



distance of a mile, or, as some suppose, than the length of a bodkin. So that their skulls will boil like a pot, and they will all be bathed in moisture. From this inconvenience, however, the good will be protected by the shade of God's throne; but the wicked will be so miserably tormented therewith, and also with hunger, thirst, and a stifling air, that they will cry out, "Lord, deliver us from this anguish, though Thou send us into hell-fire."

When those who have risen shall have waited the fixed time, God will at length appear to judge them; Muhammad undertaking the office of intercessor, after it shall have been declined successively by Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Jesus, who one and all will beg deliverance only for their own souls. On this solemn occasion God will come in the clouds, surrounded by angels, and, producing the books wherein the actions of every person are recorded by their guardian angels, will command the prophets to bear witness against those to whom they have been respectively sent. Then every one will be examined concerning all the words and actions uttered and done in this life; not as if God needed any information in those respects, but to oblige the person to make public confession and acknowledgment of the Almighty's justice. The particulars of which they shall give an account, as the Prophet himself enumerated them, are—of their time, how they spent it; of their wealth, by what means they acquired it, and how they employed it; of their bodies, wherein they exercised them; of their knowledge and learning, what use they made of them. It is said, however, that Muhammad affirmed that no less than seventy-thousand of his followers will be





permitted to enter Paradise without any previous examination. Another advantage which on the day of judgment the Muslims will possess over less-favoured races, is that either a Jew or a Christian will be assigned to each faithful Musulman as a substitute to be cast into the everlasting pit in case the accident of an adverse sentence on the part of the Lord of Heaven should overtake the hapless follower of the Prophet!

To the above-mentioned questions each person shall answer, and make his defence in the best manner he can, endeavouring to excuse himself by casting the blame of his evil deeds on others, so that a dispute shall arise even between the soul and the body, to which of them guilt ought to be imputed, the soul saying, "O Lord, my body I received from Thee; for Thou createdst me without a hand wherewith to lay hold, a foot wherewith to walk, an eye wherewith to see, or an understanding wherewith to apprehend, till I came and entered into this body; therefore, punish it eternally, but deliver me." The body, on the other side, will make this apology:—"O Lord, Thou createdst me like a stock of wood, having neither hand with which I could lay hold, nor foot with which I could walk, till this soul, like a ray of light, entered into me, and my tongue began to speak, my eye to see, and my foot to walk; therefore punish it eternally, but deliver me." But God will propound to them the following parable of the blind man and the lame man. A certain king, having a pleasant garden, in which were ripe fruits, set two persons to keep it, one of whom was blind and the other lame, the former not being able to see what to





pick, nor the latter to gather it; the lame man, however, beholding the fruit, persuaded the blind man to take him upon his shoulders; and by that means he easily plucked the same, and they then divided it between them. The lord of the garden, coming some time after, and inquiring as to his property, each began to excuse himself; the blind man said he had no eyes to see the trees, and the lame man that he had no feet to approach them. But the king, ordering the lame man to be set on the blind, passed sentence on, and punished them both. And in the same manner will God deal with the body and the soul.

Though the Muhammadans assign a long period ere the resuscitated come up for judgment, yet they tell us the trial itself will be over in a short space of time, and, according to an impression of their Prophet, familiar enough to the Arabs, will last no longer than while one may milk an ewe, or than the period between the two milkings of a she-camel. Some, explaining those words so frequently used in the Quran, "God will be swift in taking an account," say that He will judge all creatures in the space of half a day, and others that it will be done in less time than the twinkling of an eye.

At this examination they also believe that each person will have delivered to him the book, wherein all the actions of his life are written; the righteous will receive the same in their right hand, and read with great pleasure and satisfaction; but the ungodly will be obliged to take the fatal records against their wills in their left hand, which will afterwards be bound behind their backs, its neighbour on the right being tied up to their necks.





To show the exact justice which will be observed on this great day of trial, a balance will be brought, wherein all things shall be weighed. It will be held by Gabriel, and it is of so vast a size, that its two scales, one of which hangs over Paradise, and the other over Hell, are capacious enough to contain both heaven and earth: and those whose balances laden with their good works shall be heavy will be saved, but those whose balances are light will be condemned. Nor will any have just cause to complain that God suffers any good action to pass unrewarded, because the wicked have their reward in this life, and therefore can expect no favour in the next.

This examination being passed, and every one's works weighed, as stated, in a just balance, mutual retaliation will follow, according to which all creatures will take vengeance one of another, or receive satisfaction for the injuries which have been suffered. And since there will then be no other way of returning like for like, a proportionable part of the good works of him who offered the injury will be taken away and added to the amount of him who suffered it. Which being done, if the angels (by whose ministry this is to be performed) say, "Lord, we have given to every one his due; and there remaineth of this person's good works so much as equalleth the weight of an ant," God will of His mercy cause it to be doubled unto him, that he may be admitted into Paradise; but if, on the contrary, his good works be exhausted, and there remain but evil works, and there be any who have not yet received satisfaction from him, God will order that an equal weight of their sins whom he had injured, be added unto his own, that he may be





punished for them in their stead, and he will be sent to Hell laden with this additional burden. Such will be the method of God's dealing with mankind. As to brutes, after, as previously mentioned, they shall have likewise taken vengeance of one another, He will command them to be changed into dust. Wicked men being reserved to more grievous punishment, they will cry out, on hearing the sentence passed on the brutes, "Would to God that we were dust also!" As to the genii, many are of opinion that such of them as are true believers will undergo the same fate as the irrational animals, and have no other reward than the favour of being converted into dust; but others assign them a place near the confines of Paradise, where, to a certain extent, they will enjoy felicity, though they be not admitted into the mansion of delight. But the unbelieving genii, it is universally agreed, will be punished eternally, and be thrown into Hell with the infidels of mortal race.

The trials being over and the assembly dissolved, those who are to be admitted into Paradise will be gathered on the right hand, and those who are destined to perdition (upwards, it is said, of 999 out of every 1000) on the left; but everyone must first pass the bridge, called in Arabic as Sirat, which they say is laid over the midst of Hell, and described to be finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword: so that it seems very difficult to conceive how any one shall be able to stand upon it. This bridge is beset on each side with briars and hooked thorns; which, however, will be no impediment to the good, for the latter will pass with wonderful ease and swiftness, like lightning or the wind,





Muhammad and his Muslims leading the way; whereas the wicked, what with the slipperiness and extreme narrowness of the path, the entangling of the thorns, and the extinction of the light, which directed the saved to Paradise, will soon miss their footing, and fall down headlong into the yawning abyss beneath.

*Hell.*—As to the punishment of the wicked, the Muhammadans are taught that Hell is divided into seven circles, one below another, designed for the reception of as many distinct classes of lost souls. The first, Jahannam, will be the receptacle of those who acknowledged one God, that is, the wicked followers of Islam, who after having there been punished according to their demerits, will at length be released. The second, named Laza, will receive the Jews; the third, named Al Hutama, the Christians; the fourth, named as Sair, the Sabians; the fifth, named as Sagar, the Magians; the sixth, named Al Jahim, the idolaters; and the seventh, Hawiyat, the lowest and worst of all, the hypocrites, or those who outwardly professed some religion, but in their hearts were without a God.

With reference to the torments of Hell, it is supposed they will dwell amid pestilential winds and in scalding water, and in the shadow of a black smoke, not cool, and horrid to behold! Draughts of boiling water will be forced down their throats. They will be dragged by the scalp and flung into the fire. Garments of flame will be fitted on to them. They will also be beaten with iron maces. So often as they endeavour to escape because of the anguish of their torments, they will be dragged back, their





tormentors exclaiming, "Taste ye the pain of burning!" When their skins are well burned, other skins will be given them in exchange, in order that they may taste the sharper torment; for "God," says the Prophet, "is mighty and wise." It has, indeed, been well said that "Fire is the divine cruelty of the Semitic religion." It must be remarked, however, that the infidels alone will be liable to eternity of damnation, for the Muslims who having embraced the true religion, have none the less been guilty of heinous sins, will be delivered thence after they shall have expiated their crimes by their sufferings.

*Paradise.*—The wall or partition between Paradise and Hell, seems to have been suggested by the great gulf of separation mentioned in Scripture. They call it "Al Araf," a word which signifies to *distinguish* between things, or to *part* them; though some commentators give another reason for the imposition of this name, because, they say, those who stand on this partition will know and distinguish the blessed from the lost, by their respective marks or characteristics; while others think the word properly intends anything that is high raised or elevated, as such a wall of separation must be supposed to be. The Muhammadan writers greatly differ as to the persons who are to be found on Al Araf. Some imagine it to be a sort of limbo for the patriarchs and prophets, or for the martyrs and those who have been most eminent for sanctity, among whom will be also angels in the form of men. Others place here those whose good and evil works are so equal that they exactly counterpoise each other, and, therefore, deserve neither reward nor punishment; and these,





they say, will, on the last day, be admitted into Paradise, after they shall have performed an act of adoration, which will be imputed to them as a merit, and will make the scale of their good works to over-balance. Others again, suppose this intermediate space will be a receptacle for those who have gone to war without their parents' leave, and therein suffered martyrdom; being excluded from Paradise for their disobedience, and escaping Hell because they are martyrs. The breadth of this partition wall cannot be supposed to be exceeding great, since not only those who shall stand thereon will hold conference with the inhabitants both of Paradise and of Hell, but the blessed and the damned themselves will also be able to talk to one another.

The righteous, having surmounted the difficulties, and passed the sharp bridge above mentioned, before they enter Paradise will be refreshed by drinking at the pond of their Prophet, who describes it to be an exact square, of a month's journey in compass: its water which is supplied by two pipes from one of the rivers of the celestial realms, being whiter than milk or silver and more odoriferous than musk, with as many cups set around it as there are stars in the firmament, of which water whoever drinks will thirst no more for ever. This is the first taste which the blessed will have of their future, and now near-approaching felicity.

