

very lively and dramatic in their talk; but scarcely ever noisy in their mirth. They seldom indulge in loud laughter; expressing their enjoyment of anything ludicrous by a smile or an exclamation.

## CHAPTER IX

### LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND SCIENCE

THE metropolis of Egypt maintains the comparative reputation by which it has been distinguished for many centuries, of being the best school of Arabic literature, and of Muslim theology and jurisprudence. Learning, indeed, has much declined among the Arabs universally; but least in Cairo: consequently, the fame of the professors of this city still remains unrivalled; and its great collegiate mosque, the Azhar, continues to attract innumerable students from every quarter of the Muslim world.

The Arabic spoken by the middle and higher classes in Cairo is generally inferior, in point of grammatical correctness and pronunciation, to the dialects of the Bedawees of Arabia, and of the inhabitants of the towns in their immediate vicinity; but much to be preferred to those of Syria; and still more, to those of the Western Arabs. The most remarkable peculiarities in the pronunciation of the people of Egypt are the following:—The fifth letter of the alphabet is pronounced by the natives of Cairo, and throughout the greater part of Egypt, as *g* in *give*; while, in most parts of Arabia, and in Syria and other countries, it receives the sound of *j* in *joy*: but it is worthy of remark that, in a part of southern Arabia, where, it is said, Arabic was first spoken, the former sound is given to this letter.<sup>1</sup> In those parts of Egypt where this pronunciation of the fifth letter prevails, the sound of “hemzeh” (which is produced by a sudden emission of the voice after a total suppression) is given to the twenty-first letter, except by the better instructed, who give to this letter its true sound, which I represent by “*ḳ*.”

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that the Arabs of Egypt have retained, in this case, a pronunciation which was common, if not almost universal, with their ancestors in Asia.—See De Sacy's ‘Grammaire Arabe,’ 2nd ed. vol. i. pp. 17 and 18.

In other parts of Egypt, the pronunciation of the fifth letter is the same as that of *j* in *joy*, or nearly so; and the twenty-first letter is pronounced as *g* in *give*. By all the Egyptians, in common with most other modern peoples who speak the Arabic language, the third and fourth letters of the alphabet are generally pronounced alike, as our *t*; and the eighth and ninth, as our *d*: the fifteenth and seventeenth are also generally pronounced alike, as a very hard *d*; but sometimes as a hard *s*. Of the peculiarities in the *structure* of the Egyptian dialect of Arabic, the most remarkable are, the annexation of the letter "sheen" in negative phrases, in the same manner as the word "pas" is used in French; as "má yerdash" for "má yerda," "he will not consent;" "má hoosh țeyib" (vulgarly, "mósh țeyib,") for "má huwa țeyib," "it is not good:" the placing the demonstrative pronoun *after* the word to which it relates; as "el-beyt dé," "this house:" and a frequent unnecessary use of the diminutive form in adjectives; as "șugheiyir" for "șagheer," "small;" "kureiyib" for "kareeb," "near."

There is not so much difference between the literary and vulgar dialects of Arabic as some European Orientalists have supposed: the latter may be described as the ancient dialect *simplified*, principally by the omission of final vowels, and by otherwise neglecting to distinguish the different cases of nouns and some of the persons of verbs.<sup>1</sup> Nor is there so great a difference between the dialects of Arabic spoken in different countries as some persons, who have not held intercourse with the inhabitants of such countries, have imagined: they resemble each other more than the dialects of some of the different counties in England. The Arabic language abounds with synonyms; and, of a number of words which are synonymous, one is in common use in one country, and another elsewhere. Thus, the Egyptian calls milk "leben;" the Syrian calls it "haleeb:" the word "leben" is used in Syria to denote a particular preparation of *sour* milk. Again, bread is called in Egypt "eysh;" and in other Arab countries, "khubz;" and many examples of a similar kind might be adduced.—The

<sup>1</sup> The Arabs began to simplify their spoken language in the first century of the Flight, in consequence of their spreading among foreigners, who could not generally acquire the difficult language which their conquerors had hitherto used. For a proof of this, see 'Abulfedæ Annales Muslemici, Arab. et Lat.,' vol. i. pp. 432 and 434. Many other proofs might be mentioned; the fact being notorious. The modern Arabic, by its resemblance to the Biblical Hebrew, confirms the evidences of decay that the latter in itself exhibits.

pronunciation of Egypt has more softness than that of Syria and most other countries in which Arabic is spoken.

The literature of the Arabs is very comprehensive; but the number of their books is more remarkable than the variety. The relative number of the books which treat of religion and jurisprudence may be stated to be about one-fourth: next in number are works on grammar, rhetoric, and various branches of philology: the third in the scale of proportion are those on history (chiefly that of the Arab nation), and on geography: the fourth, poetical compositions. Works on medicine, chymistry, the mathematics, algebra, and various other sciences, &c., are comparatively very few.

There are, in Cairo, many large libraries; most of which are attached to mosques, and consist, for the greater part, of works on theology and jurisprudence, and philology: but these libraries are deplorably neglected, and their contents are rapidly perishing, in a great measure from the dishonesty and carelessness of their keepers and of those who make use of them. Several rich merchants, and others, have also good libraries. The booksellers of Cairo are, I am informed, only eight in number;<sup>1</sup> and their shops are but ill stocked. Whenever a valuable book comes into the possession of one of these persons, he goes round with it to his regular customers; and is almost sure of finding a purchaser. The leaves of the books are seldom sewed together; but they are usually enclosed in a cover bound with leather; and mostly have, also, an outer case<sup>2</sup> of pasteboard and leather. Five sheets, or double leaves, are commonly placed together, one within another; composing what is called a "karrás." The leaves are thus arranged, in small parcels, without being sewed, in order that one book may be of use to a number of persons at the same time; each taking a karrás. The books are laid flat, one upon another; and the name is written upon the front of the outer case, or upon the edge of the leaves. The paper is thick and glazed: it is mostly imported from Venice, and glazed in Egypt. The ink is very thick and gummy. Reeds are used for pens; and they suit the Arabic character much better. The Arab, in writing, places the paper upon his knee, or upon the palm of his left hand, or upon what is called a "misnedeh,"<sup>3</sup> composed of a dozen or more pieces of paper attached together at the four corners, and resembling a thin book, which he rests on

<sup>1</sup> These are natives. There are also a few Turkish booksellers.

<sup>2</sup> Called "zarf."

<sup>3</sup> Pronounced "misned'eh."

his knee. His ink and pens are contained in an inkhorn, called "dawáyeh," mentioned in the first chapter of this work, together with the penknife, and an ivory instrument ("mikaṭṭah") upon which the pen is laid to be nibbed. He rules his paper by laying under it a piece of pasteboard with strings strained and glued across it (called a "mistarah"),<sup>1</sup> and slightly pressing it over each string. Scissors are included among the apparatus of a writer: they are used for cutting the paper; a torn edge being considered as unbecoming. In Cairo there are many persons who obtain their livelihood by copying manuscripts.



BOOKS AND APPARATUS FOR WRITING.<sup>2</sup>

The expense of writing a karrás of twenty pages, quarto-size, with about twenty-five lines to a page, in an ordinary hand, is about three piasters (or a little more than sevenpence of our money); but more if in an elegant hand; and about double the sum if with the vowel points, &c.

In Egypt, and particularly in its metropolis, those youths or men who purpose to devote themselves to religious employments, or to any of the learned professions, mostly pursue a course of study in the great mosque El-Azhar; having previously learned nothing more than to read, and perhaps to write and to recite the *Ḳur-án*. Azhar, which is regarded as the principal university<sup>3</sup> of the East, is an extensive building,

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced "mistar'ah."

<sup>2</sup> The latter consist of the reed ("kalam"), the "mikaṭṭah," the penknife ("mikshaṭ"), the "dawáyeh," the "mistarah," the "misneh" (upon which the five articles before mentioned lie), and the scissors ("mikaṣṣ") which, with their sheath, are placed upon the upper book.

<sup>3</sup> The Azhar is not called a "university" with strict propriety; but is regarded as such by the Muslims, as whatever they deem worthy of the

surrounding a large, square court. On one side of this court, the side towards Mekkeh, is the chief place of prayer; a spacious portico: on each of the other three sides are smaller porticoes, divided into a number of apartments, called "riwáks," each of which is destined for the use of natives of a particular country, or of a particular province of Egypt. This building is situate within the metropolis. It is not remarkable in point of architecture, and is so surrounded by houses that very little of it is seen externally. The students are called "mugáwireen."<sup>1</sup> Each riwák has a library for the use of its members; and from the books which it contains, and the lectures of the professors, the students acquire their learning. The regular subjects of study are grammatical inflexion and syntax,<sup>2</sup> rhetoric,<sup>3</sup> versification,<sup>4</sup> logic,<sup>5</sup> theology,<sup>6</sup> the exposition of the *Qur-án*,<sup>7</sup> the Traditions of the Prophet,<sup>8</sup> the complete science of jurisprudence, or rather of religious, moral, civil, and criminal law,<sup>9</sup> which is chiefly founded on the *Qur-án* and the Traditions; together with arithmetic,<sup>10</sup> as far as it is useful in matters of law. Lectures are also given on algebra,<sup>11</sup> and on the calculations of the Mohammadan calendar, the times of prayer, &c.<sup>12</sup> The lecturer seats himself on the ground, at the foot of a column; and his hearers, with him, seated also on the ground, form a ring. Different books are read by students of different sects. Most of the students, being natives of Cairo, are of the

name of science, or necessary to be known, is taught within its walls. Its name has been translated, by European travellers, "the Mosque of Flowers;" as though it had been called "Gámè' el-Azhár," instead of "El-Gámè' el-Azhar," which is its proper appellation, and signifies "the Splendid Mosque." It is the first with respect to the period of its foundation, as well as in size, of all the mosques within the original limits of the city.—The preceding portion of this note (which was inserted in the first edition of the present work) apparently escaped the notice of Baron Hammer-Purgstall; for he remarked (in the Vienna 'Jahrbücher der Literatur,' lxxxi. Bd., p. 71) that, instead of "Azhar," I should have written, in this case, "Esher," [or "Ezher"]; the former, he says, signifying "flowers." The name of the mosque in question (synonymous with "neiyir," or "splendid," &c.,) is pronounced by almost all the natives of Egypt, and the Arabs in general, as I have written it, "Azhar," with the accent on the first syllable; and the plural of "zahreh" (a flower), "azhár:" but by the Turks the former word is pronounced "ezher."

<sup>1</sup> In the singular, "mugáwir."

<sup>2</sup> "El-ma'ánee wa-l-bayán."

<sup>3</sup> "El-mantík."

<sup>4</sup> "Et-teseer."

<sup>5</sup> "El-fik-h."

<sup>6</sup> "El-gebr wa-l-muqábaleh."

<sup>7</sup> "Şarf" and "naħw."

<sup>8</sup> "El-'arood."

