Where the same topic comes up in the *Annals* and in the *Commentary* we often find different traditions quoted, or the same tradition derived through different channels, and this shows the copious variety of his sources. Various parts of the *Annals* give the impression of being condensed. The *Commentary* was published before the *Annals,* and is better composed. It is the head corner-stone of Koran exegesis, as the *Annals* are of historiography. It came into general use mainly through the abridgment of Baghawí in the beginning of the 6th century of the Flight, being itself too large to be much read. The great book exists complete in the viceregal library at Cairo, and ought to be pub­lished at once.@@1

The *Annals* are a general history from the creation to 302 a.h., and are in the course of publication at Leyden. They will fill some 7000 to 7500 pages, one and a half printed pages corresponding roughly to one leaf of Tabarí’s original MS. Tabarí added a supplement about his authorities, an abridgment of which is to follow the Leyden edition. It contains biographical notices of traditionalists, contempo­raries of Mohammed, and their successors to the second half of the 2d century.@@2 Other works by Tabarí will be spoken of in detail in the preface to the Leyden edition.

The success of the *Annals* and *Commentary* was due above all to the author’s personality. The respect paid to him by his contemporaries appears in various anecdotes preserved in his biography. His pupils had an unbounded admiration for his extraordinary knowledge, and what he said seemed to them the best that could be said. In truth, both his great works were the best of their kind, especially the *Commentary,* which, in the judgment of all impartial critics, has not been equalled, before or since, in complete­ness, learning, and independent judgment. A contempo­rary says that “ it would be worth a journey to China to procure the book.” So general was this view that the opinion of Tabari was quoted as a legal authority.

The inferiority of the *Annals* as a literary composition may be due partly to the author’s years, partly to the in­equality of his sources, sometimes superabundant, some­times defective, partly perhaps to the somewhat hasty condensation of his original draft. Nevertheless the value of the book is very great : the author’s selection of tradi­tions is usually happy, and the episodes of most import­ance are treated with most fulness of detail, so that it deserves the high reputation it has enjoyed from the first. This reputation rose steadily ; there were twenty copies (one of them written by Tabari’s own hand) in the library of the Fátimite caliph 'Azíz (latter half of the 4th cen­tury), whereas, when Saladin became lord of Egypt, the princely library contained 1200 copies (Makrízí, i. 408 *sq.).* Only princes and rich men could own a book which in the time of 'Azíz cost one hundred dinars. We know that it had a place in most great libraries in other countries, for we find that it was used in all lands. Thus the fact that no complete copy can now be found any­where, and that the Leyden edition rests on odd volumes lying in various places, gives a striking image of what the East has suffered from barbarism.

The *Annals* soon came to be dealt with in various ways. They were published in shorter form with the omission of the names of authorities and of most of the poems cited ; some passages quoted by later writers are not found even in the Leyden edition. On the other hand, some interpola­tions took place, one in the author’s lifetime and perhaps by his own hand. Then many supplements were written, *e.g.,* by Ferghání (not extant) and by Hamadhání (partly preserved in Paris). ‘Aríb of Cordova made an abridg­

ment, adding the history of the West and continuing the story to about 365.@@3 Ibn Mashkawaih wrote a history from the creation to 369 a.h., with the purpose of draw­ing the lessons of the story, following Tabari closely, as far as his book is known, and seldom recurring to other sources before the reign of Moktadir ; what follows is his own composition, and shows him to be a writer of talent.@@4 In 352 an abridgment of the *Annals* was translated into Persian by Bal'amí, who, however, interwove many fables.@@5 Ibn al-Athír (d. 630) abridged the whole work, usually with judgment, but sometimes too hastily. Though he sometimes glided lightly over difficulties, his work is of service in fixing the text of Tabari. He also furnished a continuation to the year 620. Later writers took Tabari as their main authority, but fortunately sometimes con­sulted other sources, and so add to our knowledge,—- especially Ibn al-Jauzí (d. 597), who adds many important details. These later historians had valuable help from the biographies of famous men and special histories of countries and cities, dynasties and princes, on which much labour was spent from the 4th century onwards.

