possible for him to wed two by the same contract; much less four. But have we not the example of King Solomon, with his "nine hundred wives and three hundred concubines" given us in holy writ?

In pp. 25-30 Professor Wilken discusses the four systems of sexual relations mentioned by certain post-Muhammedan Arabian authors as having existed among the old pagan Arabians, probably at different times and places; namely: 1, the ordinary modern permanent marriage: 2, an eclectic species of occasional human stock-breeding intercourse of a married woman, at her husband's suggestion, with some selected man, for the purpose of obtaining a superior strain of progeny; and known to have formerly been in vigour in Germany also: 3, regular polyandry: and 4, unlimited hetairism.

Since the children begotten under the third and fourth of the foregoing systems (if such ever really existed as national or tribal institutions among the old Arabians) were always given up to the putative fathers as soon as possible, these systems cannot be taken as indications of a former matriarchate; while the first and second are in direct antagonism to any such idea.

The story, p. 31, from Dozy is singular; but those from Ibnu-Batūta and Palgrave, pp. 31-33, prove nothing unusual in the very centres of modern civilization in any quarter of the globe. The account from Palgrave, p. 33, in respect of a certain Ḥasaniyya tribe of Arabs on the White Nile is simply incredible, if the people meant (for the White Nile is not a river of Arabia) are really of Arabian descent and Muslims; though it is conceivable on the supposition of

their being of African race and pagans. Not one of those stories, however, nor those, pp. 35-36, from Mela, Cæsar, or MacLellan, has any relation to a matriarchate. They all show the predominance of a patriarchate, though the family ties described are not those customary with us now. Even Professor Wilken, p. 37, is forced to admit this, and takes refuge in a presumed original matriarchate more ancient than these several patriarchal systems. Of this he seeks to advocate the probability by adducing the alleged rule of the Nairs, as related by Bachofen, that their children, though always assigned to a putative father as his offspring, do not thereby become his heirs. With that people, according to this narrative, a father's property goes at his death, not to his own children, but to those of his sister, and failing these, to the nearest blood-relations of his grandmother. Whether Bachofen has thus correctly stated the case of the Nairs, or not, as appears very possible, matters but little; the Nairs are not the Arabians, and Professor Wilken's matriarchate is but a gratuitous, arbitrary hypothesis.

The same remark equally applies to the Malay usages of Sumatra, etc., given in pp. 38-39. But the argument of Professor Wilken in these pages, built upon the use of the word *batn* (belly) by the Arabians to designate "a tribe or family," calls for a closer examination. He claims this expression as a proof of a primitive matriarchate's having existed among the Arabians, exactly as the corresponding Malay word serves to indicate a patriarchal community in Sumatra, etc.

Whatever may be the truth as to the indication of the Malay expression, the Professor's reasoning is very faulty as regards the Arabian term. Both Lane and the Turkish translation of the great Arabic lexicon, the *Qāmūs*, under the word فَحْدٌ (*fakhdh* 'a thigh'), give the following as the more generally received order of the names of an Arabian tribe and its successive subdivisions, mostly derived from a comparison with the human body and its parts. A great tribe is termed حَيٌّ (*hayy* 'a living individual, whole'); the

largest subdivision of this is called شَعْب (sha'b, one half of the body, right or left, from crown to sole); a section of this is named قَبِيلَة (qabīla, any one of the cranial bones; its plural being قَبَائِلُ qabā'il, whence the corrupt French-Algerian jargon *les cabyles*, the tribesmen); a branch of which is denominated فَصِيلَة (faṣīla, a subdivision); a twig of which is designated عِمَارَة or عَمَارَة ('amāra, 'imāra, a chest, thorax); an offset of this it is that is really styled بَطْن (batn, a belly, abdomen); and a twig from this is qualified فَحْد or فَحْدَة (fakhdh, fakhidh, a thigh). The words أَهْل ehl and عِيَال 'iyāl usually designate the family or household (sometimes including slaves, servants, dependents, guests, etc.). Every one of these Arabic words has several or many significations, but the term batn is never used to signify a *family* or *household*. Its application to a *small tribe, clan, or sept*, does not hang on its meaning of the *belly* as the *womb*, but on that of its sense of the *abdomen*, as underlying the thorax, and from which the thighs bifurcate. This argument then, of the Professor, and his Malay parallels, do not serve to indicate a matriarchate among the Arabians.