<sup>9</sup> "Et-towheed."

<sup>10</sup> "El-aħádees."

<sup>11</sup> "El-ħesáb."

<sup>12</sup> "El-meekát."

Sháfe'ee sect; and always the Sheykh, or head of the mosque, is of this sect. None of the students pay for the instruction they receive; being mostly of the poorer classes. Most of those who are strangers, having *riwáks* appropriated to them, receive a daily allowance of food, provided from funds chiefly arising from the rents of houses bequeathed for their maintenance. Those of Cairo and its neighbourhood used to receive a similar allowance; but this they no longer enjoy, except during the month of Ramadán: for Moḥammad 'Alee took possession of all the cultivable land which belonged to the mosques, and thus the Azhar lost the greater portion of the property which it possessed: nothing but the expenses of necessary repairs, and the salaries of its principal officers, are provided for by the government. The professors, also, receive no salaries. Unless they inherit property, or have relations to maintain them, they have no regular means of subsistence but teaching in private houses, copying books, &c.; but they sometimes receive presents from the wealthy. Any person who is competent to the task may become a professor by obtaining a licence from the Sheykh of the mosque. The students mostly obtain their livelihood by the same means as the professors; or by reciting the *Qur-án* in private houses, and at the tombs and other places. When sufficiently advanced in their studies, some of them become *kádees*, *muftées*, *imáms* of mosques, or schoolmasters, in their native villages or towns, or in Cairo: others enter into trade: some remain all their lifetime studying in the Azhar, and aspire to be ranked among the higher 'Ulamá. Since the confiscation of the lands which belonged to the Azhar, the number of that class of students to whom no endowed *riwák* is appropriated has very much decreased. The number of students, including all classes except the blind, is (as I am informed by one of the professors) about one thousand five hundred.<sup>1</sup>

There is a chapel (called "*Záwiyet el-'Omyán*," or the Chapel of the Blind), adjacent to the eastern angle of the Azhar, and one of the dependencies of that mosque, where at present about three hundred poor blind men, most of whom are students, are maintained, from funds bequeathed for that purpose. These blind men often conduct themselves in a most rebellious and violent manner: they are notorious for such conduct, and for

<sup>1</sup> Many persons say that their number is not less than three thousand: others, not more than one thousand. It varies very much at different times.

their fanaticism. A short time ago, a European traveller entering the Azhar, and his presence there being buzzed about, the blind men eagerly inquired, "Where is the infidel?" adding, "We will kill him;" and groping about at the same time to feel and lay hold of him: they were the only persons who seemed desirous of shewing any violence to the intruder. Before the accession of Moḥammad 'Alee Báshà, they often behaved in a very outrageous manner whenever they considered themselves oppressed, or scanted in their allowance of food: they would, on these occasions, take a few guides, go about with staves, seize the turbans of passengers in the streets, and plunder the shops. The most celebrated of the present professors in the Azhar, the sheykh El-Ḳuweysinee,<sup>1</sup> who is himself blind, being appointed, a few years ago, Sheykh of the Záwiyet el-'Omyán, as soon as he entered upon his office, caused every one of the blind men there to be flogged; but they rose against him, bound him, and inflicted upon him a flogging far more severe than that which they had themselves endured; and obliged him to give up his office.

Learning was in a much more flourishing state in Cairo before the entrance of the French army than it has been in later years. It suffered severely from this invasion; not through direct oppression, but in consequence of the panic which this event occasioned, and the troubles by which it was followed. Before that period, a sheykh who had studied in the Azhar, if he had only two boys, sons of a moderately rich felláḥ, to educate, lived in luxury: his two pupils served him, cleaned his house, prepared his food, and, though they partook of it with him, were his menial attendants at every time but that of eating: they followed him whenever he went out; carried his shoes (and often kissed them when they took them off) on his entering a mosque; and in every case treated him with the honour due to a prince. He was then distinguished by an ample dress, and the large formal turban called a "muḳleh;" and as he passed along the street, whether on foot or mounted on an ass or mule, passengers often pressed towards him to implore a short ejaculatory prayer on their behalf; and he who succeeded in obtaining this wish believed himself especially blessed: if he passed by a Frank riding, the latter was obliged to dismount: if he went to a butcher, to procure some meat (for he found it best to do so, and not to send another), the butcher refused to

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written he became Sheykh of the Azhar. He is now dead.

make any charge; but kissed his hand, and received as an honour and a blessing whatever he chose to give.—The condition of a man of this profession is now so fallen, that it is with difficulty he can obtain a scanty subsistence, unless possessed of extraordinary talent.

The Muslim 'Ulamà are certainly much fettered by their religion in the pursuit of some of the paths of learning; and superstition sometimes decides a point which has been controverted for centuries. There is one singular means of settling a contention on any point of faith, science, or fact, of which I must give an instance. The following anecdote was related to me by the Imám of the late Muftee (the sheykh El-Mahdee): I wrote it in Arabic, at his dictation, and shall here translate his words. The sheykh Moḥammad El-Baháee (a learned man, whom the vulgar regard as a "welee," or especial favourite of heaven,) was attending the lectures of the sheykh El-Emeer el-Kebeer (Sheykh of the sect of the Málikees), when the professor read, from the Gámè' eṣ-Ṣagheer<sup>1</sup> of Es-Suyooṭee, this saying of the Prophet: "Verily El-Ḥasan and El-Ḥoseyn are the two lords of the youths of the people of Paradise, in Paradise;" and proceeded to remark, in his lecture, after having given a summary of the history of El-Ḥasan and El-Ḥoseyn, that, as to the common opinion of the people of Maṣr (or Cairo) respecting the head of El-Ḥoseyn, holding it to be in the famous Mesh-hed in this city (the mosque of the Ḥasaneyn), it was without foundation; not being established by any credible authority. "I was affected," says Moḥammad El-Baháee, "with excessive grief, by this remark; since I believed what is believed by people of integrity and of intuition, that the noble head was in this Mesh-hed; and I entertained no doubt of it: but I would not oppose the sheykh El-Emeer, on account of his high reputation and extensive knowledge. The lecture terminated, and I went away, weeping; and when night overshadowed the earth, I rose upon my feet, praying, and humbly supplicating my Lord, and betaking myself to his most noble apostle (God bless and save him), begging that I might see him in my sleep, and that he would inform me in my sleep of the truth of the matter concerning the place of the noble head. And I dreamed that I was walking on the way to visit the celebrated Mesh-hed El-Ḥoseynee in Maṣr, and that I approached the ḡubbeh,<sup>2</sup> and saw in it a spreading light, which filled it: and I entered its

<sup>1</sup> A celebrated compendious collection of the Traditions of the Prophet.

<sup>2</sup> The saloon of the tomb.



door, and found a shereef standing by the door ; and I saluted him, and he returned my salutation, and said to me, ' Salute the Apostle of God (God bless and save him);' and I looked towards the kibleh,<sup>1</sup> and saw the Prophet (God bless and save him) sitting upon a throne, and a man standing on his right, and another man standing on his left : and I raised my voice, saying, ' Blessing and peace be on thee, O Apostle of God : ' and I repeated this several times, weeping as I did it : and I heard the Apostle of God (God bless and save him) say to me, ' Approach, O my son, O Moḥammad.' Then the first man took me, and conducted me towards the Prophet (God bless and save him), and placed me in his noble presence ; and I saluted him, and he returned my salutation, and said to me, ' God recompense thee for thy visit to the head of El-Hoseyn, my son.' I said, ' O Apostle of God, is the head of El-Hoseyn here ? ' He answered, ' Yes, it is here.' And I became cheerful : grief fled from me ; and my heart was strengthened. Then I said, ' O Apostle of God, I will relate to thee what my sheykh and my preceptor El-Emeer hath affirmed in his lecture : ' and I repeated to him the words of the sheykh : and he (God bless and save him) looked down, and then raised his head, and said, ' The copyists are excused.' I awoke from my sleep joyful and happy : but I found that much remained of the night ; and I became impatient of its length ; longing for the morn to shine, that I might go to the sheykh, and relate to him the dream, in the hope that he might believe me. When the morn rose, I prayed, and went to the house of the sheykh ; but found the door shut. I knocked it violently ; and the porter came in alarm, asking, ' Who is that ? ' but when he knew me, for he had known my abode from the sheykh, he opened the door to me : if it had been another person, he would have beaten him. I entered the court of the house, and began to call out, ' My master ! My master ! ' The sheykh awoke, and asked, ' Who is that ? ' I answered, ' It is I, thy pupil, Moḥammad El-Baháee.' The sheykh was in wonder at my coming at this time, and exclaimed, ' God's perfection ! What is this ? What is the news ? ' thinking that some great event had happened among the people. He then said to me, ' Wait while I pray.' I did not sit down until the sheykh came down to the lower room ; when he said to me, ' Come up : ' and I went up, and neither saluted him, nor kissed his hand, from the effect of the dream which I had seen ; but said, ' The

<sup>1</sup> That is, towards the niche which marks the direction of Mekkeh.

head of El-Hoseyn is in this well-known Mesh-hed in Maṣr : there is no doubt of it.' The sheykh said, 'What proof have you of that? If it be a true record, adduce it.' I said, 'From a book, I have none.' The sheykh said, 'Hast thou seen a vision?' I replied, 'Yes ;' and I related it to him ; and informed him that the Apostle of God (God bless and save him) had told me that the man who was standing by the door was 'Alee the son of Aboo-Tálib, and that he who was on the right of the Prophet, by the throne, was Aboo-Bekr, and that he on his left was 'Omar the son of El-Khaṭṭáb ; and that they had come to visit the head of the Imám El-Hoseyn. The sheykh rose, and took me by the hand, and said, 'Let us go and visit the Mesh-hed El-Hoseynee ;' and when he entered the ḡubbeh, he said, 'Peace be on thee, O son of the daughter of the Apostle of God. I believe that the noble head is here, by reason of the vision which this person has seen ; for the vision of the Prophet is true ; since he hath said, 'Whoso seeth me in his sleep seeth me truly ; for Satan cannot assume the similitude of my form.' Then the sheykh said to me, 'Thou hast believed, and I have believed : for these lights are not illusive.'"—The above-quoted tradition of the Prophet has often occasioned other points of dispute to be settled in the same manner, by a dream ; and when the dreamer is a person of reputation, no one ventures to contend against him.

The remark made at the commencement of this chapter implies that there are, in the present day, many learned men in the metropolis of Egypt ; and there are some also in other towns of this country. One of the most celebrated of the modern 'Ulamà of Cairo is the sheykh Ḥasan El-'Aṭṭár, who is the present Sheykh of the Azhar.<sup>1</sup> In theology and jurisprudence, he is not so deeply versed as some of his contemporaries, particularly the sheykh El-Ḥuweysinee, whom I have before mentioned ; but he is eminently accomplished in polite literature.<sup>2</sup> He is the author of an "Inshà," an excellent collection of Arabic letters, on various subjects, which are intended as models of epistolary style. This work has been printed at Booláḡ. In mentioning its author, I fulfil a promise which he condescended to ask of me : supposing that I should publish, in my own country, some account of the people of Cairo, he desired me to state that I was acquainted with him, and to give my opinion of his acquirements.—The sheykh

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written, this eminent scholar has died.

