the 15th centuries, and during a visit to Benares he renounced some of the social and caste observances of the Hindus, called his disciples the liberated, and freed them from all restrictions in eating and social intercourse. Kabir denounced idolatry and the ritualistic practices of the Hindus. He was born a.d. 1398, and according to the legend was the son of a virgin widow, as the result of a prayer offered for her by Ramanand in ignorance of her status. Thus it will be seen that the doctrines of these early reformers contained the germs of the later Sikh religion.

Nanak seems to have been produced by the same cyclic wave of reformation as fourteen years later gave Martin Luther to Europe. He taught, "There is but one God, the Creator, whose name is true, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn and self-existent, great and bounti­ful.” He held that the wearing of religious garb, praying and practising penance to be seen of men, only produced hypocrisy, and that those who went on pilgrimages to sacred streams, though they might cleanse their bodies, only increased their mental impurity. He pointed out that God "before all temples prefers the upright heart and pure,” and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and not with the idolatrous accessories of incense, sandal-wood and burnt-offerings. He abrogated caste distinctions, and taught in opposition to ancient writings that every man had the eternal right of searching for divine know­ledge and worshipping his Creator. This doctrine of philosophic quietism was common to his successors, until in the time of the sixth guru, Har Govind, it was found necessary to support the separate existence of Sikhism by force of arms, and this led to the militant and political development of the tenth and most power­ful of the gurus, Govind Singh. The Sikhs of to-day, though they all derive primarily from Nanak, are only recognized as Singhs or real Sikhs when they accept the doctrines and practices of Guru Govind Singh.

Nanak's successor, Angad, was born in a.d 1504 and died in 1552. He also was a Khatri, and was chosen by Guru Nanak in preference to his own sons. The legend of his choice is that Nanak with his followers was going on a journey, when they saw the dead body of a man lying by the wayside. Nanak said, "Ye who trust in me eat of this food.” All hesitated save Angad (or own body), who knelt and uncovered the dead, but, behold; the corpse had disappeared, and a dish of sacred food was found in its place. The guru embraced his faith­ful follower, saying that he was as himself, and that his spirit should dwell within him. Thenceforward the Sikhs believe the spirit of Nanak to have been incarnate in each succeeding guru. Little is known of the ministry of Angad except that he committed to writing much of what he had heard about Guru Nanak as well as some devotional observations of his own, which were afterwards incorporated in the *Granth.*

Angad, like his predecessor, postponed the claims of his own sons to the guruship to those of Amar Das, who had been his faithful servant. Amar Das preached the doctrine of forgiveness and endurance, upheld Guru Nanak's abrogation of caste distinctions, and his precepts were implicitly followed by his successors. He used to place all his Sikhs and visitors in rows and cause them to eat together, not separately, as is the practice of the Hindus. He said: “Let no one be proud of his caste, for this pride of caste resulteth in many sins. He is a Brahman who knoweth Brahma (God). Every one prateth of four castes. All are sprung from the seed of Brahm. The whole world is formed out of one clay, but the Potter hath fashioned it in various forms.” It was a maxim of the Sikhs of his time: “ If any one treat you ill, bear it. If you bear it three times God himself will fight for you and humble your enemies.” Guru Amar Das also discountenanced the practice of suttee, saying: “ They are not *satis* who burn them­selves with the dead. The true *sati* is she who dieth from the shock of separation from her husband. They also ought to be considered *satis* who abide in charity and contentment, who serve and, when rising, ever remember their lord.” Amar Das was born in a.d. 1509 and died in 1574 after a ministry of twenty- two and a half years.

The fourth guru, originally called Jetha, was attracted to the third guru by his reputation for sanctity. He became the servant of Amar Das, helped in the public kitchen, shampooed his master, drew water, brought firewood from the forest, and helped in the excavation of a well which Amar Das was constructing at Goindwal. Jetha was of such a mild temper that, even if any one spoke harshly to him, he would endure it and never retaliate. He became known as Ram Das, which means God's slave; and on account of his piety and devo­tion Amar Das gave him his daughter in marriage and made him his successor. Ram Das is amongst the most revered of gurus, but no particular innovation is ascribed to him. He founded, however, the golden temple of Amritsar in a.d. 1577, which has remained ever since the centre of the Sikh religious worship. From this time onward the office of guru became hereditary, but the practice of primogeniture was not followed, each guru selecting the relative who seemed most fitted to succeed him.

Ram Das himself, finding his eldest son Prithi Chand worldly and disobedient, and his second unfitted by his too retiring disposition for the duties of guru, appointed his third son, Arjan, to succeed him. When Prithi Chand represented that he ought to have received the turban bound on Guru Arjan's head in token of succession to his father, Arjan meekly handed it to him, without, however, bestowing on him the guruship. The Sikhs themselves soon revolted against the exactions of Prithi Chand, and prayed Arjan to assert himself else the seed of the True Name would perish. It was Guru Arjan who compiled the *Granth* or Sikh Bible, out of his own and his predecessors' compositions. On this account he was accused of deposing the deities of his country and substituting for them a new divinity, but he was acquitted by the tolerant Akbar. When Akbar, however, was succeeded by Jahangir the guru aided the latter's son Khusru to escape with a gift of money. On this account his property was confiscated to the state, and he was thrown into rigorous imprisonment and tortured to death. Arjan saw clearly that it was impossible to preserve his sect without force of arms, and one of his last injunctions to his son Har Govind was to sit fully armed on his throne and maintain an army to the best of his ability. This was the turning-point in the history of the Sikhs. Hitherto they had been merely an insignificant religious sect; now, stimulated by persecution, they became a militant and political power, inimical to the Mahommedan rulers of the country.

When Har Govind was installed as guru, Bhai Budha, the aged Sikh who performed the ceremony, presented him with a turban and a necklace, and charged him to wear and preserve them as the founder of his religion had done. Guru Har Govind promptly ordered that the articles should be relegated to his treasury, the museum of the period. He said: “ My necklace shall be my sword-belt, and my turban shall be adorned with a royal aigrette.” He then sent for his bow, quiver, arrows, shield and sword, and arrayed himself in martial style, so that, as the Sikh chronicler states, his splendour shone like the sun.

The first four gurus led simple ascetic lives and were regardless of wordly affairs. Guru Arjan, who was in charge of the great Sikh temple at Amritsar, received copious offerings and became a man of wealth and influence, while the sixth guru became a military leader, and was frequently at warfare with the Mogul authorities. Several warriors and wrestlers, hearing of Guru Har Govind's fame, came to him for service. He enrolled as his body­guard fifty-two heroes who burned for the fray. This formed the nucleus of his future army. Five hundred youths then came to him for enlistment from the Manjha, Doab and Malwa districts. These men told him that they had no offering to make to him except their lives; for pay they only required instruction in his religion ; and they professed themselves ready to die in his service. The guru gave them each a horse and five weapons of war, and gladly enlisted them in his army. In a short time, besides men who required regular pay, hordes gathered round the guru who were satisfied with two meals a day and a suit of clothes every six months. The fighting spirit of the people