His idea (p. 40) of Arabian children's having been formerly named after their mothers alone is, to all appearance, incorrect. When a man had children by more than one mother (wife or slave concubine), each section of his family was distinguished as the child or children of its own mother, in addition to the appellation, common to all of them, of children of the common father. So it was that in Gen. xxi. 9, Ishmael is called "the son of Hagar the Egyptian," and in Gen. xxxiii. 2, Jacob, having divided his eleven sons and one daughter among their respective mothers, free and slave, "put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost."

The foregoing remark is strikingly illustrated by the case of that very distinguished son of the fourth Khalīfa, 'Aliyy,

son of Ebū-Tālib, cousin and son-in-law of Muhammed. After the death of his wife Fāṭima (Muhammed's daughter, and the ancestress of all his descendants, through her two sons Ḥasan and Ḥuseyn), 'Aliyy took as his second wife one of the captives named Khawla, who was made prisoner after the defeat of Museylema, prince of Yemāma, chief of the tribe of Ḥanīfa, and a would-be rival of Muhammed as a prophet of God. Khawla is better known in history as the Ḥanefitess, "el-Ḥanefiyya"; hence, her son Muhammed, by 'Aliyy, though named Ibnu-'Aliyy, like his two elder half-brothers Ḥasan and Ḥuseyn, sons of Fāṭima, and like several other younger half-brothers by other wives of 'Aliyy, was also named after his mother by his second surname Ibnu-'l-Ḥanefiyya (son of the Ḥanefitess), so as to point out that he was not of the sacred race of the prophet, neither a Sherīf nor a Seyyid. His full name in history is therefore given as "Muhammed, son of 'Aliyy, son of Ebū-Tālib, and son of the Ḥanefitess," even as Ḥasan and Ḥuseyn are styled "the two sons of 'Aliyy, son of Ebū-Tālib, and of Fāṭima, daughter of Muhammed the Apostle of God." The biographer, En-Newewī, gives a number of instances of such double names, of which there are other varieties.

So, in like manner, according to all probability, Ilyās, mentioned, in p. 40 of Professor Wilken's translated work, and ancestor in the sixteenth degree of the prophet Muhammed, may be inferred to have had children by other wives than the mother of his son Mudrika, the prophet's ancestor in the fifteenth degree. Her name is said to have been Leylā, and she was nicknamed Khindif by her husband one day, from her skipping away from their tent in pursuit of her sons, who were chasing a hare that happened to go by. At least, so says the tribal folk-lore. Hence, when Muhammed, as a prophet and victorious prince, had made the tribe of Qureysh famous and noble above all other Arabians, the men of that glorified tribe marked themselves off in tracing back their lineage through Ilyās, son of Mudzar, son of Nizār, son of Ma'add, son of 'Adnān, through their ancestress Khindif, so as to exclude from their nobility the sons of any other

wife or concubine of Ilyās than Khindif, the mother of Mudrika. They therefore called themselves Benū-Khindif, as well as Benū-Ilyāsa-'bni-Mudzara-'bni-Nizārī-'bni-Ma'addi-'bni-'Adnān.

Should a man's father be unknown, that man may be at times designated by his mother's name only; but this is uncommon. In general, when a mother's name alone is used in designating a man or woman, it is done for brevity's sake in distinguishing various branches of one father's family. But the pedigree cannot be carried beyond a mother so-named. It stops with her, and has to be traced further back, if desired and possible, through the father, as in the cases of Mudrika and Ibnu-'l-Ḥaneḥfiyya. All the Bible pedigrees are traced through the fathers, though a mother is occasionally mentioned. It is remarkable that although Hagar and Ishmael were cast out through the jealousy of Sarah in her old age, the children of Jacob by the slaves Zilpah and Bilhah were not so treated; and every one of Jacob's twelve sons married a woman of the country. No Hebrew pedigree could, therefore, be carried back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, unless traced through the male line. Imagine Solomon to be called "son of Bathsheba, daughter of So-and-So," and this son of David, the adulterer and treacherous assassin, descended from the incestuous commerce of Judah with his daughter-in-law Tamar, would be made into a Hittite, if Bathsheba, as well as her murdered husband Uriah, was of that nationality (2 Sam. xi. 3).