<sup>2</sup> "'Ilm el-adab."

Moḥammad Shiháb is also deservedly celebrated as an accomplished Arabic scholar, and elegant poet. His affability and wit attract to his house, every evening, a few friends, in whose pleasures, on these occasions, I sometimes participate. We are received in a small, but very comfortable room: each of us takes his own pipe; and coffee alone is presented to us: the sheykh's conversation is the most delightful banquet that he can offer us.—There are also several other persons in Cairo who enjoy considerable reputation as philologists and poets.—The sheykh 'Abd-Er-Raḥmán El-Gabartee, another modern author, and a native of Cairo, particularly deserves to be mentioned, as having written a very excellent history of the events which have taken place in Egypt since the commencement of the twelfth century of the Flight.<sup>1</sup> He died in 1825, or 1826, soon after my first arrival in Cairo. His family was of El-Gabart, on the south-east of Abyssinia, bordering on the ocean. The Gabartees (or natives of that country) are Muslims. They have a *riwák* (or apartment appropriated to such of them as wish to study) in the Azhar; and there is a similar provision for them at Mekkeh, and also at El-Medeeneh.

The works of the ancient Arab poets were but imperfectly understood (in consequence of many words contained in them having become obsolete) between two and three centuries, only, after the time of Moḥammad: it must not therefore be inferred, from what has been said in the preceding paragraph, that persons able to explain the most difficult passages of the early Arab authors are now to be found in Cairo, or elsewhere. There are, however, many in Egypt who are deeply versed in Arabic grammar, rhetoric, and polite literature; though the sciences mostly pursued in this country are theology and jurisprudence. Few of the 'Ulamà of Egypt are well acquainted with the history of their own nation; much less with that of other people.

The literary acquirements of those who do not belong to the classes who make literature their profession are of a very inferior kind. Many of the wealthy tradespeople are well instructed in the arts of reading and writing; but few of these devote much time to the pursuit of literature. Those who have committed to memory the whole, or considerable portions, of the *Kur-án*, and can recite two or three celebrated "*kaşeedehs*" (or short poems), or introduce, now and then,

<sup>1</sup> The twelfth century of the Flight commenced on the 16th or 17th of October, A.D. 1688.

an apposite quotation in conversation, are considered accomplished persons. Many of the tradesmen of Cairo can neither read nor write, or can only read; and are obliged to have recourse to a friend to write their accounts, letters, &c. : but these persons generally cast accounts, and make intricate calculations, mentally, with surprising rapidity and correctness.

It is a very prevalent notion among the Christians of Europe, that the Muslims are enemies to almost every branch of knowledge. This is an erroneous idea; but it is true that their studies, in the present age, are confined within very narrow limits. Very few of them study medicine, chymistry (for our first knowledge of which we are indebted to the Arabs), the mathematics, or astronomy. The Egyptian medical and surgical practitioners are mostly barbers, miserably ignorant of the sciences which they profess, and unskilful in their practice; partly in consequence of their being prohibited by their religion from availing themselves of the advantage of dissecting human bodies. But a number of young men, natives of Egypt, are now receiving European instruction in medicine, anatomy, surgery, and other sciences, for the service of the government. Many of the Egyptians, in illness, neglect medical aid; placing their whole reliance on Providence or on charms. Alchymy is more studied in this country than pure chymistry; and astrology, more than astronomy. The astrolabe and quadrant are almost the only astronomical instruments used in Egypt. Telescopes are rarely seen here; and the magnetic needle is seldom employed, except to discover the direction of Mekkeh; for which purpose, convenient little compasses (called "kibleeyehs"), shewing the direction of the kibleh at various large towns in different countries, are constructed, mostly at Dimyát: many of these have a dial, which shews the time of noon, and also that of the 'aşr, at different places and different seasons. Those persons in Egypt who profess to have considerable knowledge of astronomy are generally blind to the true principles of the science: to say that the earth revolves round the sun, they consider absolute heresy. Pure astronomy they make chiefly subservient to their computations of the calendar.

The Muslim year consists of twelve lunar months; the names of which are pronounced by the Egyptians in the following manner:—

1. Moḥarram.
2. Šafar.
3. Rabeeā el-Owwal.
4. Rabeeā et-Tánee.
5. Gumád el-Owwal, or Gumáda-l-Oolà.
6. Gumád et-Tánee, or Gumáda-t-Tániyeh.
7. Regeb.
8. Shaabán.
9. Ramaḍán.
10. Showwál.
11. Zu-l-Ḳaadeh, or El-Ḳaadeh.
12. Zu-l-Ḥeggeh, or El-Ḥeggeh.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is the general opinion of our chronologers, that the first day of the Muslim era of "the Flight" (in Arabic, "el-Hijrah," or, as it is pronounced by most of the Egyptians, "el-Higreh," more correctly translated "the Emigration,") was Friday, the 16th of July, A.D. 622. But M. Caussin de Perceval (in his 'Essai sur l'Histoire des Arabes,' &c.,) has shewn that this is a mistake. The first year of the Flight was the two hundred and eleventh year of a period during which the Arabs made use of a defective luni-solar reckoning, making every third year to consist of thirteen lunar months; the others consisting of twelve such months. This mode of reckoning was abolished by Moḥammad in the twelfth month of the tenth year of the Flight, at the time of the pilgrimage; whence it appears that the first year of the Flight commenced, most probably, on Monday, the 19th of April, A.D. 622. According to M. Caussin de Perceval, the first ten years of the Flight commenced at the following periods:—

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1st. [Monday]   | April 19, 622. |
| 2nd. [Saturday] | May 7, 623.    |
| 3rd. [Thursday] | April 26, 624. |
| 4th. [Monday]   | April 15, 625. |
| 5th. [Saturday] | May 3, 626.    |
| 6th. [Thursday] | April 23, 627. |
| 7th. [Tuesday]  | April 12, 628. |
| 8th. [Monday]   | May 1, 629.    |
| 9th. [Friday]   | April 20, 630. |
| 10th. [Tuesday] | April 9, 631.  |

Thus it appears that the first and fourth and seventh years were of thirteen lunar months each; and the seventh was the last year that was thus augmented; therefore, with the eighth year commenced the reckoning by common lunar years; and from this point we may use the tables that have often been published for finding the periods of commencement of years of the Flight. But we must not rely upon the exact accuracy of these tables: for the commencement of the month was generally determined by actual observation of the new moon, and therefore differed in different places. The era does not commence from the day on which the Prophet departed from Mekkeh (as supposed by most of our authors who have mentioned this subject), but from the first day of the moon or month of Moḥarram preceding that event. It is said that Moḥammad, after he had remained three days concealed in a cave near Mekkeh, with Aboo-Bekr, began his

Each of these months retrogrades through all the different seasons of the solar year in the period of about thirty-three years and a half: consequently, they are only used for fixing the anniversaries of most religious festivals, and for the dates of historical events, letters, &c. ; and not in matters relating to astronomy or the seasons. In the latter cases, the Coptic months are still in general use.

With the modern names of the latter I give the corresponding periods of our calendar:—

1. Toot commences on the 10th or 11th of September.
2. Bábeh . . . . . 10th or 11th of October.
3. Hátoor . . . . . 9th or 10th of November.
4. Kiyahk (vulg. Kiyák) . . . . . 9th or 10th of December.
5. Toobeh . . . . . 8th or 9th of January.
6. Amsheer . . . . . 7th or 8th of February.
7. Barmahát . . . . . 9th of March.
8. Barmoodeh . . . . . 8th of April.
9. Beshens . . . . . 8th of May.
10. Ba-ooneh . . . . . 7th of June.
11. Ebeeb . . . . . 7th of July.
12. Misrà . . . . . 6th of August.<sup>1</sup>

The Eiyám en-Nesee (Intercalary days), five or six days, complete the year.

These months, it will be observed, are of thirty days each. Five intercalary days are added at the end of three successive years; and six at the end of the fourth year. The Coptic leap-year immediately precedes ours: therefore the Coptic year begins on the 11th of September only when it is the next after their leap-year; or when our next ensuing year is a leap-year; and consequently, after the following February, the corresponding days of the Coptic and our months will be the same as in other years. The Copts begin their reckoning from the era of Diocletian, A.D. 284.

The modern (like the ancient) Egyptians divide the year into three seasons; namely, the winter ("esh-shitá"), the

journey, or "flight," to El-Medeeneh, on the ninth day of the third month (Rabeeá el-Owwal), sixty-eight days after the commencement of the era.

<sup>1</sup> The Coptic names, of which these are corruptions, are given in 'Horæ Ægyptiacæ,' by R. S. Poole, pp. 7-9; and their derivation from the names of the ancient Egyptian divinities of the months is shewn in pp. 14, 15, and 18, of that work.

summer ("eş-şeyf"), and the inundation ("en-neel," properly the Nile). Their astronomers also make use of the calendar of the Mansions of the Moon, by which the people of Arabia used to regulate all affairs relating to the seasons.

In Egypt, and other Muslim countries, from sunset to sunset is reckoned as the civil day; the night being classed with the day which *follows* it: thus the night *before* Friday is called the night of Friday. Sunset is twelve o'clock: an hour after sunset, one o'clock; two hours, two o'clock; and so on to twelve: after twelve o'clock in the morning, the hours are again named one, two, three, and so on.<sup>1</sup> The Egyptians wind up and (if necessary) set their watches at sunset; or rather, a few minutes after; generally when they hear the call to evening-prayer. Their watches, according to this system of reckoning from sunset, to be always quite correct, should be set every evening, as the days vary in length.

The following Table shews the times of Muslim prayer,<sup>2</sup> with the apparent European time of sunset, in and near the latitude of Cairo, at the commencement of each zodiacal month:—

		Sunset.		'Eshè.	Day-break.	Noon.	'Aşr.
		Mo. T.	Eur. T.	Mo. T.	Mo. T.	Mo. T.	Mo. T.
		h. m.	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.	h. m.
June 21		12 0	7 4	1 34	8 6	4 56	8 31
July 22	May 21	12 0	6 53	1 30	8 30	5 7	8 43
Aug. 23	Apr. 20	12 0	6 31	1 22	9 24	5 29	9 4
Sep. 23	Mar. 20	12 0	6 4	1 18	10 24	5 56	9 24
Oct. 23	Feb. 18	12 0	5 37	1 18	11 18	6 23	9 35
Nov. 22	Jan. 20	12 0	5 15	1 22	11 59	6 45	9 41
Dec. 21		12 0	5 4	1 24	12 15	6 56	9 43

A pocket almanac is annually printed at the government-

<sup>1</sup> Consequently the time of noon according to Mohammadan reckoning, on any particular day, subtracted from twelve, gives the apparent time of sunset, on that day, according to European reckoning.

