

finite.”¹ Such argument needs no comment; but it is a sample of Mohammedan logic.

El Buchari gives the following tradition of the prophet regarding the order of creation:² “The first thing which God created was a pen, and He said to it, Write. It said, What shall I write? And God said, Write down the quantity of every individual thing to be created. And it wrote all that was and that will be to eternity.” In Surah 13:2, *seq.* (quoted above), there occurs an expression which has given rise to much discussion among Moslems: “It is God who hath reared the heavens without pillars, then *seated* Himself upon His throne.” The word used for *seated* (*istawa*)³ has given rise to endless disputations. Even the last Mohammedan reform, under Mohammed bin Abd-ul-Wahāb, made this word the shibboleth of their theology. Most commentaries interpret the word deistically, “Then He *made for* the throne,” i.e., left the world entirely and absolutely. Zamakhshari escapes the dilemma by silence and Beidhawi says, “He betook Himself to the throne, *i.e.*, to preserve and to direct.” Husaini, the commentator, remarks on Surah 9:131: “The throne of God has 8,000 pillars and the distance be-

¹E. G. Browne's *A Year among the Persians*, p. 144.

²Hughes' *Dict. of Islam*, p. 472.

³From the root *sawa*, to intend, to be equal; VIII. conjugation *istawa*, to be equal, to ascend, intend, to sit firm and square upon. See Penrice's *Dictionary of the Koran*.