*Historians after Tabarí.*

The chief historians after Tabari may be briefly mentioned in chronological order. Rází (d. 325) wrote a *History of Spain* ; Euty- chius (d. 328) wrote *Annals* (published by Pocock, Oxford, 1656), whieh arc very important because he gives the Christian tradition ; Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi (d. 328) has very valuable historical passages in his famous miscellany called *Al-'Ikd al-Faríd* (3 vols., Cairo, 1293 a.h.) ; Súlí (d. 335) wrote on the 'Abbásid caliphs, their viziers and court poets ; Mas'údí (see MAs'Údy) composed various historical and geographical works (d. 345). Of Tabari’s contemporary Hamza Is- pahání we have the *Annals* (published by Gottwaldt, St. Petersburg, 1844) ; Abu Ί-Faraj al-Ispahání (d. 356) in his *Book of Songs (Kitáb al·Aghání,* 20 vols., Cairo, 1285) gave the lives of poets whose songs were sung ; Ibn al-Kútíya (d. 367) wrote a *History of Spain* ; Ibn Zúlák (d. 387) a *History of Egypt;* 'Otbi wrote the *History of Mah­mud of Ghazna* (d. 421), at whose court he lived (printed on the margin of the Egyptian edition of Ibn al-Athír); Tha’labí (d. 427) wrote a well-known *History of the Old Prophets* ; Abú No'aim al- Ispahani (d. 430) wrote a *History of Ispahan,* chiefly of the scholars of that city; Tha'álibí (d. 429 or 430) wrote, *inter alia,* a well- known *History of the Poets of his Time,* now (1887) in course of publication at Damascus. Bèrúní (d. 440) takes a high place among historians by his *Chronology of Ancient Nations* (ed. Sachau, Leipsic, 1878; Eng. trans., London, 1879) and his contributions to the history of India and Khwárizm; Kodá'í (d. 454) wrote a *De­scription of Egypt* and also various historical pieces, of which some are extant ; Ibn Sá'id of Cordova (d. 462) wrote a *View of the History of the Various Nations.* Baghdad and its learned men found an excellent historian in Al-Khatíb al-Baghdádí (d. 463), and Spain in Ibn Hayán (d. 469), and half a century later in Ibn Khakán (d. 529) and Ibn Bassám (d. 542). Sam'ání (d. 562) wrote an excellent book on genealogies; 'Asákir (d. 571) a *History of Damascus and her Scholars,* which is of great value, and exists in whole or in part in several libraries. The *Biographical Dictionary* of the Spaniard Ibn Pascual (d. 578) and that of Dabbí, a some­what junior contemporary, are edited in Codera’s *Bibliotheca Arab. Hisp.* (1883-1885); Saladin found his historian in the famous 'Imád addin (d. 597). Ibn al-Jauzi, who died in the same year, has been already mentioned. Abdalwáhid’s *History of the Almo­hades,* written in 621, was published by Dozy (2d ed., 1881). The geographer Yákút (d. 626) wrote also some historical works, now lost. í (d. 629) is known by his writings about Egypt (trans. De Sacy, 1810); Ibn al-Athír (d. 630) wrote, in addition to the *Chronicle* already mentioned, a *Biographical Dictionary of Con­temporaries of the Prophet.* Kiftí (d. 646) is especially known by his *History of Arabic Philologists.* Sibt ibn al-Jauzí (d. 654), grand­son of the Ibn al-Jauzí already mentioned, wrote a great *Chronicle,* of which much the larger part still exists. Codera has edited (Madrid, 1886) Ibn al-'Abbár’s (d. 658) *Biographical Lexicon,* al­ready known by Dozy’s excerpts from it. Ibn al-'Adím (d. 660) is

@@@1 See the excellent article by Loth in *Z.D.M.G.,* xxxv. 588 *sq.*

@@@2 The MS. containing this abridgment is described by Loth in *Z.D.M.G.,* xxxii. 581 *sq.* It is now in the British Museum.

@@@3 Of this work the Gotha library has a portion containing 290-320 A.H., of which the part about the West has been printed by Dozy in the *Bayán,* and the rest is to be published at Leyden.

@@@4 A fragment (198-251 a.h.) is printed in De Goeje, *Fragm. Hist. Ar.,* vol. ii., Leyden, 1871. Schefer possesses an excellent MS. of the years 249-315 ; Oxford has another fragment, 345-360 a.h. ; the second part is in the Escorial.

@@@5 The first part was rendered into French by Dubeux in 1836. We have now an excellent French translation by Zotenberg, 1874.