In p. 40, Professor Wilken adduces the argument that sundry nations have allowed, or do allow, the marriage of a man with his paternal half-sister, but prohibit his marriage with his maternal half-sister. Such nations are the Hovas of Madagascar, such were the Greeks under the laws of Solon, and such were the Hebrews. Abraham married his half-sister Sarah, according to the excuse he made to Abimelech (Gen. xx. 12) in his *suppressio veri* for the second time, having used this subterfuge twenty-four years earlier with Pharaoh (Gen. xii. 13, 19), and Isaac being shown to have done the same later in respect to

Rebekah (Gen. xxvi. 7). But in Genesis xi. 29, 31, Sarai is not said to be a daughter of Abraham's father Terah; she is simply called Abram's wife, and Terah, in Genesis xi. 26, 27, is said to have begotten Abram, Nahor, and Haran, no daughter being mentioned. The Professor's argument from this tergiversation is not particularly strong, though his inference from the words of David's daughter Tamar to her half-brother Amnon before he abused her (2 Sam. xiii. 13), is more to the point. That from Ezekiel xxii. 11 is of no value. The Arabian kings of Hira most likely followed the example of their Persian suzerains; and the example of the people of Mirbāt, p. 42, if true, may perhaps be similarly explained. The Professor gives no real Arabian custom founded on this principle. Even had he been able to adduce any number of such, they would not have constituted the slightest indication of a former matriarchate. His argument from a few exceptional cases of the succession of a son of a sister to a kingly office in the olden time among the Arabians has also no cogency as pointing to a former matriarchate. In the first place, an exception is a proof of a rule; and as the rule among Arabians, as probably with all other Semitic peoples, the son, especially the eldest son, succeeded to his father; though considerations of many kinds have had weight, in different times and places, in determining the choice of a successor to a throne or to an office of dignity.

In p. 43-44, an argument is introduced of still less weight; namely, that in some parts of Arabia the natives prefer to keep their married daughters at home in their natal town or tribe, especially if they are wedded to a stranger. This feeling is not altogether peculiar to certain Arabians, but is to be met with in all countries at all times. How then can it point to a primitive matriarchate?

Coming now to the Professor's most telling argument, apparently, from Wetzstein's account (p. 45) of what he so often heard ejaculated in our own days in Damascus, as a blessing or a curse on the maternal uncle (خال *khāl*) of the actor of any laudable or reprehensible deed, coupled with the explanation given to Wetzstein by the natives, of the grounds

of their benediction or malediction on the maternal uncle, and not on the actor himself, namely, "the ultimate incentive to do any act is an inheritance from one's maternal uncle;" upon which Dr. Tylor has felt justified in using his quotation of the poetical phrase of Tacitus: "he is bound to his sister's children by a closer and holier tie than paternity," it may be remarked of the badly-expressed or ill-understood explanation given to or reported by Wetzstein, that it is the enunciation of the simple physiological fact that mental and moral, as well as physical qualities, are greatly inherited by children from parents and ancestors to the third and fourth generation may be, or to the hundredth, for that matter.

But what has this physiological fact to do with one's "maternal uncle," who is neither one's parent nor one's ancestor? That has been explained as follows: The moral qualities most prized in a man by the Arabians are great courage and surpassing munificence; those most condemned by them in a man are cowardice and grinding avarice. But the very reverse of these are held by them to constitute the glory or the reproach of a woman. For a woman to be entitled to eulogy she must be timid and economical. If bold, she is a virago; if prodigal, she ruins her household. But, in Arabia, before and since the advent of Islām, a woman is usually secluded from the observation of the public at large; the points of her character are screened from all but her nearest relatives; she is never, generally speaking, the subject of common public criticism. The moral qualities inherited by a man from his father are commonly well known to the public. Should any of the points of a man's character differ from those known to belong to his father, good or bad, they will most probably be seen foreshadowed in the character of the mother's brother—of the man's maternal uncle—though not open to public observation in the mother herself. The illogical mob at once attributes to some occult influence of the uncle what is naturally inherited from the unobservable mother; and hence their blessings or curses on him. But thoughtful observers and serious writers among Arabians of all times,* and Muslims of all countries, know how to

attribute these moral inheritances to their true, natural source ; and how to explain away the vulgar conceptions of the mob. They are well aware of the tendency of the *mésaillance* of a nobly-endowed man with the sordid daughter of an ignoble stock, to engraft on their progeny the failings and meannesses of her race, or the contrary, as publicly observable in her brother. He is the patent index of the qualities, good or bad, derived from his own parents and transmitted from them, not from him, by his sister to her children. These ideas are well represented in the Turkish translation of the Arabic lexicon, the *Qāmūs*, under the word خَال (khāl, maternal uncle), in explanation of the proverb, not given by Meydānī, Freytag, Lane, or Wilken : “عِرْقُ الْخَالِ لَا يَنَامُ” (*irqu 'l-Khālī 'l-khālī lā yenām*), the root, fibre, or vein of one's maternal uncle becomes not dormant ;” as much as to say, “the son of an ignoble mother is often a plague, foil, or enemy to his noble father.” The anecdotes collected by Professor Wilken on this subject are interesting, and may all be explained as above.