<sup>2</sup> The periods of the 'eshè, daybreak, and 'aşr, are here given according to the reckoning most commonly followed in Egypt. (See the chapter on Religion and Laws.) "Mo. T." denotes Mohammadan Time: "Eur. T." European Time.

press at Boolâk.<sup>1</sup> It comprises the period of a solar year, commencing and terminating with the vernal equinox; and gives, for every day, the day of the week, and of the Mohamadan, Coptic, Syrian, and European months; together with the sun's place in the zodiac, and the time of sunrise, noon, and the 'aṣr. It is prefaced with a summary of the principal eras and feast-days of the Muslims, Copts, and others; and remarks and notices relating to the seasons. Subjoined to it is a calendar containing physical, agricultural, and other notices for every day in the year; mentioning eclipses, &c.; and comprising much matter suited to the superstitions of the people, together with some remains of the ancient calendar of Egypt. It is the work of Yaḥyà Efendee, originally a Christian priest of Syria; but now a Muslim.<sup>2</sup>

Of geography, the Egyptians in general, and, with very few exceptions, the best instructed among them, have scarcely any knowledge: having no good maps, they are almost wholly ignorant of the relative situations of the several great countries of Europe. Some few of the learned venture to assert that the earth is a globe; but they are opposed by a great majority of the 'Ulamâ. The common opinion of all classes of Muslims is, that our earth is an almost plane expanse, surrounded by the ocean,<sup>3</sup> which, they say, is encompassed by a chain of mountains called "Kaḥ." They believe it to be the uppermost of *seven* earths; and in like manner they believe that there are seven heavens, one above another.

Such being the state of science among the modern Egyptians, the reader will not be surprised at finding the present chapter followed by a long account of their superstitions; a knowledge of which is necessary to enable him to understand their character, and to make due allowances for many of its faults. We may hope for, and, indeed, reasonably expect, a very great improvement in the intellectual and moral state of this people, in consequence of the introduction of European sciences, by

<sup>1</sup> More than a hundred books had been printed at this press at the time of my second visit to Egypt: most of them for the use of the military, naval, and civil servants of the government. Since that time, 'The Thousand and One Nights,' and the 'Khiṭat' of El-Makreezee, and several other important works, have been printed in the same press, at the expense of private individuals.

<sup>2</sup> During my last residence in Egypt, the almanac of Yaḥyà Efendee was superseded by one better adapted to astronomical purposes, and very creditable to its author, Mahmood Efendee.

<sup>3</sup> As the Greeks believed in the age of Homer and Hesiod.



which Moḥammad 'Alee, in some degree, made amends for his oppressive sway; but it is not probable that this hope will be soon realized to any considerable extent.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER X

### SUPERSTITIONS

THE Arabs are a very superstitious people; and none of them are more so than those of Egypt. Many of their superstitions form a part of their religion, being sanctioned by the Kur-án; and the most prominent of these is the belief in "Ginn," or Genii, in the singular, "Ginnee."

The Ginn are said to be of pre-adamite origin, and, in their general properties, an intermediate class of beings between angels and men, but inferior in dignity to both, created of fire, and capable of assuming the forms and material fabric of men, brutes, and monsters, and of becoming invisible at pleasure. They eat and drink, propagate their species (like, or in conjunction with, human beings), and are subject to death; though they generally live many centuries. Their principal abode is in the chain of mountains called "Káf," which are believed to encompass the whole earth: as mentioned near the close of the preceding chapter. Some are believers in El-Islám: others are infidels: the latter are what are also called "Sheytáns," or devils; of whom Iblees (that is, Satan, or *the* devil,) is the chief: for it is the general and best-supported opinion, that he (like the other devils) is a ginnee, as he was created of fire; whereas the *angels* are created of *light*, and are impeccable.

<sup>1</sup> It has been justly remarked, by Baron Hammer-Purgstall, that the present Chapter of this work is very deficient. I should gladly have made its contents more ample, had I not felt myself obliged to consult the taste of the general reader, upon whose patience I fear I have already trespassed to too great an extent by the insertion of much matter calculated to interest only Orientalists. With respect to recent innovations, I have made but few and brief remarks in this work, in consequence of my having found the lights of European science almost exclusively confined to those servants of the government who have been *compelled* to study under Frank instructors, and European customs adopted by scarcely any persons except a few *Turks*. Some Egyptians who had studied for a few years in France declared to me that they could not instil any of the notions which they had there acquired even into the minds of their most intimate friends.

Of both the classes of ginn, good and evil, the Arabs stand in great awe; and for the former they entertain a high degree of respect. It is a common custom of this people, on pouring water, &c., on the ground, to exclaim, or mutter, "Destoor;" that is, to ask the permission, or crave the pardon, of any ginnee that may chance to be there: for the ginn are supposed to pervade the solid matter of the earth, as well as the firmament, where, approaching the confines of the lowest heaven, they often listen to the conversation of the angels respecting future things, thus enabling themselves to assist diviners and magicians. They are also believed to inhabit rivers, ruined houses, wells, baths,<sup>1</sup> ovens, and even the *latrina*: hence, persons, when they enter the latter place, and when they let down a bucket into a well, or light a fire, and on other occasions, say, "Permission," or "Permission, ye blessed:"<sup>2</sup>—which words, in the case of entering the *latrina*, they sometimes preface with a prayer for God's protection against all evil spirits; but in doing this, some persons are careful not to mention the name of God after they have entered (deeming it improper in such a place), and only say, "I seek refuge with *Thee* from the male and female devils." These customs present a commentary on the story in 'The Thousand and One Nights,' in which a merchant is described as having killed a ginnee by throwing aside the stone of a date which he had just eaten. In the same story, and in others of the same collection, a ginnee is represented as approaching in a whirlwind of sand or dust; and it is the general belief of the Arabs of Egypt, that the "zóba'ah," or whirlwind which raises the sand or dust in the form of a pillar of prodigious height, and which is so often seen sweeping across the fields and deserts of this country, is caused by the flight of one of these beings; or, in other words, that the ginnee "rides in the zóba'ah."<sup>3</sup> A charm is usually uttered by the Egyptians to avert the zóba'ah, when it seems

<sup>1</sup> In the belief that it will prevent the ginn from entering the bath, it is a common custom in Egypt, of Muslims as well as Christians, to draw, or paint, a cross over its entrance.

<sup>2</sup> "Destoor," or "Destoor yá mubárakeen."

<sup>3</sup> I measured the height of a zóba'ah, with a sextant, at Thebes, in circumstances which insured a very near approximation to perfect accuracy (observing its altitude, from an elevated spot, at the precise moment when it passed through, and violently agitated, a distant group of palm-trees), and found it to be seven hundred and fifty feet. I think that several zóba'ahs which I have seen were of greater height. Others, which I measured at the same place, were between five hundred and seven hundred feet in height.

to be approaching them: some of them exclaim, "Iron, thou unlucky!"<sup>1</sup>—as ginn are supposed to have a great dread of that metal: others endeavour to drive away the monster by exclaiming, "God is most great!"<sup>2</sup> What we call a "falling star" (and which the Arabs term "shiháb") is commonly believed to be a dart thrown by God at an evil ginnee; and the Egyptians, when they see it, exclaim, "May God transfix the enemy of the religion!"<sup>3</sup> The evil ginnées are commonly termed "'Efreets;" and one of this class is mentioned in the *Kur-án* in these words, "An 'efreet of the ginn answered" (ch. xxvii. v. 39): which words Sale translates, "A terrible genius answered." They are generally believed to differ from the other ginn in being very powerful, and always malicious: but to be, in other respects, of a similar nature. An evil ginnee of the most powerful class is called a "Márid."

Connected with the history of the ginn are many fables not acknowledged by the *Kur-án*, and therefore not credited by the more sober Muslims, but only by the less instructed. All agree that the ginn were created before mankind; but some distinguish another class of pre-adamite beings of a similar nature. It is commonly believed that the earth was inhabited, before the time of Adam, by a race of beings differing from ourselves in form, and much more powerful; and that forty (or, according to some, seventy-two,) pre-adamite kings, each of whom bore the name of Suleymán (or Solomon), successively governed this people. The last of these Suleymáns was named Gánn Ibn-Gánn; and from him, some think, the ginn (who are also called "gánn"<sup>4</sup>) derive their name. Hence, some believe the ginn to be the same with the pre-adamite race here mentioned: but others assert that they (the ginn) were a distinct class of beings, and brought into subjection by the other race.

Ginnées are believed often to assume, or perpetually to wear, the shapes of cats, dogs, and other brute animals. The sheykh Khaleel El-Medábighee, one of the most celebrated of the 'Ulamà of Egypt, and author of several works on various sciences, who died, at a very advanced age, during the period of my first visit to this country, used to relate the following anecdote:—He had, he said, a favourite black cat, which always slept at the foot of his mosquito-curtain. Once, at

<sup>1</sup> "Hadeed yá mashoom."

<sup>2</sup> "Alláhu akbar."

<sup>3</sup> "Saham Alláh fee 'adoó ed-deen."

<sup>4</sup> According to some writers, the Gánn are the least powerful class of Ginn.

midnight, he heard a knocking at the door of his house ; and his cat went, and opened the hanging shutter of his window, and called, "Who is there?" A voice replied, "I am such a one" (mentioning a strange name) "the ginnee: open the door." "The lock," said the sheykh's cat, "has had the name [of God] pronounced upon it."<sup>1</sup> "Then throw me down," said the other, "two cakes of bread." "The bread-basket," answered the cat at the window, "has had the name pronounced upon it." "Well," said the stranger, "at least give me a draught of water." But he was answered that the water-jar had been secured in the same manner ; and asked what he was to do, seeing that he was likely to die of hunger and thirst: the sheykh's cat told him to go to the door of the next house ; and went there also himself, and opened the door, and soon after returned. Next morning, the sheykh deviated from a habit which he had constantly observed : he gave, to the cat, half of the fa<sup>te</sup>ereh upon which he breakfasted, instead of a little morsel, which he was wont to give ; and afterwards said, "O my cat, thou knowest that I am a poor man : bring me, then, a little gold : " upon which words, the cat immediately disappeared, and he saw it no more.—Ridiculous as stories of this kind really are, it is impossible, without relating one or more, to convey a just notion of the opinions of the people whom I am attempting to describe.

