

Arabia.<sup>1</sup> The assertion is that Mohammed got his idea of the Trinity from this heretical sect, "who invested the Virgin Mary with the name and honours of a goddess," and offered to her cylindrical cakes (*κολλύριδες*), hence their name. Let us see what basis there is for this view. The only authority we have to prove even the *existence* of this female sect is the history of heresies by Epiphanius;<sup>2</sup> what others tell is quoted from his chapter. Gerock says: "Epiphanius does not relate anything definite concerning the sect, and the long chapter devoted to this heresy contains next to nothing save controversy, in which the author seems to delight. Even had such a sect existed at the time of Epiphanius in Arabia, it is far from probable that, consisting only of women, it would have continued for three centuries until the time of Mohammed and become so extended and strong that Mohammed could mistake it for the Christian religion."<sup>3</sup> Mohammed came in contact

<sup>1</sup>Gibbon, Vol. III., p. 488. Hottinger, *Hist. Orient*, p. 225, and copied in most of the later accounts of the history of Moslem teaching, e.g., Sale's *Prelim. Discourse to the Koran*.

<sup>2</sup>"Epiphanius," says Dr. Schaff (*Hist. of Christian Church*, Vol. III., p. 169), "was lacking in knowledge of the world and of men, in sound judgment and critical discernment. He was possessed of boundless credulity, now almost proverbial, causing innumerable errors and contradictions in his writings." Scaliger calls him "an ignorant man who committed the greatest blunders, told the greatest falsehoods, and knew next to nothing about either Hebrew or Greek."

<sup>3</sup>Gerock's *Christologie*, p. 75.