Though Paradise is so very frequently mentioned in the Quran, yet it is a dispute among the Muhammadians whether it is already created, or is yet to be created hereafter: some sectaries asserting that there is not at present any such place, and that the





Paradise which the righteous will inhabit in the next life, will be different from that from which Adam was expelled. However the orthodox profess the contrary, maintaining that it was created even before the world, and describe it, in the following manner:—

It is situate above the seven heavens (or in the seventh heaven) and next under the throne of God: the earth thereof is composed of the finest wheat flour, or of the purest musk, or, as others suppose of saffron; its stones are pearls and jacinths, the walls of its buildings being enriched with gold and silver, while the trunks of all its trees are of the first-mentioned precious metal: the most remarkable is the tree called Tuba, or the tree of happiness. The boughs of this tree will spontaneously bend down to the hand of the person who would gather of its fruits, and it will supply the blessed not only with food, but also with silken garments, and beasts whereon to ride, ready saddled, bridled, and adorned with rich trappings which will burst forth from its fruits. It is believed that this tree, which is so large, that a person mounted on the fleetest horse would not be able to gallop from one end of its shade to the other in a hundred years, stands in the palace of Muhammad, though a branch of it will reach to the house of every true believer; that it will be laden with pomegranates, grapes, dates, and other fruits of surprising size, and of tastes unknown to mortals. So that if a man desire to eat of any particular kind of fruit, it will immediately be presented to him; or if he choose flesh, birds ready dressed will be set before him according to his wish.





As plenty of water is one of the greatest additions to the delights of an Eastern locality, the Quran often speaks of the rivers of Paradise as a principal ornament thereof; some of these streams, they say, flow with water, some with milk, some with wine, and others with honey, all taking their rise from the root of the tree "Tuba." And lest these should not be sufficient, this garden is also watered by a great number of lesser springs and fountains, whose pebbles are rubies and emeralds, while their earth consists of camphor, their beds of musk, and their sides of saffron, the most remarkable among them being "Salsabil" and "Tasnim."

But all these glories will be eclipsed by the resplendent and ravishing girls of Paradise, the enjoyment of whose company will be a principal felicity of the Faithful. These, they say, are created not of clay, as in the case of mortal women, but of pure musk: being, as the Prophet often affirms, free from all natural impurities, defects, and inconveniences incident to the sex; further, too, they will be of the strictest modesty, and secluded from public view in pavilions of hollow pearls, so large that, as some traditions have it, one of them will be no less than sixty miles long, and as many broad.

The name which the Muhammadans usually give to this happy mansion, is "the garden"; and sometimes they call it, with an addition, the "garden of Paradise," the "garden of Eden," the "garden of abode," the "garden of pleasure," and the like; by which several appellations some understand a similar number of different abodes, or at least places of various degrees of felicity (for they reckon no less





than a hundred such in all), the very meanest whereof will afford its inhabitants so many pleasures and delights, that one would conclude persons must even sink under them, had not the Prophet declared, that in order to qualify the blessed for a full enjoyment of such bliss, God will give to every one the potentialities of a hundred individuals.

Besides Muhammad's pond, already described, some authors mention two fountains, springing from under a certain tree near the gate of Paradise, and say, that the blessed will also drink of one of them, to purge their bodies and carry off all impurities, and will wash themselves in the other. When they are arrived at the gate itself, each person will there be met and saluted by the beautiful youths appointed to serve and wait upon him, one of them running before, to carry the news of his arrival to the wives destined for him; two angels will also appear, bearing presents from God, one of whom will invest him with a garment of Paradise, and the other will put a ring on each of his fingers, with inscriptions alluding to the happiness of his condition. By which of the eight gates of Paradise they are respectively to enter is not known; but it must be observed that Muhammad has declared that no person's good works will gain him admittance, and that even himself shall be saved, not by his merits, but merely by the mercy of God. It is, however, the constant doctrine of the Quran, that the felicity of each person will be proportioned to his deserts, the abodes being assorted according to varied gradations of happiness; the most eminent degree for the prophets, the second for the doctors and teachers of God's





worship, the next for the martyrs, and the lower for the rest of the righteous. There will also be some distinction made in respect to the time of admission, Muhammad (to whom the gates will first be opened) having affirmed, that the poor will enter Paradise five hundred years before the rich: nor is this the only privilege which the former will enjoy in the next life; since the Prophet has also declared, that when he took a view of the celestial regions, he saw that the majority of its inhabitants were composed of the poor. It may also be added that when he looked down into Hell, he noticed that the greater part of the wretches confined there were women!

For the first entertainment of the blessed on their admission, the whole earth will then be as one loaf of bread, which God will reach to them with His hand, holding it like a cake; while for meat they will have the ox Balaam, and the fish Nun, the lobes of whose livers will suffice 70,000 of the principal guests, viz., those who, to that number, as already explained, will be admitted into Paradise without examination.

From this feast every one will be dismissed to the mansion designed for him, where he will enjoy such a share of felicity as will be proportioned to his merits, but vastly exceeding comprehension or expectation; since the very meanest will have 80,000 servants, seventy-two wives of the girls of Paradise, besides, as some suppose, the spouses he had in this world (not in all cases it may be feared an unquestionable felicity), and a tent erected for him of pearls, jacinths, and emeralds, of a very large extent. According to another tradition he will, while eating, be waited on





by 300 attendants, his food being served in dishes of gold, whereof 300 shall be set before him at once, containing each a different kind of food, the last morsel of which will be as grateful as the first; he will also be supplied with as many sorts of liquors in vessels of the same metal. To complete the entertainment, there will be no want of wine, which, though forbidden in this life, will yet be freely allowed to be consumed in the next, and without danger, since that beverage in Paradise will neither inflame nor inebriate. The flavour of this celestial potation we may conceive to be delicious beyond description, since the water of Tasnim and the other fountains which will be used to dilute it, is said to be wonderfully sweet and fragrant. If any object to these pleasures, as an impudent Jew did to Muhammad, and contend that so much eating and drinking must necessarily involve various bodily functions, it may be answered that the inhabitants of Paradise will not need even to blow their noses, for all superfluities will be discharged and carried off by perspiration, or a perspiration odoriferous as musk, after which their appetite will return afresh.

The magnificence of the garments and gems promised by the Quran to the godly in the next life, is conformable to the delicacy of their diet. For they are to be clothed in the richest silks and brocades, chiefly of green, which will burst forth from the fruits of Paradise, and will be also supplied by the leaves of the tree Tuba; they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and silver, and crowns set with pearls of incomparable lustre; and will make use of silken carpets, litters of a prodigious size, couches, pillows,





and other rich furniture embroidered with gold and precious stones.

That the inhabitants of Paradise may be the better able to taste these pleasures in their height, they will enjoy a perpetual youth; at whatever period of life they may happen to die, they will be raised in their prime and vigour, and become as if about thirty years of age, which they will never exceed (it may also be remarked that the tortures of Hell are perpetuated to the lost souls in a precisely similar manner). When the blessed enter into bliss, they will be of the same stature with Adam, who, as is fabled, was no less than 60 cubits high. And to this age and stature their children, if they shall desire any (for the choice will be in their own hands), will immediately attain; according to that saying of their Prophet, "If any of the Faithful in Paradise be desirous of issue, it shall be conceived, born, and grown up within the space of an hour." And in the same manner, if any one shall desire to employ himself in agriculture (which rustic pleasure may suit the fancy of some), what he shall sow will spring up and come to maturity in a moment.

Lest any of the senses should lack their proper delight, the ear will there be entertained, not only with the ravishing songs of the angel Israfil, who has the most melodious voice of all God's creatures, and with the strains of the daughters of Paradise; but even the trees themselves will celebrate the divine praises with a harmony exceeding whatever mortals have heard; to which will be joined the sound of the bells hanging on the branches, which latter will be put in motion by the wind proceeding from the throne





of God, so often as the blessed wish for music : nay, the very clashing of the golden-bodied trees, whose fruits are pearls and emeralds, will surpass human imagination ; so that the pleasures of this sense will not be the least of the enjoyments of the blessed.

The delights above enumerated will be common to all the inhabitants of Paradise, even those of the lowest of all the orders therein. What then, must they enjoy who shall obtain a superior degree of honour and felicity ? For these, there are prepared, besides all this, "such things as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." Muhammad is reported to have said, that the meanest of them will not only see his gardens, wives, servants, furniture, and other possessions fill the space of a thousand years' journey (for so far and farther will the blessed see in the next life), but that he will be in the highest honour with God, and behold the face of the Almighty morning and evening. This favour is supposed to be that additional or superabundant recompense, promised in the Quran, which will give such exquisite delight, that in respect thereof all the other pleasures of Paradise will be forgotten and lightly esteemed. In face of this circumstance, it can scarcely be contended, as some maintain, that the Muhammadans admit of no spiritual pleasure in the next life, but make the happiness of the blessed to consist wholly in corporeal enjoyments.

Before quitting this subject it may not be improper to observe the falsehood of a vulgar imputation on the followers of Islam, who are by several writers reported to hold that women have no souls ; or, if





they have, that they will perish, like those of brute beasts, and will not be rewarded in the next life. But whatever may be the opinion of ignorant people, it is certain that Muhammad had too great a respect for the fair sex to teach such a doctrine; and there are several passages in the Quran which affirm that women, in the next life, will not only be punished for their evil actions, but will also receive the rewards of their good deeds, just as in the case of the men, and that God will make no distinction of sexes. It is, avowedly, by no means certain that they will be admitted into the same abode with men; but whether this be so or no, it will not escape notice that their places will in any case be supplied to some extent by the nymphs (though some allow that a man will there also have the company of those who were his wives in this world, or at least such of them as he shall desire). It is by some supposed that good women will go into a separate place of happiness, where they will enjoy all sorts of delights; whether, however, one of those pleasures will be the society of agreeable male companions created for them, to complete the economy of the Muhamminadan system, is nowhere decided. One circumstance relating to these beatified females, conformable to what has been asserted of the men, may be gathered from the Prophet's reply to an old woman, who, desiring him to intercede with God that she might be admitted into Paradise, was told that no old woman would enter that place; not unnaturally the poor creature commenced crying, whereupon he explained himself by saying that God would then make her young again. If this be so it is not apparent, and indeed it is





nowhere explained in the Quran, how wives when restored to everlasting youth will regard the rival claims of the resplendent Houris, whom it might be supposed they would not be likely to view with complaisance.