It is commonly affirmed, that malicious or disturbed ginn very often station themselves on the roofs, or at the windows, of houses in Cairo, and other towns of Egypt, and throw bricks and stones down into the streets and courts. A few days ago, I was told of a case of this kind, which had alarmed the people in the main street of the metropolis for a whole week ; many bricks having been thrown down from some of the houses every day during this period, but nobody killed or wounded. I went to the scene of these pretended pranks of the ginn, to witness them, and to make inquiries on the subject ; but on my arrival there, I was told that the "regm" (that is, the throwing,) had ceased. I found no one who denied the throwing down of the bricks, or doubted that it was the work

<sup>1</sup> It is a custom of many "fu<sup>q</sup>ahà" (or learned and devout persons), and some others, to say, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," on locking a door, covering bread, laying down their clothes at night, and on other occasions ; and this, they believe, protects their property from genii. The thing over which these words have been pronounced is termed "musemmee (for "musemmà") 'aleyh."

of ginn; and the general remark, on mentioning the subject, was, "God preserve us from their evil doings!"

One of my friends observed to me, on this occasion, that he had met with some Englishmen who disbelieved in the existence of ginn; but he concluded that they had never witnessed a public performance, though common in their country, of which he had since heard, called "kumedyeh" (or comedy); by which term he meant to include all theatrical performances. Addressing one of his countrymen, and appealing to me for the confirmation of his words, he then said, "An Algerine, a short time ago, gave me an account of a spectacle of this kind which he had seen in London."—Here his countryman interrupted him, by asking, "Is not England in London? or is London a town in England?"—My friend, with diffidence, and looking to me, answered that London was the metropolis of England; and then resumed the subject of the theatre.—"The house," said he, "in which the spectacle was exhibited cannot be described: it was of a round form, with many benches on the floor, and closets all round, in rows, one above another, in which people of the higher classes sat; and there was a large square aperture, closed with a curtain. When the house was full of people, who paid large sums of money to be admitted, it suddenly became very dark: it was at night; and the house had been lighted up with a great many lamps; but these became almost entirely extinguished, all at the same time, without being touched by anybody. Then, the great curtain was drawn up: they heard the roaring of the sea and wind; and indistinctly perceived, through the gloom, the waves rising and foaming, and lashing the shore. Presently a tremendous peal of thunder was heard; after a flash of lightning had clearly shewn to the spectators the agitated sea: and then there fell a heavy shower of real rain. Soon after, the day broke; the sea became more plainly visible; and two ships were seen in the distance: they approached, and fought each other, firing their cannons; and a variety of other extraordinary scenes were afterwards exhibited. Now it is evident," added my friend, "that such wonders must have been the works of ginn, or at least performed by their assistance."—He could not be convinced of his error by my explanations of these phenomena.

During the month of Ramadán, the ginn, it is said, are confined in prison; and hence, on the eve of the festival which follows that month, some of the women of Egypt, with the view of preventing these objects of dread from entering

their houses, sprinkle salt upon the floors of the apartments ; saying, as they do it, " In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful."

A curious relic of ancient Egyptian superstition must here be mentioned. It is believed that each quarter in Cairo has its peculiar guardian-genius, or Agathodæmon, which has the form of a serpent.

The ancient tombs of Egypt, and the dark recesses of the temples, are commonly believed, by the people of this country, to be inhabited by 'efreets. I found it impossible to persuade one of my servants to enter the Great Pyramid with me, from his having this idea. Many of the Arabs ascribe the erection of the Pyramids, and all the most stupendous remains of antiquity in Egypt, to Gánn Ibn-Gánn, and his servants, the ginn ; conceiving it impossible that they could have been raised by human hands.

The term 'efreet is commonly applied rather to an evil ginnee than any other being ; but the ghosts of dead persons are also called by this name ; and many absurd stories are related of them ; and great are the fears which they inspire. There are some persons, however, who hold them in no degree of dread.—I had once a humorous cook, who was somewhat addicted to the intoxicating *hasheesh* : soon after he had entered my service, I heard him, one evening, muttering and exclaiming, on the stairs, as if in surprise at some event ; and then politely saying, " But why are you sitting here in the draught?—Do me the favour to come up into the kitchen, and amuse me with your conversation a little." The civil address, not being answered, was repeated and varied several times ; till I called out to the man, and asked him to whom he was speaking. " The 'efreet of a Turkish soldier," he replied, " is sitting on the stairs, smoking his pipe, and refuses to move : he came up from the well below : pray step and see him." On my going to the stairs, and telling the servant that I could see nothing, he only remarked that it was because I had a clear conscience. He was told, afterwards, that the house had long been haunted, but asserted that he had not been previously informed of the supposed cause ; which was the fact of a Turkish soldier having been murdered there. My cook professed to see this 'efreet frequently after.

The existence of "Ghools" likewise obtains almost universal credence among the modern Egyptians, in common

with several other Eastern nations. These beings are generally believed to be a class of evil ginnees, and are said to appear in the forms of various animals, and in many monstrous shapes; to haunt burial-grounds, and other sequestered spots; to feed upon dead bodies; and to kill and devour every human creature who has the misfortune to fall in their way. Hence, the term "ghool" is applied, in general, to any cannibal.

That fancies such as these should exist in the minds of a people so ignorant as those who are the subject of these pages cannot reasonably excite our surprise. But the Egyptians pay a superstitious reverence not to imaginary beings alone: they extend it to certain individuals of their own species; and often to those who are justly the least entitled to such respect.<sup>1</sup> An *idiot* or a *fool* is vulgarly regarded by them as a being whose mind is in heaven, while his grosser part mingles among ordinary mortals; consequently, he is considered an especial favourite of heaven. Whatever enormities a reputed saint may commit (and there are many who are constantly infringing precepts of their religion), such acts do not affect his fame for sanctity: for they are considered as the results of the abstraction of his mind from worldly things; his soul, or reasoning faculties, being wholly absorbed in devotion, so that his passions are left without control. Lunatics who are dangerous to society are kept in confinement; but those who are harmless are generally regarded as saints. Most of the reputed saints of Egypt are either lunatics, or idiots, or impostors. Some of them go about perfectly naked, and are so highly venerated, that the women, instead of avoiding them, sometimes suffer these wretches to take any liberty with them in a public street; and, by the lower orders, are not considered as disgraced by such actions, which, however, are of very rare occurrence. Others are seen clad in a cloak or long coat composed of patches of various coloured cloths, which is called a "dilk,"<sup>2</sup> adorned with numerous strings of beads, wearing a ragged turban, and bearing a staff with shreds of cloth of various colours attached to the top. Some of them eat straw, or a mixture of chopped straw and broken glass; and attract observation by a variety of absurd actions. During my first visit to this country, I often met, in the streets of Cairo, a deformed man, almost naked, with long matted hair, and riding

<sup>1</sup> As is the case also in Switzerland.

<sup>2</sup> Also (and more properly) pronounced "daliq," but commonly pronounced as above.

upon an ass, led by another man. On these occasions, he always stopped his beast directly before me, so as to intercept my way, recited the Fát'hah (or opening chapter of the K̄ur-án), and then held out his hand for an alms. The first time that he thus crossed me, I endeavoured to avoid him; but a person passing by remonstrated with me, observing that the man before me was a saint, and that I ought to respect him, and comply with his demand, lest some misfortune should befall me. Men of this class are supported by alms, which they often receive without asking for them. A reputed saint is commonly called "sheykh," "murábit," or "welee." If affected with lunacy or idiotcy, or of weak intellect, he is also, and more properly, termed "megzoob," or "mesloob." "Welee" is an appellation correctly given only to an eminent and a very devout saint; and means "a favourite of heaven;" but it is so commonly applied to real or pretended idiots, that some wit has given it a new interpretation, as equivalent to "beleed," which means "a fool" or "simpleton;" remarking that these two terms are equivalent both in sense and in the numerical value of the letters composing them: for "welee" is written with the letters "wā'w," "lám," and "yé," of which the numerical values are 6, 30, and 10, or, together, 46; and "beleed" is written with "bé," "lám," "yé," and "dál," which are 2, 30, 10, and 4, or, added together, 46. A simpleton is often jestingly called a welee.

The Muslims of Egypt, in common with those of other countries, entertain very curious superstitions respecting the persons whom they call welees. I have often endeavoured to obtain information on the most mysterious of these superstitions; and have generally been answered, "You are meddling with the matters of the 'ṭareekah,'" or the religious course of the darweeshes; but I have been freely acquainted with general opinions on these subjects, and such are perhaps all that may be required to be stated in a work like the present: I shall, however, also relate what I have been told by learned persons, and by darweeshes, in elucidation of the popular belief.

In the first place, if a person were to express a doubt as to the existence of true welees, he would be branded with infidelity; and the following passage of the K̄ur-án would be adduced to condemn him: "Verily, on the favourites<sup>1</sup> of God no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve."<sup>2</sup> This is considered as sufficient

<sup>1</sup> In the original, "owliyà," plural of "welee."

<sup>2</sup> Ch. x. v. 63.



to prove that there is a class of persons distinguished above ordinary human beings. The question then suggests itself, "Who, or of what description, are these persons?" and we are answered, "They are persons wholly devoted to God, and possessed of extraordinary faith; and, according to their degree of faith, endowed with the power of performing miracles."<sup>1</sup>

The most holy of the welees is termed the *Ḳuṭb*; or, according to some persons, there are two who have this title; and again, according to others, four. The term "*ḳuṭb*" signifies an *axis*; and hence is applied to a welee who rules over others; they depending upon him, and being subservient to him. For the same reason it is applied to temporal rulers, or any person of high authority. The opinion that there are *four* *ḳuṭbs*, I am told, is a vulgar error, originating from the frequent mention of "the four *ḳuṭbs*," by which expression are meant the founders of the four most celebrated orders of *darweeshes* (the *Rifá'eeyeh*, *Ḳádireeyeh*, *Aḥmedeeyeh*, and *Baráhimeh*); each of whom is believed to have been the *ḳuṭb* of his time. I have also generally been told, that the opinion of there being *two* *ḳuṭbs* is a vulgar error, founded upon two names, "*Ḳuṭb el-Haḳeeḳah*" (said to mean the *Ḳuṭb* of Truth), and "*Ḳuṭb el-Ghós*" (or the *Ḳuṭb* of Invocation for help), which properly belong to but one person. The term "*el-Ḳuṭb el-Mutawellee*" is applied, by those who believe in but one *ḳuṭb*, to the one ruling at the present time; and by those who believe in two, to the *acting* *ḳuṭb*. The *ḳuṭb* who exercises a superintendence over all other welees (whether or not there be another *ḳuṭb*, for if there be, he is inferior to the former,) has, under his authority, welees of different ranks, to perform different offices; "*Naḳeebs*," "*Negeeb*," "*Bedeels*,"<sup>2</sup> &c.; who are known only to each other, and perhaps to the rest of the welees, as holding such offices.

The *Ḳuṭb*, it is said, is often seen, but not known as such; and the same is said of all who hold authority under him. He always has a humble demeanour, and mean dress; and mildly reproves those whom he finds acting impiously; particularly such as have a false reputation for sanctity. Though he is unknown to the world, his favourite stations are well known; yet at these places he is seldom visible. It is asserted that he

<sup>1</sup> A miracle performed by a welee is termed "*karámeh*:" one performed by a prophet, "*moagizeh*."