The law of slavery in Islām, treated of by the Professor in pp. 48–51, as in the old Roman adage : “*partus sequitur ventrem*,” is a natural, often a necessary, unavoidable consequence of female slavery, as of the ownership of female beasts. A woman is captured, given, sold, or exchanged by barter ; after a time she is found to be pregnant, and later she gives birth. Her child, male or female, belongs by law to her owner, male or female, whoever may have been the known or unknown father of her child. The humane law of Islām forbids the separation of such or any slave-mother from her child, by sale, gift, or barter of either, until the child attains an age to dispense with its mother's fostering care. Even when her free male owner acknowledges and claims her child, male or female, as his own offspring, thereby making the child instantly free by law, and conferring on the mother also eventual freedom irrevocably, together with instant immunity from all further sale, gift, or barter, he may not separate the mother and child by any

act of his. Should he not emancipate her earlier, she becomes enfranchized by law at his death, as the mother of his acknowledged, free, and legitimate child; for no person, in Islām, can be the owner of either of his or her parents. Should any one, young or old, male or female, in any way become the owner of either of his or her parents, the parent, by law, instantly acquires full and unconditional freedom. No man or woman, in Islām, can marry his female or her male slave, without first making the slave free; and, on acquiring such freedom, the quondam slave is free also to refuse the proffered marriage. Many men and women, in Islām, do marry their quondam slaves by mutual consent. A male owner of a female slave disposes of her person absolutely; he may give her in marriage, even without her consent, to any husband he may accept or choose for her, free or slave, and whether such slave-husband belong to himself or another. A female owner has the same power. But, beyond this, a male owner may take possession of *his own* female slave as his legitimate concubine, with or without her consent; she remains an absolute slave still, and may be sold, given, or bartered, like any other slave, even though she should bear him one or many children, so long as he does not acknowledge one of them as his legitimate offspring. If he acknowledge one, all become equally free, legitimate, and heirs to equal shares of his estate with his children born in wedlock, if any. Not so their hitherto slave-mother; she acquires her freedom by his death, but has no share in his inheritance.

A female owner of a male slave has no corresponding rights over his person for herself. She may give him in marriage to another woman, free or slave, even without his consent. She cannot marry him herself, unless she first make him free, and then obtain his formal assent. But, while she retains him in bondage, he remains on the same footing towards her, sexually, as any other stranger. His service to her is of the same kinds only as those of her free, hired, stranger servants. Her person, even the sight of her face, is as much forbidden to him as to them. Had it

not been so even in the days of the Pharaohs, Joseph would have been as much at the disposal of the wife of Potiphar, as Hagar had been at that of Abraham, Zilpah and Bilhah at that of Jacob.

The law of slavery in Islām, then, can never have had any relation to a matriarchate. The child born of a female slave is either the free and acknowledged, legitimate child and heir of her free male owner, or is the slave of her owner, male or female, whoever may be its father.

In p. 52, Professor Wilken touches on the question of "purity of race." A descent from parents who are both noble is and always has been as much gloried in among the Arabians as with any other people. But legitimate birth gives to a free child full rights of inheritance, even though one or both its parents bear the stain of plebeian or even slave extraction. Even a bastard, there as elsewhere, may achieve distinction or win a kingdom by his own merit. This, too, has no relation to a matriarchate; neither has exogamy or endogamy, as known to the Arabians and Semites within any assignable period.

The old Arabian, barbarous, but exceptional and optional, practice of infanticide on daughters by their own parents, discussed in pp. 54-56 by Professor Wilken, cannot in any way be adduced as an argument in proof of a primitive matriarchate, unless it can be demonstrated that such child-murder was the act of the mother alone, when desirous of rearing none but male children, and on the principle of the internecine struggle of two queen-bees in one hive. Had all new-born girls been murdered, the race must have been kept alive by imported females. Where then could there be a matriarchate?

Muhammed, it is true, imposed an oath on every female convert to Islām, that she would never murder her infant daughter. But this oath was first taken by the twelve *men* of Medina, who swore fealty to the prophet in the mountain-pass near Mekka, before he promulgated his commission to fight for the faith, and the words used included boys as well as girls. A year later, a different oath of fealty was

taken in the same place by seventy-three men and two women of Medina, in which the obligation to fight in defence of Muhammed and Islām was added. Those two women are traditionally said to have fought bravely in the cause they had thus sworn to support. But no woman was subsequently sworn by this second oath, afterwards tendered to men only; and the first oath, thence named "the oath of women," was the only one by which fresh female converts plighted their troth to Islām. But even Professor Wilken, p. 56, seems to admit that infanticide on daughters, if pushed to an extreme degree, would have ended by preventing even exogamy, and so would have destroyed the whole race and the matriarchate with it.