Can it be, that, as in this terrestrial sphere a Muhammadan wife is content to be one amongst others, she would be happy and content were she to be assigned in heaven a rôle which is but a continuation in the next world of the position allotted to her in the realm on earth? To give an answer is impossible—till the great Hereafter solves a problem of the Muslim faith which must ever remain incapable of solution on this side of the grave.

*Predestination.*—The sixth great point of faith, which the Muhammadans are taught by the Quran to believe, is God's absolute decree and predestination both of good and evil. For the orthodox doctrine is, that whatever hath been or shall come to pass in this world, whether it be good or whether it be bad, proceedeth entirely from the divine will, and is irrevocably fixed and recorded from all eternity in the preserved table; God having secretly predetermined not only the adverse or prosperous fortune of every person in this world, in the most minute particulars, but also his faith or infidelity, his obedience or disobedience, and consequently his everlasting happiness or misery after death; which fate it is not possible, by any foresight or wisdom, to avoid.

Of this doctrine Muhammad makes great use in his Quran for the advancement of his designs; encouraging his followers to fight without fear, and even desperately, for the propagation of their faith,





by representing to them that all their caution could not avert their inevitable destiny, or prolong their lives for a moment; and deterring them from disobeying or rejecting him, by setting before them the danger they might thereby incur of being abandoned, by the just judgment of God, to seduction, hardness of heart, and a reprobate mind, as a punishment for their obstinacy.

As this doctrine of absolute election and reprobation has been thought by many Muslim divines to be derogatory to the goodness and justice of God, and to make Him the author of evil, several subtle distinctions have been invented, and disputes raised, to moderate or soften it; and different sects have been formed, according to their several opinions or methods of explaining this point. These will be described in the chapter on minor sects.

*Prayer.*—Of the four fundamental points of religious practice required by the Quran, the first is prayer, which was by Muhammad thought so necessary a duty, that he used to call it the pillar of religion and the key of Paradise; and when in A.D. 631 a neighbouring tribe sent to make their submission to the Prophet, after the retention of their favourite idol had been denied them, begging that, at least, they might be excused saying the appointed prayers, he answered, "There could be no good in that religion wherein was no prayer."

That so important a duty, therefore, might not be neglected, Muhammad obliged his followers to pray five times every twenty-four hours, at certain stated periods, viz., (1) In the morning, before sunrise; (2) When noon is past, and the sun begins to decline





from the meridian ; (3) In the afternoon, before sunset ; (4) In the evening, after sunset, and before close of day ; and (5) After the day is ended, and before the first watch of the night. For this institution he asserted that he had received the divine command from the throne of God himself, when he took his night journey to heaven ; and the duty of observing the stated times of prayer is frequently insisted on in the Quran. Accordingly, at the aforesaid periods, of which public notice is given by the Muazzin, or Crier, from the steeples of their mosques (for they use no bell), every conscientious Muslim prepares himself for prayer, which he performs either in the sanctuary or any other place (provided it be clean), after a prescribed form, and with a certain number of phrases or ejaculations (which the more scrupulous count by a string of beads), and using certain postures of worship ; it is not permissible to abridge the devotions, unless in some special cases ; as on a journey, or preparing for battle, etc.

For the regular performance of the duty of prayer among the Muhammadans, it is also requisite that they turn their faces, while they pray, towards the temple of Mecca ; the quarter where the same is situate being, for that reason, pointed out within their mosques by a niche, which they call "Al Mihrab," and without, by the situation of the doors opening into the galleries of the steeples ; in places where they have no other direction there are also tables calculated for the ready finding out their "Qibla," or part towards which they ought to pray.

But what is principally to be regarded in the discharge of this duty, is the inward disposition of





the heart, which is the life and spirit of prayer; the most punctual observance of the external rites and ceremonies before mentioned being of little or no avail, if performed without due attention, reverence, devotion and hope: so that it must not hastily be concluded that the Muhammadans, or the considerate part of them at least, content themselves with the mere formal performance of a duty; nor may it be imagined that their whole religion consists in a mere external system of devotion.

Two matters deserve mention in connection with this subject. One is, that though the Prophet bid them take their "ornaments to every mosque" the Faithful are not generally wont to address themselves to God in sumptuous apparel, though they are obliged to be decently clothed; but, as a rule, lay aside their costly habits and pompous decorations, if they wear any, when they approach the divine presence, lest they should seem proud and arrogant. The other is, that they do not admit their women to pray with them in public; that sex being obliged to perform their devotions at home, or if they visit the mosques it must be at a time when the men are not there: for the Muslims are of opinion that their presence inspires a different kind of devotion from that which is requisite in a place dedicated to the worship of God. "Church Parade" finds no place in the devotions of Islam. Under the head of prayer, are also comprehended, as has been said, those legal washings or purifications which are necessary preparations.

Of these purifications there are two degrees:  
(1) "Wazu" or "Abdast," the ordinary ablution in





common cases, and before prayer; it consists in washing the face from the top of the forehead to the chin, as far as the ear; in cleansing the hands and arms up to each elbow; in rubbing a fourth part of the head with the wet hand, and in wiping the feet to the ankles.

These actions may be done in silence, or prayer may be repeated: of the invocation to the Deity, used on such occasions, one example will suffice. When cleaning the teeth, the votary says, "Vouchsafe, O God, as I clean my teeth, to purify me from my faults, and accept my homage, O Lord! May the purity of my teeth be for me a pledge of the whiteness of my face at the Day of Judgment."

The other purification (2) which is known as "Ghusl," consists in an ablution of the whole body after certain defilements. The *modus operandi* is as follows: The person, having put on clean clothes and performed the "wazu," proclaims his intention to make "Ghusl" and "to put away impurity." All being ready, he pours water over the right shoulder three times, then over the left three times, and lastly on his head a like number of times; so particular and careful must he be, that it is accepted amongst Muslims that if but one hair of the body be left untouched with the water, the whole act of purification is rendered vain and useless.

When water is not procurable, or when, in case of sickness, its use might be injurious, purification by sand is allowable.

Minute regulations are laid down with regard to the water which may be used for purification: rain, water from the sea, rivers, fountains, and wells is





allowable, as also snow, and ice-water; but, singularly enough, ice itself is not lawful. As to what constitutes impurity in water, and so renders it unfit for ablutions, it may be said, briefly, that it is universally accepted amongst the orthodox that if a dead body or any unclean thing falls into flowing water, or into a reservoir more than fifteen feet square, the liquid can be used, provided always that the colour, smell, and taste be not changed. It is for this reason that the pool near a mosque is never less than a certain size.

There are also special prayers for individual occasions, such as an eclipse of the sun or moon, times of drought, funerals (in the latter case they are always repeated in the open space in front of the mosque, or in some neighbouring spot, never in the graveyard), special work, fast of "Ramazan," etc., etc.

*Alms.*—The next point of the Muhammadan religion is the giving of alms, which are of two sorts, (a) legal; and (b) voluntary. The former (a) are of indispensable obligation, being commanded by the law, which both directs the portion which is to be given, and determines what things ought to be bestowed; but the latter (b) are left to every one's liberty to give more or less, as shall be deemed fit. Obligatory alms some think to be properly called Zakat, while voluntary alms are known as Sadaqat; though this last-mentioned name is somewhat indiscriminately used. They are called Zakat, either because they increase a man's store, by drawing down a blessing thereon, and produce in his soul the virtue of liberality, or because they purify the remain-





ing part of his substance from pollution, and the soul from the filth of avarice; while Sadaqat indicates that they are a proof of a man's sincerity in the worship of God. Some writers have called the legal alms tithes, but improperly, since in some cases they fall short, and in others exceed the proportion of one-tenth.

The giving of alms is frequently commanded in the Quran, and often recommended therein jointly with prayer; the former being held of great efficacy in causing the latter to be heard of God: for which reason the Khalif Omar used to say, "that prayer carries us half-way to God, fasting brings us to the door of His palace, and alms procure us admission."

The traditions, also, are very severe upon persons who omit to observe the duty of charity: "To whomsoever God gives wealth," so runs the terrible denunciation, "and he does not perform the charity due from it, his wealth will be made into the shape of a serpent on the day of resurrection, which shall not have any hair upon its head, and this is a sign of its poison and long life: and it has two black spots upon its eyes, and it will be twisted round his neck like a chain on the day of resurrection: then the serpent will seize the man's jawbones, and will say, 'I am thy wealth, the charity from which thou didst not give, and I am thy treasure from which thou didst not separate any alms.'" Another tradition says, "Verily two women came to the Prophet, each having a bracelet of gold on her arm, and the Prophet said, 'Do ye perform the alms for them?' They said 'we do not.' Then the Prophet said to them, 'Do you wish that God should cause you to wear hell fire in place of them?' They eagerly responded in the





negative, whereupon he commanded them to 'Perform the alms for them.'"

In any circumstances the Muhammadans esteem almsdeeds to be highly meritorious, and many of them have been illustrious for the exercise thereof. Hasan, the son of Ali, and grandson of Muhammad, in particular, is related to have twice in his life divided his substance equally between himself and the poor, and twice to have given away well-nigh all he possessed: and the generality are so addicted to acts of benevolence, that they extend their charity even to brutes.