<sup>2</sup> In the plural forms, "*Nuḳabá*," "*Angáb*" or "*Nugabá*," and "*Abdál*."

is almost constantly seated at Mekkeh, on the roof of the Kaabeh; and, though never seen there, is always heard at midnight to call twice, "O Thou most merciful of those who shew mercy!"<sup>1</sup> which cry is then repeated from the *mád'neh*s of the temple, by the *muëddins*: but a respectable pilgrim, whom I questioned upon this matter, confessed to me that he himself had witnessed that this cry was made by a regular minister of the mosque; yet that few pilgrims knew this: he believed, however, that the roof of the Kaabeh is the chief "markaz" (or station) of the *Ḳuṭb*. Another favourite station of this revered and unknown person is the gate of Cairo called *Báb Zuweyleh*, which is at the southern extremity of that part of the metropolis which constituted the old city; though now in the heart of the town; for the capital has greatly increased towards the south, as it has also towards the west. From its being a supposed station of this mysterious being, the *Báb Zuweyleh* is commonly called "El-Mutawellee."<sup>2</sup> One leaf of its great wooden door (which is never shut), turned back against the eastern side of the interior of the gateway, conceals a small vacant space, which is said to be the place of the *Ḳuṭb*. Many persons, on passing by it, recite the *Fát'ḥah*; and some give alms to a beggar who is generally seated there, and who is regarded by the vulgar as one of the servants of the *Ḳuṭb*. Numbers of persons afflicted with head-ache drive a nail into the door, to charm away the pain; and many sufferers from the tooth-ache extract a tooth, and insert it in a crevice of the door, or fix it in some other way, to insure their not being attacked again by the same malady. Some curious individuals often try to peep behind the door, in the vain hope of catching a glimpse of the *Ḳuṭb*, should he happen to be there, and not at the moment invisible. He has also many other stations, but of inferior celebrity, in Cairo; as well as one at the tomb of the *seyyid Aḥmad El-Bedawee*, at *Ṭanṭà*; another at *El-Maḥalleh* (which, as well as *Ṭanṭà*, is in the Delta); and others in other places. He is believed to transport himself from Mekkeh to Cairo in an instant; and so too from any one place to another. Though he has a number of favourite stations, he does not abide solely at these; but wanders throughout the whole world, among persons of every religion, whose appearance, dress, and language he assumes; and distributes to mankind, chiefly through the agency of the subordinate *wellees*,

<sup>1</sup> "Yá arḥama-r-ráḥemeen."

<sup>2</sup> For "Báb El-Mutawellee."

evils and blessings, the awards of destiny. When a *Ḳuṭb* dies, he is immediately succeeded in his office by another.

Many of the Muslims say that Elijah, or Elias, whom the vulgar confound with *El-Khiḍr*,<sup>1</sup> was the *Ḳuṭb* of his time; and that he invests the successive *Ḳuṭbs*: for they acknowledge that he has never died; asserting him to have drunk of the Fountain of Life. This particular in their superstitious notions respecting the *Ḳuṭbs*, and some other particulars which I have before mentioned, appear to have been suggested by what we are told, in the Bible, of Elijah, of his translation, of his being transported from place to place by the Spirit of God, of his investing Elisha with his miraculous powers and his offices, and of the subjection of the other prophets to him and to his immediate successor.<sup>2</sup> Some welees renounce the pleasures of the world, and the society of mankind; and, in a desert place, give themselves up to meditation upon heaven, and prayer; depending upon divine providence for their support: but their retreat becomes known; and the Arabs daily bring them food. This, again, reminds us of the history of Elijah, if, as is the opinion of some critics, we should read, instead of "ravens," in the fourth and sixth verses of the seventeenth chapter of the second book of Kings, "Arabs:"—"I have commanded the *Arabs* to feed thee"—"And the *Arabs* brought him bread," &c.

Certain welees are said to be commissioned by the *Ḳuṭb* to perform offices which, according to the accounts of my informants here, are far from being easy. These are termed "*Aṣ-ḥáb ed-Darak*," interpreted to me (but I know not on what ground) as meaning "watchmen," or "overseers."<sup>3</sup> In illustration of their employments, the following anecdote was related to me.—A devout tradesman in this city, who was ardently desirous of becoming a welee, applied to a person who was generally believed to belong to this holy class, and implored the latter to assist him to obtain the honour of an

<sup>1</sup> This mysterious person, according to the more approved opinion of the learned, was not a prophet, but a just man, or saint, the Wezeer and counsellor of the first *Zu-l-Ḳarneyn*, who was a universal conqueror, but an equally doubtful personage, contemporary with the patriarch *Ibráheem*, or Abraham. *El-Khiḍr* is said to have drunk of the Fountain of Life, in consequence of which he lives till the day of judgment, and to appear frequently to Muslims in perplexity. He is generally clad in green garments; whence, according to some, his name.

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Kings xviii. 12, and 2 Kings ii. 9-16.

<sup>3</sup> This rendering is agreeable with an explanation of "*darak*" by M. Quatremère (in his '*Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks*,' vol. i. p. 169), elicited from a comparison of a number of passages in which it occurs.

interview with the *Ḳuṭb*. The applicant, after having undergone a strict examination as to his motives, was desired to perform the ordinary ablution (*el-wuḍoó*) very early the next morning; then to repair to the mosque of *El-Mu-eiyad* (at an angle of which is the *Báb Zuweyleh*, or *El-Mutawellee*, before mentioned), and to lay hold of the first person whom he should see coming out of the great door of this mosque. He did so. The first person who came out was an old, venerable-looking man; but meanly clad; wearing a brown woollen gown (or *zaaboot*); and this proved to be the *Ḳuṭb*. The candidate kissed his hand, and entreated to be admitted among the *As-háb ed-Darak*. After much hesitation, the prayer was granted: the *Ḳuṭb* said, "Take charge of the district which consists of the *Ḍarb el-Aḥmar*<sup>1</sup> and its immediate neighbourhood;" and immediately the person thus addressed found himself to be a *welee*; and perceived that he was acquainted with things concealed from ordinary mortals: for a *welee* is said to be acquainted by God with all secrets necessary for him to know.—It is commonly said of a *welee*, that he knows what is secret,<sup>2</sup> or not discoverable by the senses; which seems plainly contradictory to what we read in several places in the *Ḳur-án*, that none knoweth what is secret (or hidden from the senses) but God: the Muslims, however, who are seldom at a loss in a discussion, argue that the passages above alluded to, in the *Ḳur-án*, imply the knowledge of secrets in an unrestricted sense; and that God imparts to *welees* such secrets only as He thinks fit.

The *welee* above mentioned, as soon as he had entered upon his office, walked through his district; and seeing a man at a shop with a jar full of boiled beans before him, from which he was about to serve his customers as usual, took up a large piece of stone, and, with it, broke the jar. The bean-seller immediately jumped up; seized hold of a palm-stick that lay by his side; and gave the *welee* a severe beating: but the holy man complained not; nor did he utter a cry: as soon as he was allowed, he walked away. When he was gone, the bean-seller began to try if he could gather up some of the scattered contents of the jar. A portion of the jar remained in its place; and on looking into this, he saw a venomous serpent in it, coiled round, and dead. In horror at what he had done, he

<sup>1</sup> A street leading from the *Báb Zuweyleh* towards the south-east, and forming a part of a great thoroughfare-street that extends to the citadel.

<sup>2</sup> " *Yaalam el-gheyb*."

exclaimed, "There is no strength nor power but in God! I implore forgiveness of God, the Great. What have I done! This man is a welee; and has prevented my selling what would have poisoned my customers." He looked at every passenger all that day, in the hope of seeing again the saint whom he had thus injured, that he might implore his forgiveness; but he saw him not; for he was too much bruised to be able to walk. On the following day, however, with his limbs still swollen from the blows he had received, the welee limped through his district, and broke a great jar of milk at a shop not far from that of the bean-seller; and its owner treated him as the bean-seller had done the day before; but while he was beating him, some persons ran up, and stopped his hand, informing him that the person whom he was thus punishing was a welee, and relating to him the affair of the serpent that was found in the jar of beans. "Go, and look," said they, "in your jar of milk, and you will find, at the bottom of it, something either poisonous or unclean." He looked; and found, in the remains of the jar, a dead dog.—On the third day, the welee, with the help of a staff, hobbled painfully up the Darb el-Ahmar, and saw a servant carrying, upon his head, a supper-tray covered with dishes of meat, vegetables, and fruit, for a party who were going to take a repast in the country; whereupon he put his staff between the man's legs, and overthrew him; and the contents of the dishes were scattered in the street. With a mouth full of curses, the servant immediately began to give the saint as severe a thrashing as he himself expected to receive from his disappointed master for this accident: but several persons soon collected around him; and one of these bystanders observed a dog eat part of the contents of one of the dishes, and, a moment after, fall down dead: he therefore instantly seized the hand of the servant, and informed him of this circumstance, which proved that the man whom he had been beating was a welee. Every apology was made to the injured saint, with many prayers for his forgiveness: but he was so disgusted with his new office, that he implored God and the Kuṭb to release him from it; and, in answer to his solicitations, his supernatural powers were withdrawn, and he returned to his shop, more contented than before.—This story is received as true by the people of Cairo; and therefore I have inserted it: for, in treating of superstitions, we have more to do with opinions than with facts. I am not sure, indeed, that it is altogether false: the supposed saint might have em-

ployed persons to introduce the dead serpent and dog into the vessels which he broke. I am told that many a person has obtained the reputation of being a welee by artifices of the kind just mentioned.

There have been many instances, in Egypt, of welees afflicting themselves by austerities similar to those which are often practised by devotees in India. At the present time there is living, in Cairo, a welee who has placed an iron collar round his neck, and chained himself to a wall of his chamber; and it is said that he has been in this state more than thirty years: but some persons assert that he has often been seen to cover himself over with a blanket, as if to sleep, and that the blanket has been removed immediately after, and nobody found beneath it! Stories of this kind are related and believed by persons who, in many respects, are endowed with good sense; and to laugh, or express discredit, on hearing them, would give great offence. I was lately told that, a certain welee being beheaded, for a crime of which he was not guilty, his head spoke after it was cut off;<sup>1</sup> and, of another decapitated under similar circumstances, that his blood traced upon the ground, in Arabic characters, the following declaration of his innocence—"I am a welee of God; and have died a martyr."

It is a very remarkable trait in the character of the people of Egypt and other countries of the East, that Muslims, Christians, and Jews, adopt each other's superstitions, while they abhor the leading doctrines of each other's faiths. In sickness, the Muslim sometimes employs Christian and Jewish priests to pray for him: the Christians and Jews, in the same predicament, often call in Muslim saints for the like purpose. Many Christians are in the frequent habit of visiting certain Muslim saints here; kissing their hands; begging their prayers, counsels, or prophecies; and giving them money and other presents.

