

ART. VI.—*Māham Anaga*. By H. BEVERIDGE.

THIS lady was one of Akbar's nurses, and is said to have watched over him from the cradle to the throne. She must have been a notable woman, for she acquired great influence over Akbar, and was for a time the administratrix of his kingdom. It was in great measure through her intrigues that Akbar emancipated himself from the control of Bairām Khān. There has long been a mystery about her status and about the paternity of her children. She had two sons, Bāqī Khān Kōka and Adham Khān Kōka, but their father's name is never mentioned. Abū'l-faẓl, Niẓāmu-d-dīn, Badā'ōnī, and other writers, always speak of them as the sons of Māham Anaga, but give no hint as to their father's identity. Hence Mr. Blochmann concluded that Adham Khān, the more celebrated of the two, was "doubtless a royal bastard." Professor Dowson demurs to this view on account of the great respect with which Māham Anaga is always spoken of, but admits that there is a mystery about the paternity. If, however, an illuminated MS. in the possession of Colonel Hanna is to be trusted, the mystery is cleared up, for its author states that Māham Anaga was the wife of Nadīm Khwāja Kōka, the sherbet-provider (*sharbat-bardār*) or butler of Humāyūn. The statement occurs at p. 9b of the MS., in telling the story (also given in the *Akbarnāma*) of how Akbar, while still an infant, comforted his nurse Jijī Anaga. Māham Anaga and the other nurses were, it seems, jealous of Akbar's predilection for Jijī, and accused her to Humāyūn of practising enchantments so as to make the young prince refuse all milk but her own. Jijī was very sad about this, and one evening when she was alone with the child, the latter, while yet in the cradle, opened

his *Messiah-like* mouth and bade her be of good cheer, for she would always have the exclusive nursing of him. The statement about Māham Anaga's being the wife of Nadīm is quite clear, and Nadīm is a perfectly possible husband for her, for he seems to have been a foster-brother of Humāyūn, and he is frequently mentioned by Abū'l-faẓl, Jauhar and others, as a faithful follower of Humāyūn's fortunes. It is true that Abū'l-faẓl, in his account of Akbar's nurses, speaks of Nadīm Kōka's wife as Fakhrū-n-nissā, but this may have been another name for Māham, and the author of Colonel Hanna's MS. uses both names as if they belonged to the same person. Moreover, Gulbadan Begum, who is presumably a better authority than either of them, calls Fakhrū-n-nissā the mother, and not the wife, of Nadīm. The main question is—Is the author of Colonel Hanna's MS. a sufficient authority for the statement that Nadīm was Māham Anaga's husband? Colonel Hanna has kindly allowed me to examine the MS., and I have read as much of it as I could in two days. On the flyleaf the MS. is said to be the composition of two ladies—Shukru-n-nissa, a daughter of Akbar (afterwards married to Mīrzā Shāhrukh), and her sister-in-law Ḥabiba Bānū, daughter of 'Azīz Kōka and wife of Prince Murād. But I was unable to find in the MS. any reference to a dual authorship, or to its being the work of a lady. The author speaks of himself as a grandson of 'Azīz Kōka, and was consequently a great-grandson of Akbar's nurse Jijī Anaga. He wrote apparently in the time of Jahāngīr. Some of his statements are not accurate, but he seems to have had good sources of information, for he quotes the Tārīkh-i-Atka Khān, which seems to have been written by Nawab Sharīf Khān, a son(?) of the Atka Khān (Shamsu-d-dīn), and which appears to be now lost. As a descendant, too, of Jijī Anaga, I think he may be trusted about a fact connected with her. Unfortunately, the preface to the first part of the MS. is wanting. What is prefixed to the beginning is a fragment of the introduction to the second part. Hence we have not the author's account

of the work. I conjecture, however, that he was a teacher employed in the royal court and that he wrote his book for the instruction of some young prince. Perhaps this explains the curiously rude and childish form of the pictures in the book. Colonel Hanna is inclined to think them the productions of the above-named two young ladies, but it seems to me more probable that they are sketches made by a Mūnshī for the instruction and amusement of a child.¹

¹ The words used at p. 9*b* of the MS. are Māham Anaga zan-i-Nadīm Khwāja. Nadīm is not called Kōka, but he can hardly be a different person from the Nadīm Kōka of Abū'l-faẓl. At p. 9*a* he is called Nadīm Khwāja, *sharbat-bardār*. On the same page, we are told that Jijī Anaga was also called Sultānam, and that she belonged to the family of Amir Sayyid 'Abdu-l-lāh Al Farid (?). That Nadīm was a man of some position is shown by the statement in the *Akbarnāma* (Bib. Ind., i, 241) that he was one of Humāyūn's most trusty servants, and that he was put in charge of Mirzā 'Askarī when the latter was recaptured after his flight from Qandahār (A.D. 1545).