Alms, according to the prescriptions of the Muhammadan law, are to be given of five things: (1) Of cattle, that is to say, of camels, kine, and sheep. (2) Of money. (3) Of corn. (4) Of fruits, viz., dates and raisins. And (5) Of wares sold. Of each of these a certain portion is to be bestowed in charity, being usually one part in forty, or two and a half per cent. of the value. But no alms are due for them, unless they amount to a certain quantity or number; nor until a man has been in possession of them eleven months, he not being obliged to give therefrom before the twelfth month is begun: nor are they due for cattle employed in tilling the ground, or in carrying of burdens. In some cases a much larger portion than that before-mentioned is customary: thus of what is gotten out of mines, or the sea, or by any art or profession, over and above what is sufficient for the reasonable support of a man's family, and especially where there is a mixture or suspicion of unjust gain, a fifth part ought to be given in charity. Moreover, at the end of the fast of Ramazan,



every Muslim is obliged to give in alms for himself and for everyone of his family, if he has any, a measure of wheat, barley, dates, raisins, rice, or other commonly eaten provisions.

The legal alms were at first collected by the Prophet himself, who employed them as he thought fit, in the relief of his poor relations and followers, though he chiefly applied them to the maintenance of those who served in his wars, and fought, as he termed it, in the way of God. His successors continued to do the same, till, in process of time, other taxes and tributes being imposed for the support of the government, they seem to have been weary of acting as almoners to their subjects, and to have left the latter to pay their donation according to their consciences.

*Fasting.*—The third point of religious practice is fasting; a duty of so great moment, that Muhammad used to say it was “the gate of religion,” and that “the odour of the mouth of him who fasteth is more grateful to God than that of musk.” According to the Muslim divines, there are three degrees of fasting: (1) The restraint of the stomach and other parts of the body from satisfying their lusts; (2) The maintenance of the ears, eyes, tongue, hands, feet, and other members free from sin; and (3) The fasting of the heart from worldly cares, and the concentration of the thoughts solely on God.

The Muhammadans are obliged, by the express command of the Quran, to fast the whole month of Ramazan, from the time the new moon first appears, till the appearance of the next new moon; during which time they must abstain from eating, drinking,





and lust, during the period from daybreak till night or sunset. If on account of dull weather, or of dust storms, the new moon be not visible, it is sufficient to act on the testimony of a trustworthy person, who may declare that Ramazan has commenced. The sacred injunction they observe so strictly, that while fasting they suffer nothing to enter their mouths, or other parts of their body, esteeming the fast broken and null if they smell perfumes, bathe, or even purposely swallow their spittle; some being so cautious that they will not open their mouths to speak, lest they should breathe the air too freely. The fast is also deemed void if a man kiss or touch a woman, or if he vomit designedly, while even should a portion of food no larger than a grain of corn, from the nightly meal remain between the teeth, or in a cavity of the mouth, the fast is destroyed. But after sunset they are allowed to refresh themselves, and to eat and drink, and enjoy the company of their wives until daybreak; though the more rigid begin the fast again at midnight. This fast is extremely rigorous and mortifying when the month of Ramazan happens to fall in summer (for the Arabian year being lunar, each month runs through all the different seasons in the course of thirty-two solar years), the length and heat of the days making the observance of it much more difficult and uneasy in such case than in winter.

Its distinctive feature is that it lasts only during light: accordingly the rich mitigate its rigours as far as possible by turning night into day: but amongst the poorer and industrial classes such a proceeding is obviously impossible; nevertheless, so strictly do they obey the injunction of the Prophet in this matter



that when Burton visited Cairo in the disguise of a Musulman doctor, he found but one patient who would break his fast, even though warned that the result of obstinacy might be death.

The reason given why Ramazan was selected for this purpose is, that on that month the Quran was sent down from heaven. But some assert that Abraham, Moses, and Jesus received their respective revelations in the same month.

From the fast of Ramazan none are excused, except only travellers and sick persons (under which last denomination the Muslims comprehend all whose health would manifestly be injured by their keeping the fast; as women with child and giving suck, elderly people, and young children); but then they are obliged, as soon as the impediment is removed, to fast an equal number of other days: the deliberate breaking of the fast is ordered to be expiated, either by setting a slave at liberty, by fasting every day for two months, or by giving sixty persons two full meals each, or one man a like number of repasts daily for sixty days: if the omission arise from the infirmity of old age the expiation consists in the bestowal of alms.

When the thirty days have expired the fast is broken, and this joyous occasion is known as the "feast of the breaking of the Fast." The reaction which sets in after so lengthened a period of restraint finds vent in every conceivable token of joy; the men lounge about happy, merry, and convivial, while the fair sex don their best jewellery and lightest attire; festive songs and loud music fill the air, friends meet, presents are distributed, and



all is life, joy, cheerful mirth, and amusement. The voluntary fasts of the Muhammadans are such as have been recommended either by the example or approbation of their Prophet; especially in regard to certain days of those months which they esteem sacred: there being a tradition that he used to say, "That a fast of one day in a sacred month was better than a fast of thirty days in another month; and that the fast of one day in Ramazan was more meritorious than a fast of thirty days in a sacred month." Among the more commendable days is that of Ashura, the tenth of the first month: regarding which it is related that when Muhammad came to Madina, and found the Jews there fasted on the day of Ashura, he asked them the reason of it; they told him it was because on that day Pharaoh and his people were drowned, Moses and those who were with him escaping: whereupon he said that he bore a nearer relation to Moses than they, and ordered his followers to fast on that day. However, it seems afterwards he was not so well pleased in having imitated the Jews; and, therefore, declared that, if he lived another year, he would alter the day, and fast on the ninth, abhorring so near an agreement with them.

While, however, on the one hand certain days are considered especially fitting for the observance of fastings, there are on the other a few occasions when it is unlawful to observe this duty; these are five in number, viz., the "feast of the breaking of the Fast," the "Kine-fête" (which will be explained hereafter), and the 11, 12, and 13 of the twelfth month of the year.

*Circumcision.*—It may here be stated that cir-





cumcision, though not enjoined in the Quran, is yet held by the Muhammadans to be an ancient divine institution, confirmed by the religion of Islam, not indeed so absolutely necessary but that it may be dispensed with in some cases, yet highly proper and expedient. The Arabs used this rite for many ages before the advent of the Prophet, having probably learned it from the Ishmaelites, who, in common with other tribes, practised the same. They used to circumcise their children, we are told, not on the eighth day, as is the custom of the Jews, but when about twelve or thirteen years old, at which age their father underwent that operation; and the Muhammadans imitate them so far as not to circumcise children before they be able, at least, distinctly to pronounce that profession of their faith, "There is no God but God, Muhammad is the apostle of God"; the age selected varies from six to sixteen, or thereabouts. Though the Muslim doctors are generally of opinion that this precept was originally given to Abraham, yet some have imagined that Adam was taught it by the angel Gabriel, to satisfy an oath he had made to cut off that flesh which, after his fall, had rebelled against his spirit; whence an odd argument has been drawn for the universal obligation of circumcision.

*Prohibitions.*—Having seen what are the fundamental points of the Muhammadan religion both as regards faith and practice, it may be well to refer to the prohibitions which are imposed upon the faithful followers of the Prophet.

*Wine.*—The drinking of wine, under which name all sorts of strong and inebriating liquors are com-





prehended, is forbidden in the Quran in more places than one. Some, indeed, have imagined that excess therein is alone reprehended, and contend that moderate use is allowed in the same book; but the more received opinion is, that to drink any strong liquors, either in a lesser quantity, or in a greater, is absolutely unlawful; and though libertines indulge themselves in a contrary practice, yet the more conscientious are so strict, especially if they have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, that they hold it unlawful not only to taste wine, but to press grapes for the making of it, to buy or to sell it, or even to maintain themselves with the money arising from trade in that liquor. The Persians, however, as well as the Turks, are very fond of wine; and if asked how it comes to pass that they venture to drink it, when it is so directly forbidden by their religion, they answer, that it is with them as with the Christians, who, their religion prohibiting drunkenness and profligacy as great sins, glory, notwithstanding, some in their debaucheries, and others in drinking to excess.

Several stories have been told as to the grounds on which Muhammad prohibited the drinking of wine: but the true reasons are given in the Quran, viz., because the ill qualities of that liquor surpass its powers for good, the common effects thereof being quarrels and disturbances in company, coupled with neglect in the performance of religious duties.

*Coffee and Tobacco.*—It has been a question whether coffee does not come under the above-mentioned prohibition, because the fumes of it have some effect on the imagination. This drink, which was first publicly used at Aden in Arabia Felix, about the sixteenth century of





the Christian era, and thence gradually introduced into Mecca, Madina, Egypt, Syria, and other parts of the Levant, has been the occasion of great disputes and disorders, having been sometimes publicly condemned and forbidden, and again declared lawful and allowed. At present the use of coffee, as of tobacco, is generally tolerated, if not permitted, though the more religious, especially the "Wahabis," make a scruple of taking the latter, not only because it inebriates, but also out of respect to a traditional saying of their Prophet, "That in the latter days there should be men who should bear the name of Muslims, but should not be really such; and that they should smoke a certain weed, which should be called TOBACCO." This prediction, however, must be received with some degree of reserve, inasmuch as the drug was not introduced into the East for many hundreds of years after the death of the Prophet. However, Eastern nations are generally so addicted to both, that they say, "A dish of coffee and a pipe of tobacco are a complete entertainment;" and the Persians have a proverb that coffee without tobacco is meat without salt; and Doughty, who travelled in Arabia about A.D. 1886, tells of a person in Najd who was wont to drink fifty cups of coffee in the twenty-four hours, and smoke a like number of pipes of tobacco.

Opium and "bhang" (which latter is the leaves of hemp in pills or conserve), though not mentioned in the Quran, are also, by the rigid Muhammadans, esteemed unlawful, because they intoxicate and disturb the understanding, yet these drugs are now commonly taken in the East; but they who are





addicted to them are generally looked upon as debauchees.