Though their prophet disclaimed the power of performing miracles, the Muslims attribute to him many; and several miracles are still, they say, constantly or occasionally performed for his sake, as marks of the divine favour and honour. The pilgrims who have visited El-Medeeneh relate that there is seen, every night, a ray or column of faint light rising from the cupola over the grave of the Prophet to a considerable height, apparently to the clouds, or, as some say, to Paradise; but that

<sup>1</sup> Like that of the Sage Doobán, whose story is told in 'The Thousand and One Nights.'

the observer loses sight of it when he approaches very near the tomb.<sup>1</sup> This is one of the most remarkable of the miracles which are related as being still witnessed. On my asking one of the most grave and sensible of all my Muslim friends here, who had been on a pilgrimage, and visited El-Medeeneh, whether this assertion were true, he averred that it was; that he had seen it every night of his stay in that city; and he remarked that it was a most striking and impressive proof of God's favour and honour for "our lord Moḥammad." I did not presume to question the truth of what he asserted himself to have seen; nor to suggest that the great number of lights kept burning every night in the mosque might produce this effect: but to judge whether this might be the case, I asked my friend to describe to me the construction of the apartment of the tomb, its cupola, &c. He replied, that he did not enter it, nor the Kaābeh at Mekkeh, partly from his being in a state of excessive nervous excitement (from his veneration for those holy buildings, but particularly for the former, which almost affected him with a kind of hysteric fit), and partly because, being of the sect of the Ḥanafees, he held it improper, after he should have stepped upon such sacred ground, ever again to run the risk of defiling his feet, by walking barefooted: consequently, he would have been obliged always to wear leather socks, or mezz, within his outer shoes; which, he said, he could not afford to do.—The pilgrims also assert, that, in approaching El-Medeeneh, from the distance of three days' journey, or more, they always see a flickering lightning, in the direction of the sacred city, which they believe to proceed from the Prophet's tomb. They say, that, however they turn, they always see this lightning in the direction of El-Medeeneh. There is something strikingly poetical in this and in the former statement.

A superstitious veneration, and honours unauthorized by the Kūr-án or any of the Traditions, are paid, by all sects of Muslims, except the Wahhábees, to deceased saints, even more than to those who are living; and more particularly by the Muslims of Egypt.<sup>2</sup> Over the graves of most of the more

<sup>1</sup> It is also said that similar phenomena, but not so brilliant, distinguish some other tombs at El-Medeeneh and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> Several superstitious customs, observed in the performance of many ordinary actions, result from their extravagant respect for their prophet, and their saints in general. For instance, on lighting the lamp in the evening, more particularly at a shop, it is customary to say, "Commemorate Moḥammad, and forget not the excellencies of 'Alee: the Fát'hah for

celebrated saints are erected large and handsome mosques : over that of a saint of less note (one who, by a life of sanctity or hypocrisy, has acquired the reputation of being a welee, or devout sheykh,) is constructed a small, square, whitewashed building, crowned with a cupola. There is generally, directly over the vault in which the corpse is deposited, an oblong monument of stone or brick (called "tarkeebeh") or wood (in which case it is called "táboot"); and this is usually covered with silk or linen, with some words from the *Kur-án* worked upon it, and surrounded by a railing or screen, of wood or bronze, called "maḡsoorah." Most of the sanctuaries of saints in Egypt are tombs ; but there are several which only contain some inconsiderable relic of the person to whom they are dedicated ; and there are a few which are mere cenotaphs. The most sacred of all these sanctuaries is the mosque of the Ḥasaneyn, in which the head of the martyr El-Ḥoseyn, the son of the Imám 'Alee, and grandson of the Prophet, is said to be buried. Among others but little inferior in sanctity, are the mosques of the seyyideh Zeyneb (daughter of the Imám 'Alee, and grand-daughter of the Prophet), the seyyideh Sekeeneh (daughter of the Imám El-Ḥoseyn), the seyyideh Nefeeseh (great-grand-daughter of the Imám El-Ḥasan), and the Imám Esh-Shafe'ee, already mentioned as the author of one of the four great Muslim persuasions, that to which most of the people of Cairo belong. The buildings above mentioned, with the exception of the last two, are within the metropolis : the last but one is in a southern suburb of Cairo ; and the last, in the great southern cemetery.

The Egyptians occasionally visit these and other sanctuaries of their saints, either merely with the view of paying honour to the deceased, and performing meritorious acts for the sake of these venerated persons, which they believe will call down a blessing on themselves, or for the purpose of urging some special petition, as for the restoration of health, or for the gift of offspring, &c. ; in the persuasion that the merits of the deceased will insure a favourable reception of the prayers which they offer up in such consecrated places. The generality

the Prophet, and for every welee : " and then, to repeat the Fát'hah. It is usual to say, on first seeing the new moon, " O God, bless our lord Moḡammad. God make thee a blessed moon (or month) : " and on looking at one's face in a glass, " O God, bless our lord Moḡammad. " This ejaculation being used to counteract the influence of the evil eye, it seems as if an Arab feared the effect even of his own admiring look.



of the Muslims regard their deceased saints as intercessors with the Deity; and make votive offerings to them. The visiter, on arriving at the tomb, should greet the deceased with the salutation of peace, and should utter the same salutation on entering the burial-ground; but I believe that few persons observe this latter custom. In the former case, the visiter should front the face of the dead, and consequently turn his back to the *ķibleh*. He walks round the *maķşoorah* or the monument from left to right; and recites the *Fát'ħah*, inaudibly, or in a very low voice, before its door, or before each of its four sides. Sometimes a longer chapter of the *Ķur-án* than the first (or *Fát'ħah*) is recited afterwards: and sometimes a "khatmeh" (or recitation of the whole of the *Ķur-án*) is performed on such an occasion. These acts of devotion are generally performed for the sake of the saint; though merit is likewise believed to reflect upon the visiter who makes a recitation. He usually says at the close of this, "[Extol] the perfection of thy Lord, the Lord of Might, exempting Him from that which they [that is, the unbelievers,] ascribe to Him" (namely, the having a son, or a partaker of his god-head); and adds, "And peace be on the Apostles; and praise be to God, the Lord of the beings of the whole world. O God, I have transferred the merit of what I have recited from the excellent *Ķur-án* to the person to whom this place is dedicated," or—"to the soul of this welee." Without such a declaration, or an intention to the same effect, the merit of the recital belongs solely to the person who performs it. After this recital, the visiter, if it be his desire, offers up any prayer, for temporal or spiritual blessings; generally using some such form as this:—"O God, I conjure Thee by the Prophet, and by him to whom this place is dedicated, to grant me such and such blessings:" or "My burdens be on God and on thee, O thou to whom this place is dedicated." In doing this, some persons face any side of the *maķşoorah*: it is said to be more proper to face the *maķşoorah* and the *ķibleh*; but I believe that the same rule should be observed in this case as in the salutation. During the prayer, the hands are held as in the private supplications after the ordinary prayers of every day; and afterwards they are drawn down the face. Many of the visitors kiss the threshold of the building, and the walls, windows, *maķşoorah*, &c. This, however, the more strict disapprove; asserting it to be an imitation of a custom of the Christians. The rich, and persons in easy circumstances,

when they visit the tomb of a saint, distribute money or bread to the poor; and often give money to one or more water-carriers to distribute water to the poor and thirsty, for the sake of the saint.<sup>1</sup> There are particular days of the week on which certain tombs are more generally visited: thus, the mosque of the Ḥasaneyn is mostly visited, by men, on Tuesday, and by women, on Saturday: that of the seyyideh Zeyneb, on Wednesday: that of the Imám Esh-Sháfe'ee, on Friday. On these occasions, it is a common custom for the male visitors to take with them sprigs of myrtle: they place some of these on the monument, or on the floor within the maḡsoorah; and take back the remainder, which they distribute to their friends. The poor sometimes place "khoos" (or palm-leaves); as most persons do upon the tombs of their friends and relations. The women of Cairo, instead of the myrtle or palm-leaves, often place roses, flowers of the hennà-tree, jasmine, &c.

At almost every village in Egypt is the tomb of some favourite or patron saint, which is generally visited, on a particular day of the week, by many of the inhabitants; chiefly women; some of whom bring thither bread, which they leave there for poor travellers or any other persons. Some also place small pieces of money in these tombs. These gifts are offerings to the sheykh; or given for his sake. Another custom common among the peasants is, to make votive sacrifices at the tombs of their sheykh. For instance, a man makes a vow ("nedr") that, if he recover from a sickness, or obtain a son, or any other specific object of desire, he will give, to a certain sheykh (deceased), a goat, or a lamb, or a sheep, &c.: if he attain his object, he sacrifices the animal which he has vowed at the tomb of the sheykh, and makes a feast with its meat for any persons who may choose to attend. Having given the animal to the saint, he thus gives to the latter the merit of feeding the poor. Little kids are often vowed as future sacrifices; and have the right ear slit; or are marked in some other way. It is not uncommon, too, without any definite view but that of obtaining general blessings, to make these vows: and sometimes, a peasant vows that he will sacrifice, for the sake of a saint, a calf which he possesses, as soon as it is full-grown and fatted: it is let loose, by consent of all his neighbours, to pasture where it will, even in fields of young wheat; and at last, after it has been sacrificed, a public

<sup>1</sup> See the account of the water-carriers in Chapter XIV.

feast is made with its flesh. Many a large bull is thus given away.