The argument (pp. 57-62) from the Arabian common practice of men's wedding their cousins, daughters of the brothers of their fathers, is, as Professor Wilken remarks, and has long been, known as unadvisable in view of begetting hale, intelligent children. Formerly, until its ill effects forced themselves into notice, it may have been upheld, as reported, for the security of a pure, noble race, as with some European royal families, and with the in-and-in system of cattle-breeders. But there is no need to have recourse to an *à priori* conceived matriarchate to account for this practice, still much in use under dispensation, among Roman Catholics, and while the marriage of "first cousins" is held to be valid by most, if not all, Protestants, though the union of "second cousins" is said to be unlawful.

All the material arguments put forward by Professor Wilken in this special treatise of his "On the Matriarchate among the Old Arabians" have now, one by one, been passed in review in the present paper. No valid ground has been discovered for maintaining that such a system ever existed among them or any cognate Semitic nation. One may agree with advanced anthropologists on *à priori* hypotheses, in surmising that, wherever their primitive abode may have been, among Semitic peoples, perhaps, as among others, at some immensely remote period, far removed from an

approach to historic times, say 50, 100, or more thousands of years ago, in the stone ages, before and during the great glacial period and the advent of the Aryan race in Asia, when man was slowly or rapidly differentiating from the brutes, a matriarchate system may have prevailed, as among some other nations in more modern times, even to the present generation. But Professor Wilken's laboured arguments fall very far short, in the treatise under consideration, of the startling and utterly groundless assertion of the very learned and indefatigable President of the Anthropological Section of the British Association at Montreal, to the effect that "among the Arabs to this day survives the most matriarchal idea that one's nearest relative is not one's father, but one's maternal uncle."

So little has any such matriarchal idea been current amongst Arabians for the last thirteen hundred years and more (to say nothing of the Hebrews for another twenty-five hundred years earlier), that the laws of Islām give the inheritance of every deceased person, male or female, married or single, to be divided in fixed shares among the deceased's spouse, children (to any degree), parents or ancestors (to any degree), collaterals, etc., even to liberated slaves (male or female), according as these may exist and nearer links may fail. A maternal uncle or aunt would never inherit from a deceased nephew or niece, nor would these inherit from the maternal uncle or aunt, except as representatives of their mother, in case the deceased should leave neither descendants, ascendants, nor near collaterals, so that the estate might pass to more distant relations.

As far as Arabian emotional sentiment is concerned on this point of a man's nearest kin in their estimation, it may be interesting to cite a pithy and well-known Arabian *dictum*, as follows: "The children of our sons are *our* children; the children of our daughters are the children of strangers."

In conclusion it may be further mentioned that, according to "D'Herbelot's Bibliothèque Orientale" (vol. ii. pp. 167, l. 13-14), there were in Bagdād, in the time of the Abbāsī Khalifa Mehdī (A.D. 767-785), a set of people called Zenādiqa

or Manichæans, who, "permettaient le mariage entre les plus proches parents et même dans le premiers degrés de consanguinité."

The Khalifa's son Hādi, by his father's command, set up 1000 gibbets and hung the whole crew, after having had them registered with great care and exactness.

Those Manichæan doctrines dated in Persia from the times of the Sassanian kings (before the advent of Islām), whose capital was in the neighbourhood of Bagdād, and had furnished a large portion of its inhabitants. The Arabians before Islām were subject to Persia; and doctrines prevalent in Persia would be to some extent disseminated among them here and there. Persian and Kurdish tribes are to this day found scattered as colonies among the towns and villages of Southern Arabia; and old Persian tenets would long leave traces among such.

The Manichæan doctrines were, in reality, a gross travesty of the early apostolic tenet that the brethren should enjoy and share all things in common. Mānī, their author, a Persian Christian in name, included wives and daughters among the chattels of the community. It may be that survivals of these, and of many an old pagan doctrine, are still traceable here and there in Arabia among mixed populations or isolated tribes; but all the truly national conceptions and traditions are strictly patriarchal, and have been so from the earliest traceable cuneiform and hieroglyphic times, long before Abraham, Moses, and the Hebrew people existed. To say that the Arabians hold a man's maternal uncle to be his nearest of kin is as rank a heresy, in its way, as to hold the oft-exploded error that Islām denies woman's possession of a soul, whereas every Muslimess's tombstone bears carved on it the pious request: "O thou who passest by, recite the Opening Chapter of the Qur'ān (the Lord's Prayer of Islām), for the benefit of the soul of the deceased woman N.N., taken to God's mercy."