*Games of Hazard.*—Gaming is prohibited by the Quran in the same passages, and for the same reasons as wine. The word which is there used, signifies a particular manner of casting lots by arrows, much practised by the pagan Arabs, and performed in the following manner :—A young camel being bought and killed, and divided into parts, persons to the number of seven cast lots for them ; eleven arrows are then provided, without heads or feathers, seven of which are marked, the first with one notch, the second with two, and so on, and the other four have no mark at all. These arrows are put promiscuously into a bag, and then drawn by an indifferent person, who has another near him to receive them, and to see he acts fairly ; those to whom the marked arrows fall win shares in proportion to their lot, and those who draw blanks are entitled to no part of the camel at all, but obliged to pay the full price thereof. The winners, however, do not taste the flesh any more than the losers, but the whole is distributed among the poor ; and this they do out of pride and ostentation, it being reckoned a shame for a man to stand out, and not venture his money on such an occasion. This custom, therefore, though it was of some use to the poor, no less than a diversion to the rich, was forbidden by Muhammad as the source of great inconveniences, by occasioning quarrels and heart-burnings, which arose from the winners insulting those who lost.

Under the name of lots, commentators agree that all other games whatsoever, which are subject to hazard or chance, are comprehended and forbidden, as





dice, cards, tables, etc. And they are reckoned so ill in themselves, that the testimony of him who plays at them is, by the more rigid, judged to be of no validity in a court of justice. Chess is almost the only game which the Muslim doctors allow to be lawful (though it has been a doubt with some), because it depends wholly on skill and management, and not at all on chance : but it is only allowed under certain restrictions, viz., that it be no hindrance to the regular performance of devotions, and that no money or other stake be played for or betted ; which condition the Turks religiously observe, but the Persians neglect. But what is supposed chiefly to have been disliked in the game of chess was the carved pieces with which the pagan Arabs played, being little figures of men, elephants, horses, and dromedaries ; and these are thought, by some commentators, to be truly meant by the images prohibited in one of the passages of the Quran. That the Arabs in Muhammad the Prophet's time actually used such figures for chessmen appears from what is related of Ali, who passing accidentally by some who were playing at chess, asked, "What images they were upon which they were so intent ?" for they were perfectly new to him, that game having been but very lately introduced into Arabia, and not long before into Persia, whither it was first brought from India in the reign of Nushirwan (A.D. 530-578). Hence the Muhammadan doctors infer that the game was disapproved only for the sake of the images ; wherefore the Turks always play with plain pieces of wood or ivory ; but the Persians and Indians, who are not so scrupulous, continue to make use of the carved figures.





The Muhammadans comply with the prohibition against gaming much better than they do as regards wine; for though the common people, among the Turks more frequently, and the Persians more rarely, are addicted to play, yet the better sort are seldom guilty of such a proceeding.

Of course, Muslims, like other people in all climes and of all religions, are given to excesses—but at any rate as regards the denizens of Arabia a recent traveller (Doughty) bears testimony that “hazardry, banquetting, and many running sores and hideous sinks of our great towns are unknown to them. The Arabs, not less frugal than Spartans, are happy in the epicurean moderation of their religion.”

*Divination.*—Another practice of the idolatrous Arabs, also forbidden in the Quran, is that of divining by arrows. Those used for this purpose, which like others with which they cast lots had neither heads nor feathers, were kept in the temple of some idol, in whose presence they were consulted. Seven such arrows were stored in the mosque at Mecca; but generally in divination three only were used, on one of which was written, “My LORD hath commanded me;” on another, “My LORD hath forbidden me;” and the third was blank. If the first was drawn, it was looked upon as an approbation of the enterprise in question; if the second, a contrary conclusion was made; but if the third happened to be drawn, it was customary to mix them and draw over again, till a decisive answer was obtained. These divining arrows were generally consulted before anything of moment was undertaken; as when a man was about to marry, or about to go a journey, or the like.





*Meats.*—A distinction of meats was so general amongst eastern nations, that it is no wonder that Muhammad made some regulations in that matter. The Quran, therefore, prohibits the eating of blood, and swine's flesh, and whatever dies of itself, or is slain in the name or in honour of any idol, or is strangled, or killed by a blow or a fall, or by any other beast. In case of necessity, however, where a man may be in danger of starving, he is allowed by the law of Islam to eat any of the prohibited kinds of food.

*Usury.*—In the prohibition of usury, Muhammad followed the example of the Jews, who are strictly forbidden by their law to practice it among one another, though they may be guilty of it in their dealing with those of a different religion : but the Prophet of the Arabs has not made any distinction in this matter.

It may be doubted, however, whether the injunctions of the Prophet are universally followed by the Muhammadan world : at any rate in Arabia Deserta such is the recent testimony of Doughty, "the lending of usury disallowed in the Quran doctrine is practised even in these puritanical countries."

*Infanticide.*—The Musulman law also put a stop to the inhuman custom which had been long practised by the pagan Arabs, of burying their daughters alive, lest the parents should be reduced to poverty by providing for them, or else that they might avoid the displeasure and the disgrace which would follow, if they should happen to be made captives, or to become scandalous by their behaviour ; the birth of a daughter being, for these reasons, reckoned a great misfortune, and her death an equal happiness. The manner of practising





infanticide is differently related : some say that when an Arab had a daughter born, if he intended to bring her up, he sent her, clothed in a garment of wool or hair, to keep camels or sheep in the desert ; but if he designed to put her to death, he let her live till she became six years old, and then said to her mother, "Perfume her, and adorn her, that I may carry her to her mothers" ; which being done, the father led her to a well or pit dug for that purpose, and having bid her to look down into it, pushed her in headlong as he stood behind her, and then filling up the pit, levelled it with the rest of the ground ; but others say, that when a child was about to be born, they dug a pit ; to the brink the mother was brought, and if the child happened to be a daughter, they threw it into the pit, but if a son, they saved it alive.

This wicked practice is condemned by the Quran in several passages ; one of which, as some commentators judge, also alludes to another custom of the Arabians, altogether as wicked, and as common among other nations of old, viz., the sacrificing of their children to their idols ; as was frequently done, more particularly in satisfaction of a vow, by no means unusual, that if they had a certain number of sons born, they would offer one of them in sacrifice.

*Civil and Criminal Law.*—The Muhammadan civil law is founded on the precepts and determinations of the Quran. And it may be well to explain some of the more prominent usages and ordinances appertaining to this branch of the rites and institutions of Islam.

*Marriage and Polygamy.*—As regards polygamy,





it is a vulgar mistake to suppose that the Prophet granted to his followers an unbounded plurality of wives. The injunctions of the Quran are (Professor Palmer's translation), Chapter iv., verse 3: "Then marry what seems good to you by twos, or threes, or fours; and if ye fear that ye cannot be equitable, then only one; or what your right hands possess" (*i.e.* female slaves).

This passage seems to justify an unlimited number of female slaves, as distinguished from four legal wives: as a matter of fact, however, while the richer part of the Muslim community add, when so disposed, to the maximum number of wives, as many concubines as they think fit, the humbler classes are mostly content with a solitary spouse, though as worldly prosperity advances, they not infrequently add a few slave girls to the harem.

*Slavery.*—As regards slavery, the teaching of the Quran is largely directed to "female slaves." That slavery, however, is tolerated in the Quran, is evidenced from the language of Chapter ii., verse 220: "Wed not with idolatrous women until they believe, for surely a believing handmaid is better than an idolatrous woman, even though she please you. And wed not to idolatrous men until they believe, for a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he please you." At the time of Muhammad, captives were made slaves unless they embraced Islam on the field of battle, in which case the men became free, while females generally passed into the harems of the conquerors. The Quran, however, enjoins that slaves are to be treated with kindness and granted their freedom if they "have a writing" to that effect.





As regards the condition of slaves, Doughty bears testimony that it is "always tolerable and is often happy in Arabia: bred up as poor brothers of the sons of the household, they are a manner of God's wards of the pious Muhammadan householder." Even "Africans," such is the testimony of the same traveller, "think this is the better country where they are the Lord's free men, a land of more civil life, the soil of the two sanctuaries, the land of Muhammad: for such they do give God thanks that their bodies were sometimes sold into slavery."

It must be observed that among the Muhammadians, the children of their concubines or slaves are esteemed as equally legitimate with those of their legal wives; none being accounted bastards, except such only as are born of common women, and whose fathers are unknown.

Before leaving the subject of marriages, it may be proper to take notice of some peculiar privileges in relation thereto, which, as is asserted, were granted by God to Muhammad, to the exclusion of all other Muslims. One of them was, that he might lawfully marry as many wives and have as many concubines as he pleased, without being confined to any particular number; a privilege which, he asserted, had been granted to the prophets before him. Another was, that he might alter the turns of his wives, and favour such of them as he thought fit, without being tied to that order and equality which others are obliged to observe. A third privilege was, that no man might marry any of his wives, either such as he should divorce during his lifetime, or such as he should leave widows at his death.





*Divorce.*—Divorce is also well known to be allowed by Muhammadan law: but it must not be overlooked that the Prophet, to prevent his followers from divorcing their wives on every light occasion, or out of an inconstant humour, ordained that, if a man divorced his wife the third time (for he might divorce her twice without being obliged to part with her, if he repented of what he had done), it should not be lawful for him to take her again until she had been first married and divorced by some second husband. It must be observed, that though a man is allowed to repudiate his wife even on the slightest disgust, yet the women are not allowed to separate themselves from their husbands unless it be for ill-usage, want of proper maintenance, neglect of conjugal duty, or some cause of equal import; but then she generally loses her dowry, which she does not if divorced by her husband, unless she has been guilty of immodesty or notorious disobedience.

When a woman is divorced she is obliged, by the direction of the Quran, to wait three months before she marry another; after which time she is at full liberty to dispose of herself as she pleases; should circumstances, however, render this necessary, she must wait the birth of the child, continuing in the meantime in the husband's house, and maintained at his expense, it being forbidden to turn the woman out before the expiration of the term, unless she be guilty of impropriety. Where a man divorces a woman who has been his wife only in name, she is not obliged to wait any particular time, nor is he obliged to give her more than one half of her dower. If the divorced woman have a young child, she is to





suckle it till it be two years old; the father, in the meantime, maintaining her in all respects: a widow is also obliged to do the same, and to wait four months and ten days before she marry again.

