

## PREFACE

**J**EWES, Christians and Mohammedans believe in one God and yet differ widely in their interpretation of this idea. Unless we know the Moslem's idea of God we cannot understand his creed nor judge his philosophy, nor intelligently communicate our idea of God to him. The strength of Islam is not in its ritual nor in its ethics, but in its tremendous and fanatical grasp on the one great truth—Monotheism.

Our purpose in these pages is to learn the extent and content of this idea; an idea which holds the Moslem world even more than they hold it. I have found no book in English, among the wealth of literature on Islam, that treats of this subject. In German there are two books on the theology of the Koran,<sup>1</sup> but both are rare and limited, as appears from their titles, to a consideration of what *the Koran* teaches.

For a fair interpretation, however, of Islam's idea of God we must go not only to the Koran, but also to orthodox tradition. The *Hadith* are the records of the authoritative sayings and doings of Moham-

<sup>1</sup>Haller's *Lehre von Gott aus dem Koran gezogen*. Altenburg, 1779. Dettinger's *Beiträge zu einer Theologie des Korans*. Tübingen Zeitschrift für Theologie, 1831, 3's Heft.