Immorality on the part of either single or married women was, in the beginning of Muhammadism, very severely punished; it being ordered that such offenders should be shut up in prison till they died; but afterwards it was ordained that an adulteress should be stoned, and an unmarried woman guilty of impropriety scourged with a hundred stripes, and banished for a year. A she-slave, if convicted of adultery, suffers but half the punishment of a free woman, viz., fifty stripes, and banishment for six months; but is not to be put to death. To convict a woman of adultery, so as to make it capital, four witnesses are expressly required, and those, as the commentators say, ought to be men; and if a man falsely accuse a respectable woman of disreputable behaviour of any kind, and is not able to support the charge by that number of witnesses, he is to receive fourscore stripes, and his testimony is to be held invalid for the future. Immorality, in either sex, is by the sentence of the Quran to be punished with a hundred stripes.

If a man accuse his wife of infidelity, and is not able to prove it by sufficient evidence, and will swear four times that it is true, and the fifth time imprecate God's vengeance on him if it be false, she is to be looked on as convicted, unless she will take the like oaths, and make the like imprecation, in testimony of her innocency; which if she do, she is free from punishment though the marriage is generally dissolved.

*Inheritance.*—The laws of the Quran concerning





inheritances were principally designed to abolish certain practices of the pagan Arabs, who used to treat widows and orphan children with great injustice, frequently denying them any share in the inheritance of their fathers or their husbands, on pretence that the property ought to be distributed among those only who were able to bear arms, while widows were disposed of, even against their consent, as part of their husbands' possessions. To prevent such injuries for the future, the Prophet ordered that women should be respected, and orphans have no wrong done them; and in particular that the former should not be taken against their wills, as by right of inheritance, but should themselves be entitled to a distributive part, in a certain proportion, of what their parents, husbands, and near relations should leave behind them.

The general rule to be observed in the distribution of the deceased's estate is, that a male shall have twice as much as a female; but to this principle there are some few exceptions; a man's parents, for example, and also his brothers and sisters, where they are entitled not to the whole, but a small part of the inheritance, have equal shares with one another in the distribution thereof, without any difference on account of sex.

If a man dispose of part of his estate by will, two witnesses, at the least, are required to render the same valid; and such witnesses ought to be of his own tribe, and of the Muslim religion, if such persons can be found. Though there be no express law to the contrary, yet it is reckoned wrong for a man to give away any part of his substance from his family, unless it be in legacies for pious uses; and even in



that case a person ought not to bestow all he has in charity, but only a reasonable part in proportion to his substance. On the other hand, though a man make no will, and bequeath nothing for charitable uses, yet the heirs are directed, on the distribution of the estate, if the value will permit, to bestow something on the poor, especially such as are of kin to the deceased, and to the orphans.

The first law, however, laid down by Muhammad touching inheritances, was not very equitable; for he declared that those who had fled with him from Mecca, and those who had received and assisted him at Madina should be deemed the nearest of kin, and consequently heirs to one another, preferably to, and in exclusion of, their relations by blood; nay, though a man were a true believer, yet if he had not quitted his country for the sake of religion and joined the Prophet, he was to be looked on as a stranger; but this law did not long continue in force, being quickly abrogated.

*Contracts.*—As to private contracts between man and man, the conscientious performance of them is frequently recommended in the Quran. For the preventing of disputes all contracts are directed to be made before witnesses, and in case such contracts are not immediately executed, the same ought to be reduced into writing in the presence of at least two witnesses, who should be Muslims and of the male sex; but if two men cannot be conveniently found, then one man and two women may suffice. The same method is also directed to be taken for the security of debts to be paid at a future day; and where a writer is not to be found, pledges are to be taken. Hence, if people trust one another without writing, witnesses, or





pledge, the party on whom the demand is made is always acquitted if he denies the charge on oath, and swears that he owes the plaintiff nothing, unless the contrary be proved by very convincing circumstances.

*Murder.*—Wilful murder, though forbidden by the Quran under the severest penalties to be inflicted in the next life, is yet, by the same book, allowed to be compounded for, on payment of a fine to the family of the deceased, and freeing a Muslim from captivity; but it is in the election of the next of kin, or the avenger of blood, either to accept of such satisfaction, or to refuse it; for he may, if he pleases, insist on having the murderer delivered into his hands, to be put to death in such manner as he shall think fit.

*Manslaughter.*—If the Muhammadan laws seem light in case of murder, they may perhaps be deemed too rigorous in case of manslaughter, or the killing of a man undesignedly, which must be redeemed by fine (unless the next of kin shall think fit to remit it out of charity), and the freeing of a captive; but if a man be not able to do this, he is to fast two months together by way of penance. The fine for a man's blood, which is set at a hundred camels, is to be distributed among the relations of the deceased, according to the laws of inheritance; but it must be observed that, though the person slain be a Muslim, yet if he be of a nation or party at enmity, or not in confederacy, with those to whom the slayer belongs, he is not then bound to pay any fine at all, the redemption of a captive being, in such case, declared a sufficient penalty.

*Personal Injuries.*—As to injuries done to men in their persons, the law of retaliation is approved by the Quran; but this law, which seems to have been allowed





by Muhammad to his Arabians to prevent particular revenges, being neither strictly just nor practicable in many cases, is seldom put in execution, the punishment being generally turned into a mulct or fine, which is paid to the party injured.

Theft is ordered to be punished by cutting off the hand, as the offending part, which, at first sight, seems just enough; but on reflection it will at once occur that to sever a limb would be to deprive the culprit of the means of getting his livelihood in an honest manner.

*Minor Crimes.*—In injuries and crimes of an inferior nature, where no particular punishment is provided by the Quran, and where a pecuniary compensation will not suffice, the Muhammadans have recourse to stripes or beating, the most common chastisement used in the East at this day, as well as formerly; the instrument wherewith the sentence is generally executed being the cudgel, which for its virtue and efficacy in keeping people in good order and within the bounds of duty, is said to have come down from heaven.

Notwithstanding the Quran is in general regarded by the followers of Islam as the fundamental part of their civil law, yet the secular tribunals do not consider themselves bound to observe the same in all cases, but frequently give judgment against those decisions which are not consonant to equity and reason; and therefore distinction is to be made between the written civil law, as administered in the ecclesiastical courts, and the law of nature or common law (so to speak) which takes place in the secular courts, and has the executive power on its side.

*Wars against Infidels.*—Under the head of civil



laws may be comprehended the command to war against infidels, which is repeated in several passages of the Quran, and declared to be of high merit in the sight of God, those who are slain fighting in defence of the faith being reckoned martyrs, and promised immediate admission into Paradise. Hence this duty is greatly magnified by Muslim divines, who call the sword the key of Heaven and Hell, and persuade people that the least drop of blood spilt in the way of God, as it is called, is most acceptable unto Him, and that the defence of the territories of the faithful for one night is more meritorious than a fast of two months: on the other hand, desertion, or refusing to serve in these holy wars, or to contribute towards carrying them on, if a man has ability, is accounted a most heinous crime.

While Muhammadism was in its infancy, its opponents when taken in battle were doomed to death, without mercy; but this was judged too severe to be put in practice when that religion came to be sufficiently established, and past the danger of being subverted by its enemies.

When the Muhammadans declare war against people of a different faith, they give them their choice of three offers, viz. : (1) either to embrace the faith of Islam, in which case they become not only secure in their persons, families, and fortunes, but entitled to all the privileges of other Muslims; or (2) to submit and pay tribute, by doing which they are allowed to profess their own religion, provided it be not gross idolatry or against the moral law; or else (3) to decide the quarrel by the sword, in which last case, if the followers of the Prophet prevail, the women and children which are made captives become absolute





slaves, and the men taken in the battle may either be slain, unless they turn Muhammadans, or are otherwise disposed of at the pleasure of the prince.

*Division of Spoils.*—On the first considerable success of Muhammad in war, the dispute which happened among his followers in relation to the division of the spoil, rendered it necessary for him to make some regulation on this point; he therefore pretended to have received the divine commission to distribute the plunder among his soldiers at his own discretion, reserving therefrom, in the first place, one-fifth part for the uses after-mentioned; and, in consequence, he considered himself authorised, on extraordinary occasions, to distribute it as he thought fit, without regard to rules and regulations.

The fifth part directed by the Quran to be taken out of the spoil before it be divided among the captors, is declared to belong to God, and to the apostle and his kindred, as well as the orphans, and the poor, and the traveller; which words are variously understood.

Immovable possessions, as lands, etc., taken in war, are subject to the same laws as the movable; excepting only that the fifth part of the former is not actually divided, but the income and profits thereof, or the price, if sold, are applied to public and pious uses, and distributed once a year; while the prince may either take the fifth part of the land itself, or a like portion of the income and produce of the whole, as he shall make his election.

*Sacred Months.*—It was a custom among the ancient Arabs to observe four months in the year as sacred, during which they held it unlawful to wage





war, so that taking off the heads from their spears, they used to cease from incursions and other hostilities. During those months, even when persons were surrounded by enemies, they lived in full security ; so that if a man met the murderer of his father or brother he durst not offer him any violence.

The months which the Arabs held sacred were the first, the seventh, the eleventh, and the twelfth in the year. The last mentioned of these being the time wherein they performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, not only that month, but also the preceding and the following, were for that reason kept inviolable, that every one might safely and without interruption pass and repass to and from the sacred city. The second is said to have been more strictly observed than any of the other three, probably because in that month the pagan Arabs used to fast; the ninth month, which was afterwards set apart by Muhammad for that purpose, being in the time of ignorance dedicated to drinking in excess.

The observance of the aforesaid months seemed so reasonable to the Prophet that it met with his approbation ; and the duty is accordingly confirmed and enforced by several passages of the Quran, which forbid war to be waged during those months against such as acknowledge them to be sacred, but grant, at the same time, full permission to attack alike in the sacred months as in the profane those who make no such distinction.

One practice, however, of the pagan Arabs, in relation to these sacred months, Muhammad thought proper to reform. Some of them, weary of sitting quiet for three months together, and eager to make





their accustomed incursions for plunder, used, by way of expedient, whenever it suited their inclinations or convenience, to put off the observance of the first proper month to the following month, thereby avoiding to keep the former, which they supposed it lawful for them to profane, provided they sanctified another month in lieu of it, and gave public notice thereof at the preceding pilgrimage. This custom of transferring the observation of a sacred month to a profane month is absolutely condemned in a passage of the Quran, and declared to be an impious innovation.

*Sacred Day of Week.*—The setting apart of one day in the week for the more peculiar attendance on God's worship, so strictly required by the Jewish and Christian religions, appeared to Muhammad to be so proper an institution, that he did not hesitate to imitate an example of which he approved; though for the sake of distinction, he obliged his followers to observe a different day from either. Several reasons are given why Friday the sixth day of the week was selected for this purpose; but Muhammad seems to have preferred the day on which the people used, long before his time, to assemble together though such gatherings were held, perhaps, rather on a civil than a religious account. However it be, Muhammadan writers bestow very extraordinary encomiums on this day, calling it the prince of days, and the most excellent day on which the sun rises, asserting also that it will be the day whereon the last judgment will be solemnised; and they esteem it a peculiar honour to Islam, that God has been pleased to appoint this same to be the feast-day of the Muslims, and to grant them the advantage of having first observed it.





Though the Muhammadans do not think themselves bound to keep their day of public worship so holy as is the case with the Jews and Christians, there being a permission, as is generally supposed, in the Quran, allowing them to return to their employments or diversions after divine service is over; yet the more devout disapprove of any part of that day being devoted to worldly affairs, and require it to be wholly dedicated to the business of the life to come.





## CHAPTER XI

## THE PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA

"It is a duty towards God incumbent on those who are able to go thither to visit this house" [Becca or Mecca] (Quran, chapter iii., verse 90). Thus decreed the Prophet, the Lawgiver of Arabia, and for more than twelve centuries the injunction has been observed with a pious zeal and ardent fervour which put to shame the apathetic indifference of the civilised West. Volumes have been written by Muslim commentators in regard to this pilgrimage to the Holy Cities of Mecca and Madina, some laying more and some less stress upon the duty in question. Without seeking to follow in this labyrinth of sophistry and argument, it will suffice to assert that, whatever may be the *precise* value which Muhammad attached to the ceremony, he considered the discharge of the duty as all-important; and there is a tradition that he held that he who passes through life without fulfilling the injunction, "Perform the Pilgrimage of Mecca" (Quran, chapter ii., verse 192), may as well die a Jew or a Christian. Nor must it be overlooked that the Prophet of Islam made the "Hajj" one of the five





pillars or foundations of practice in the religion of Arabia.

Every Muslim is therefore bound to visit Mecca at least once during his lifetime, but there is a saving clause—provided “able” so to do. The discussions as to the definition of the elastic qualification attached to the injunction of the Prophet have been endless and undecided. As a general rule, however, intending votaries must comply with four conditions: (1) profession of the faith of Islam; (2) adolescence, generally fixed at the age of fifteen; (3) freedom from slavery; (4) mental sanity. To these some authorities add four more requirements, viz.: (1) sufficiency of provision; (2) the possession of a beast of burden, if living more than two days’ journey from Mecca; (3) security on the road; and (4) ability to walk two stages if the pilgrim have no beast. Others, again, include all conditions under two heads: (1) health, and (2) ability. It is even maintained by some, that those who have money enough, if they cannot go themselves, may hire a substitute to go to Mecca in their stead. But this privilege in the early days of Islam was very sparingly, if ever, used, and even now it is generally considered amongst the orthodox sects that pilgrimage cannot be performed by proxy. However, if a Muhammadan on his death-bed bequeath a sum of money to be paid to some person to visit Mecca on behalf of his patron, it is considered to satisfy in a way the claims of the Muslim law. It is also decreed a meritorious act to defray the expenses of those who cannot afford to obey the injunction of the Prophet. Many pilgrims, too poor to be able to collect the money which their religion requires them to spend for





this purpose, beg their way, and live upon the charity of those who are blessed with means and a benevolent heart to help their more necessitous brethren. Even women are not excused from the performance of the pilgrimage, and one portion of the temple is called "the women's sanded place," because it is appropriated to female devotees. To avoid the dangers and discomforts of the journey by land, women generally travel by sea as far as Jeddah. Perhaps they are in some cases persuaded to take this safer route, since, so says Doughty, "a man is mocked in the raw Hajj proverbs that will lead his querulous harem on pilgrimage." It may be explained that the weaker sex are forbidden to go alone; if, therefore, a fair lady have no husband or near relation to protect her, she must select some virtuous person worthy of confidence to accompany her, his expenses being charged to her account. This circumstance gives rise to a curious illustration of supply and demand. There are a class of idle and impudent scoundrels known as "guides," who besiege the pilgrim from morn till eve, obtruding advice whether it be sought or not, and sharing the votary's meals, but *not* his expenses, of which indeed they pocket a portion. These worthless vagabonds are wont, when the occasion presents itself, to let themselves out as husbands for rich old widows who repair to Mecca, or perchance now and again lend their services to some younger matrons who may have happened to lose their spouses on the road, it being meritorious and profitable to facilitate the progress of desolate ladies through the sacred territory of Arabia. The marriage under these circumstances, though formally arranged in the presence of a magistrate, is





merely nominal, and a divorce is given on the return of the parties to Jeddah, or elsewhere beyond the limits of Mecca. Pilgrimage is not obligatory upon slaves, who, should they accompany their master to Mecca, must on being released from bondage again repair to the Holy City as "free men."

It need scarcely be said that Muhammad, ready as he was to impose the pilgrimage as a duty upon others, was no less willing to accept the obligation himself; while after his death the Khalifs who succeeded him gloried in following his example; though it is but fair to add that they journeyed in many cases with great pomp and luxury, at the head of a magnificent retinue. This devout practice continued certainly as late as the time of Khalif Harun ar Rashid, who early in the ninth century visited Mecca no less than nine times; on one occasion expending, it is said, a sum of upwards of £700,000 sterling! If, however, his own confession is to be accepted, the result of his piety was satisfactory, inasmuch as he gained thereby numerous victories over his enemies—a circumstance which led him to inscribe on his helmet an Arabic passage to the effect that "he who makes the pilgrimage to Mecca becomes strong and valiant."

So firmly impressed, indeed, are the Muhammadans with the impiety of neglecting the decree of their Prophet with regard to the pilgrimage, that in A.D. 931-2, when, in consequence of the proceedings of the Karmathians, who, on one occasion (A.D. 929) at that period, had slain 20,000 pilgrims, and plundered the temple of Mecca, the journey to the Holy Cities was too dangerous to be hazarded, devout Muslims, rather



than omit the duty altogether, betook themselves to Jerusalem. It is also recorded that a famous doctor, by name Hüllage, was put to death for having taught certain ceremonies and prayers to supply the neglect of performing the "Hajj." Great indeed must be the merit of bowing in adoration before the mosque of the Arabian holy city, since it is taught that every step taken in the direction of the sacred precincts blots out a sin, while he who dies on his way is enrolled in the list of martyrs. In spite of all this (such is the weakness of human nature), in Burckhardt's time (about 1815), he found that Muhammadans were getting more and more lax in complying with the injunction of the Quran relative to pilgrimage, pleading the increased expense attendant on this duty, which in many cases they evade by giving a few dollars to some pious votaries to add to their own prayers some words on behalf of their errant and absent brethren.

It must not, however, be supposed that Muhammad *introduced* this rite amongst the Arabs; far otherwise, for he merely lent to an institution which he found in existence the all-potent weight of his sanction and approval. Omitting reference to primeval times, it will suffice to draw attention to the fact that, so far back as the middle of the fifth century, or upwards of 200 years before the era of the Prophet, the command of Mecca having passed into the hand of Qussai, "he maintained the Arabs," thus writes Tabari, one of the most trustworthy of native historians, "in the performance of all the prescriptive rites of pilgrimage, because he believed them in his heart to be a religion which it behoved him not to alter." Indeed, accord-





ing to Sir W. Muir, who has carefully investigated the subject, "the religious observances thus perpetuated by Qussai were in substance the same as in the time of Muhammad, and with some modification the same as we still find practised at the present day." It is not improbable that the Arabs in turn borrowed the notion of pilgrimage from the Jews. According to Muslim divines man being but a "wayfarer," winding his steps towards another world, the "Hajj" is emblematical of his transient condition here below. The idea, though admittedly poetical, is so far borne out in practice that pilgrimage is common to all faiths of olden times. In the words of a modern writer, "the Hindus wander to Egypt, to Thibet, and to the inhospitable Caucasus; the classic philosophers visited Egypt, the Jews annually flocked to Jerusalem, and the Tartars and Mongols (Buddhists) journey to distant Lama serais. The spirit of pilgrimage was predominant in mediæval Europe, and the processions of the Roman Catholic Church are, according to her votaries, modern memorials of the effete rite."

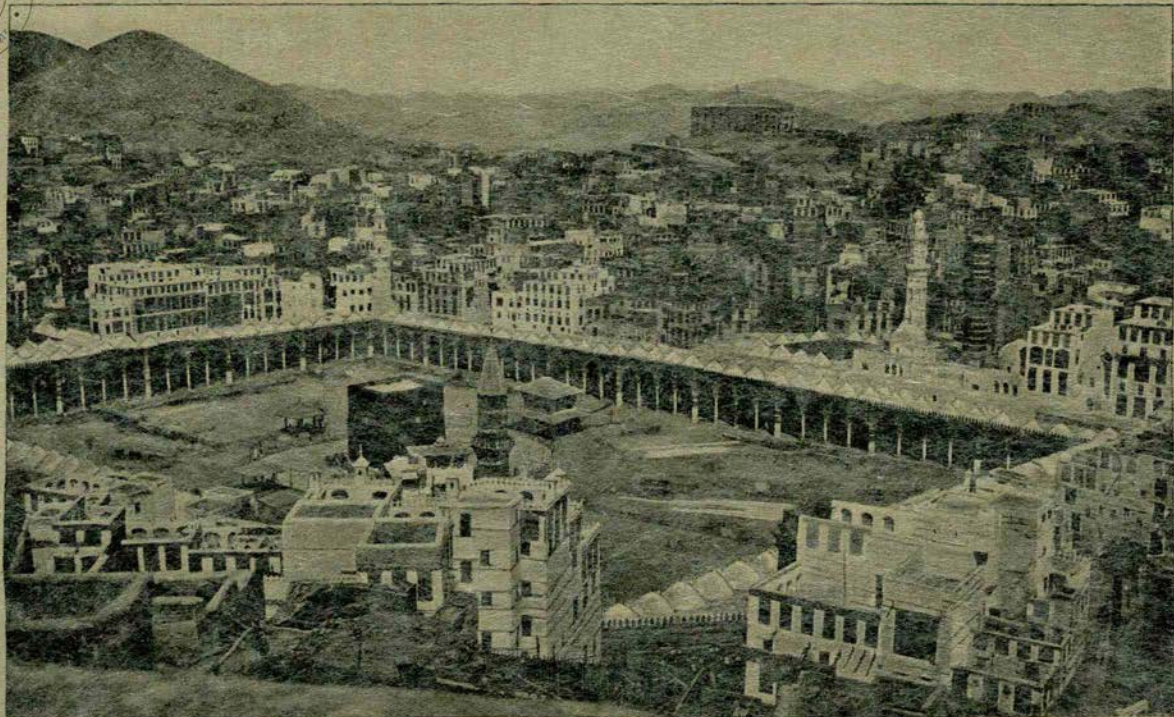
Before entering upon any description of the mode in which the pilgrimage is carried out, it may be well to notice some incidental matters, not only in themselves worthy of attention, but in regard to which a clear understanding is necessary to make intelligible the account of the "Hajj" which will follow:—

The temple of Mecca, is an oblong square enclosed in a great wall, the measurement of which is variously estimated. Burckhardt reckons it at 440 yards long, by 352 broad, while Burton gives the dimensions as 452 yards by 370. None of the sides are quite in a straight line, though a casual observer





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THE MOSQUE AT MECCA.

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would not detect the irregularity. On the eastern side the open square is enclosed by a colonnade, round which are pillars in a quadruple row, being three deep on the other sides; these are united by pointed arches, every four of which support a dome plastered and whitened on the outside. These domes are 152 in number. The pillars are about 20 feet in height, and generally from one foot and a half to one foot and three quarters in diameter, being more or less irregular. Some are of white marble, granite or porphyry, but the greater number are of common stone from the mountains of Mecca. Between every three or four columns stands an octagonal pillar about four feet in thickness. On the east side are two shafts of reddish grey granite in one piece, and one of fine grey porphyry, with slabs of white felspar. On the north side is one red granite column, as well as a pillar of fine grained red porphyry. Some parts of the walls and arches are gaudily painted in stripes of yellow, red, and blue, as are also the minarets, though paintings of flowers in the usual Musulman style are nowhere seen. The floors of the colonnades are paved with large stones badly cemented together. Causeways, also paved, lead from the colonnades towards the centre; these latter are of sufficient breadth to admit four or five persons to walk abreast, and they are elevated about nine inches above the ground. Between these causeways, which are covered with fine gravel or sand, grass appears growing in several places, produced by the water oozing out of the jars, which are arranged on the ground in long rows during the day. There is a descent of eight or ten steps from the gates on the



north side into the platform of the colonnade, and of three or four steps from the gates on the south side. The whole of these buildings are studded with small domes or cupolas, while seven minarets with varied quadrangular and round steeples with gilded spires and crescents, lend to the mosque a picturesque and pleasing appearance.

Towards the middle of the area stands the Kaba, an oblong massive structure, the dimensions of which, according to Burckhardt, are as follows:—length 45 feet, breadth 35 feet, and height from 35 to 40 feet. Burton, however, gives the measurements as 55 feet by 45 feet, while it appeared to him taller than it was long. It is composed of grey Mecca stone in large blocks of different sizes. According to some authorities these latter are roughly joined together with bad cement, while others maintain that the stones are tolerably fitted, and held by excellent mortar like Roman cement. The Kaba stands upon a base 2 feet in height, composed of fine white marble slabs, polished like glass, welded in which are large brass rings for the purpose of holding down the covering. The outer roof (for there is also an inner roof) is supported from within by three octangular pillars of aloe wood, between which, on a bar of iron, hang some silver lamps. The only door which affords entrance is on the eastern side (though Burckhardt erroneously places it in the northern wall), about 7 feet above the ground. It is universally accepted that originally the door was on a level with the pavement, and no satisfactory explanation has ever been forthcoming for the hollow round the Kaba. Some chroniclers are of opinion that the Quraish tribe,



when in charge of the holy temple, raised the door to prevent devotees entering without permission, an explanation which does not, however, account for the fact that the floor of the building is on a level with the door. It is generally supposed that in days gone by there was a second door, on the side of the temple opposite the present entrance. However, there is now but one door; this, which was brought to Mecca from Constantinople in A.D. 1633, is coated with silver, and ornamented with several gilt decorations. At its threshold various small lighted wax candles and perfuming pans filled with musk, aloe wood, etc., are placed every night, and pilgrims and pious devotees collect the drippings of wax, the ashes from the aloe wood, and the dusts from the threshold, either to rub upon their foreheads or to preserve as relics.

At the south-eastern corner of the Kaba, near the door, is the famous "Black Stone," which forms a part of the sharp angle of the building at from 4 to 5 feet from the ground. It is an irregular oval about 7 inches in diameter, with an undulating surface, composed of about a dozen smaller stones of different sizes and shapes, well joined together with a small quantity of cement, and perfectly well smoothed; the whole looking as if the stone had been broken into many pieces by a violent blow, and then united again. Worn away as the precious relic has been by the touches and kisses of countless myriads of pilgrims, it is hazardous to conjecture what was its original colour; at present it is a deep reddish brown, approaching to black, but it is popularly supposed amongst the Arabs themselves,





that, at first, whiter than milk, it grew black long since by the touch of an impure woman, or, as others proclaim, by the sins of mankind. The more reasonable amongst the sons of the desert, however, hold, what is probably the case, that the inside is still white, the colour of the exterior being the result of the devotions of countless worshippers; a theory which is confirmed by the experience of a recent traveller, who was bold enough to scratch the surface of the Holy Stone. It is surrounded on all sides by a border composed of a substance like pitch, mixed with gravel, of a similar but slightly different brownish colour. This border, which serves to support its detached pieces, is 2 or 3 inches in breadth and rises a little above the surface of the stone. Both the border and the stone itself are encircled by a silver band, wider below than above, and as regards two sides with a considerable swelling below, as if a part of the stone were hidden under it. The lower portion of the border is studded with silver nails.

It is asserted by Sale that when the Karmathians, a sect which rose to power about A.D. 891, took away the Black Stone, they could not be prevailed on for love or money to restore it, though the people of Mecca offered no less than 5000 pieces of gold for the precious charm (A.D. 931-2). After, however, keeping the relic for twenty-two years, seeing that they could not thereby draw the pilgrims from Mecca, they, of their own accord, sent back the worthless burden, at the same time openly declaring it not to be the true stone. It was, however, proved to be no counterfeit, so runs the legend, by its peculiar quality



of swimming on the water! It is contended by Muslims, that at the Day of Judgment this stone, then endowed with sight and speech, will bear witness in favour of all those who have touched it with sincere hearts.

In another corner of the Kaba there is a second stone about 5 feet from the ground: it is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet in length and 2 inches in breadth, placed upright, and is merely common Mecca stone. As the people walk round they touch this emblem with their right hand, while others, more zealous than correct, occasionally kiss it.

The four sides of the Kaba are covered with a black silk stuff hanging down and leaving the roof bare, but secured at the bottom to the metal rings in the basement. This covering is known as the "Kiswa," an Arabic word which signifies a "robe or habit." On it are various prayers interwoven in the same colour as the stuff itself, while a little above the middle, and running round the whole building, is a zone composed of five pieces of the same material as the covering, sewn together so as to form one continuous band. This is also decorated with inscriptions in gold, the characters, which are large and elegant, being surrounded by a band of the same metal. At the end where the borders unite, there is a plentiful array of green and red silk. On the first and second pieces is inscribed in letters of gold worked into red silk, the "Throne" verselet from the Quran, and on the third and fourth the title of the reigning Sultan. That part of the "Kiswa" which covers the door is richly embroidered with gold and silver, and lined with green silk, openings being left





for the black stone and the other stone, both of which thus remain uncovered. The gold-embroidered curtain which conceals the entrance is called the "Kaba's face-veil," though the vulgar, connecting it in some way with the Prophet's daughter, term it "Fatima's face-veil." Some, however, maintain that the popular appellation is derived from the circumstance that a certain individual of that name, was the first person who sent a veil of this kind to cover the door of the Kaba. The origin of this latter curious custom is ascribed by Burton to the practice of typifying the church visible by a virgin or bride, an idea which has found its way into the poetry of the East, wherein this sacred object of veneration is elegantly styled "Mecca's Bride." It is also worthy of remark that the "Holy of Holies" is guarded by eunuchs, just as would be the case were it the abode of fair damsels, who amongst the richer classes are universally surrounded in the East by a band of those hideous monstrosities.

"The black colour of the 'Kiswa,'" says Burckhardt, "covering a large cube in the midst of a vast square, gives to the Kaba, at first sight, a very singular and imposing appearance. As it is not fastened down tightly, the slightest breeze causes it to move in slow undulations which are hailed with prayers by the congregation assembled around the building, as a sign of the presence of its guardian angels, whose wings, by their motion, are supposed to be the cause of the waving of the covering. 70,000 angels have the Kaba in their holy care, and are ordered to transport it to Paradise when the trumpet of the Last Judgment shall be sounded."

The Meccan temple was first dressed as a mark of honour by the chief of the Himyarites, and the