Almost every celebrated saint, deceased, is honoured by an anniversary birthday festival, which is called "moolid," or more properly, "mólid." On the occasions of such festivals, many persons visit the tomb, both as a duty and as a supposed means of obtaining a special blessing; fiķees are hired to recite the Kūr-án, for the sake of the saint; faķeers often perform zikrs; and the people living in the neighbourhood of the tomb hang lamps before their doors, and devote half the night to such pleasures as those of smoking, sipping coffee, and listening to story-tellers at the coffee-shops, or to the recitals of the Kūr-án, and the zikrs. I have now a cluster of lamps hanging before my door, in honour of the moolid of a sheykh who is buried near the house in which I am living. Even the native Christians often hang up lamps on these occasions. The festivities often continue several days. The most famous moolids celebrated in Cairo, next to that of the Prophet, are those of the Ḥasaneyn and the seyyideh Zeyneb; accounts of which will be found in a subsequent chapter, on the periodical public festivals, &c., of the people of Egypt. Most of the Egyptians not only expect a blessing to follow their visiting the tomb of a celebrated saint, but they also dread that some misfortune will befall them if they neglect this act. Thus, while I am writing these lines, an acquaintance of mine is suffering from an illness which he attributes to his having neglected, for the last two years, to attend the festivals of the seyyid Aḥmad El-Bedawee, at Ṭanṭà; this being the period of one of these festivals. The tomb of this saint attracts almost as many visitors, at the periods of the great annual festivals, from the metropolis, and from various parts of Lower Egypt, as Mekkeh does pilgrims from the whole of the Muslim world. Three moolids are celebrated in honour of him every year; one, about the tenth of the Coptic month of Ṭoobeh (17th or 18th of January); the second, at, or about, the Vernal Equinox;<sup>1</sup> and the third, or great moolid, about a month after the Summer Solstice (or about the middle of the Coptic month of Ebeeb), when the Nile has risen considerably, but the dams of the canals are not yet cut. Each lasts one week and a day; beginning on a Friday, and ending on the afternoon of the next Friday; and, on each night, there is a

<sup>1</sup> Called the "Shems el-Kebeerh."

display of fireworks. One week after each of these, is celebrated the moolid of the seyyid Ibráheem Ed-*Dasookee*, at the town of *Dasook*, on the east bank of the western branch of the Nile. The seyyid Ibráheem was a very famous saint; next in rank to the seyyid El-Bedawee. These moolids, both of the seyyid El-Bedawee and of the seyyid Ibráheem, are great fairs, as well as religious festivals. At the latter, most of the visiters remain in their boats; and some of the *Saadeeyeh darweeshes* of *Rasheed* exhibit their feats with serpents: some carrying serpents with silver rings in their mouths, to prevent their biting: others partly devouring these reptiles alive. The religious ceremonies at both are merely *zikrs*,<sup>1</sup> and recitals of the *Kur-án*.—It is customary among the Muslims, as it was among the Jews, to rebuild, whitewash, and decorate, the tombs of their saints, and occasionally to put a new covering over the *tarkeebeh* or *táboot*; and many of them do this from the same pharisaic motives which actuated the Jews.<sup>2</sup>

“*Darweeshes*” are very numerous in Egypt; and some of them who confine themselves to religious exercises, and subsist by alms, are much respected in this country; particularly by the lower orders. Various artifices are employed by persons of this class to obtain the reputation of superior sanctity, and of being endowed with the power of performing miracles. Many of them are regarded as *welees*.

A direct descendant of *Aboo-Bekr*, the first *Khaleefeh*, having the title of “*Esh-Sheykh el-Bekree*,” and regarded as the representative of that prince, holds authority over all orders of *darweeshes* in Egypt. The present *Sheykh el-Bekree*, who is also descended from the Prophet, is *Naķeeb el-Ashráf*, or chief of the *Shereefs*. The second *Khaleefeh*, *'Omar*, has likewise his representative, who is the *sheykh* of the *'Enáneeyeh*, or *Owlád 'Enán*, an order of *darweeshes* so named from one of their celebrated *sheykhs*, *Ibn-'Enán*. *'Osmán* has no representative, having left no issue. The representative of *'Alee* is called *Sheykh es-Sádát*,<sup>3</sup> or *Sheykh* of the *Seyyids*, or *Shereefs*; a title of less importance than that of *Naķeeb* of the *Shereefs*. Each of these three *sheykhs* is termed the occupant of the “*seggádeh*” (or prayer-carpet) of his great ancestor. So too the *sheykh* of an order of *darweeshes* is called the occupant

<sup>1</sup> The “*zkr*” will be fully described in another chapter, on the periodical public festivals, &c.

<sup>2</sup> See St. Matthew xxiii. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Often improperly called “*esh-Sheykh es-Sádát*.”

of the seggádeh of the founder of the order.<sup>1</sup> The seggádeh is considered as the spiritual throne. There are four great seggádehs of darweeshes in Egypt; which are those of four great orders about to be mentioned.

The most celebrated orders of darweeshes in Egypt are the following.—1. The “Rifá’eyeh” (in the singular “Rifá’ee”). This order was founded by the seyyid Aḥmad Rifá’ah El-Kebeer. Its banners, and the turbans of its members, are black; or the latter are of a very deep-blue woollen stuff, or muslin of a very dark greenish hue. The Rifá’ee darweeshes are celebrated for the performance of many wonderful feats.<sup>2</sup> The “Ilwáneeyeh,” or “Owlád ’Ilwán,” who are a sect of the Rifá’ees, pretend to thrust iron spikes into their eyes and bodies without sustaining any injury; and in appearance they do this, in such a manner as to deceive any person who can believe it possible for a man to do such things in reality. They also break large masses of stone on their chests; eat live coals, glass, &c.; and are said to pass swords completely through their bodies, and packing-needles through both their cheeks, without suffering any pain, or leaving any wounds: but such performances are now seldom witnessed. I am told that it was a common practice for a darweesh of this order to hollow out a piece of the trunk of a palm-tree, fill it with rags soaked with oil and tar, then set fire to these contents, and carry the burning mass under his arm, in a religious procession (wearing only drawers); the flames curling over his bare chest, back, and head, and apparently doing him no injury. The “Saadeeyeh,” an order founded by the sheykh Saad-ed-Deen El-Gibáwee, are another and more celebrated sect of the Rifá’ees. Their banners are green; and their turbans, of the same colour or of the dark hue of the Rifá’ees in general. There are many darweeshes of this order who handle, with impunity, live, venomous serpents, and scorpions; and partly devour them. The serpents, however, they render incapable of doing any injury, by extracting their venomous fangs; and doubtless they also deprive the scorpions of their poison. On certain occasions (as, for instance, on that of the festival of the birth of the Prophet), the Sheykh of the Saadeeyeh rides, on horseback, over the bodies of a number of his darweeshes, and other persons, who throw themselves on the ground for the

<sup>1</sup> The title is “šáḥeb seggádeh.”

<sup>2</sup> In most of their juggling performances, the darweeshes of Egypt are inferior to the most expert of the Indians.

purpose; and all assert that they are not injured by the tread of the horse.<sup>1</sup> This ceremony is called the "dóseh." Many Rifá'ee and Saadee darweeshes obtain their livelihood by going about to charm away serpents from houses. Of the seats of these modern Psylli, an account will be given in another chapter.—2. The "Kádireeyeh;" an order founded by the famous seyyid 'Abd-El-Kádir El-Geelánee. Their banners and turbans are white. Most of the Kádireeyeh of Egypt are fishermen: these, in religious processions, carry, upon poles, nets of various colours (green, yellow, red, white, &c.), as the banners of their order.—3. The "Aḥmedeeyeh," or order of the seyyid Aḥmad El-Bedawee, whom I have lately mentioned. This is a very numerous and highly respected order. Their banners and turbans are red. The "Beiyoomeeyeh" (founded by the seyyid 'Alee El-Beiyoomee), the "Shaaráweeyeh" (founded by the sheykh Esh-Shaaráwee<sup>2</sup>), the "Shinnáweeyeh" (founded by the seyyid 'Alee Esh-Shinnáwee), and many other orders, are sects of the Aḥmedeeyeh. The Shinnáweeyeh train an *ass* to perform a strange part in the ceremonies of the last day of the moolid of their great patron saint, the seyyid Aḥmad El-Bedawee, at Ṭantà: the ass, of its own accord, enters the mosque of the seyyid, proceeds to the tomb, and there stands while multitudes crowd around it, and each person who can approach near enough to it plucks off some of its hair, to use as a charm, until the skin of the poor beast is as bare as the palm of a man's hand. There is another sect of the Aḥmedeeyeh, called "Owlad Nooh," all young men; who wear "ṭarṭoors" (or high caps), with a tuft of pieces of various-coloured cloth on the top, wooden swords, and numerous strings of beads; and carry a kind of whip (called "firḳilleh"), a thick twist of cords.—4. The "Baráhimeh," or "Burhámeeyeh;" the order of the seyyid Ibráheem Ed-Dasooḳee, whose moolid has been mentioned above. Their banners and turbans are green.—There are many other classes of darweeshes; some of whom are sects of one or other of the above orders. Among the more celebrated of them are the "Ḥefnáweeyeh," the "Afeefeeyeh," the "Demirdásheeyeh," the "Naḳshibendeeyeh," the "Bekreeyeh," and the "Ley-seeyeh."

It is impossible to become acquainted with all the tenets,

<sup>1</sup> In the chapters on the periodical public festivals, &c., this and other performances of the darweeshes of Cairo will be described more fully.

<sup>2</sup> Thus commonly pronounced, for Esh-Shaaránee.

rules, and ceremonies of the darweeshes, as many of them, like those of the freemasons, are not to be divulged to the uninitiated. A darweesh with whom I am acquainted thus described to me his taking the "ahd," or initiatory covenant, which is nearly the same in all the orders. He was admitted by the sheykh of the Demirdásheeyeh. Having first performed the ablution preparatory to prayer (the wuḍoó), he seated himself upon the ground before the sheykh, who was seated in like manner. The sheykh and he (the "mureed," or candidate,) then clasped their right hands together in the manner which I have described as practised in making the marriage-contract: in this attitude, and with their hands covered by the sleeve of the sheykh, the candidate took the covenant; repeating, after the sheykh, the following words, commencing with the form of a common oath of repentance. "I beg forgiveness of God, the Great" (three times); "than whom there is no other deity; the Living, the Everlasting: I turn to Him with repentance, and beg his grace, and forgiveness, and exemption from the fire." The sheykh then said to him, "Dost thou turn to God with repentance?" He replied, "I do turn to God with repentance; and I return unto God; and I am grieved for what I have done [amiss]; and I determine not to relapse:" and then repeated, after the sheykh, "I beg for the favour of God, the Great, and the noble Prophet; and I take as my sheykh, and my guide unto God (whose name be exalted), my master 'Abd-Er-Raḥeem Ed-Demirdáshee El-Khalwetee Er-Rifá'ee En-Nebawee; not to change, nor to separate; and God is our witness: by God, the Great!" (this oath was repeated three times): "there is no deity but God" (this also was repeated three times). The sheykh and the mureed then recited the Fát'hah together; and the latter concluded the ceremony by kissing the sheykh's hand.

The religious exercises of the darweeshes chiefly consist in the performance of "zikrs." Sometimes standing in the form of a circular or an oblong ring, or in two rows, facing each other, and sometimes sitting, they exclaim, or chant, "Lá iláha illa-lláh" (There is no deity but God), or "Alláh! Alláh! Alláh!" (God! God! God!), or repeat other invocations, &c., over and over again, until their strength is almost exhausted; accompanying their ejaculations or chants with a motion of the head, or of the whole body, or of the arms. From long habit they are able to continue these exercises for a surprising length of time without intermission. They are often accompanied, at

intervals, by one or more players upon a kind of flute called "náy," or a double reed-pipe, called "arghool," and by persons singing religious odes; and some darweeshes use a little drum, called "báz,"<sup>1</sup> or a tambourine, during their zikrs: some, also, perform a peculiar dance; the description of which, as well as of several different zikrs, I reserve for future chapters.

Some of the rites of darweeshes (as forms of prayer, modes of zikr, &c.) are observed only by particular orders: others, by members of various orders. Among the latter may be mentioned the rites of the "Khalwetees" and "Sházilees;" two great classes, each of which has its sheykh. The chief difference between these is that each has its particular form of prayer to repeat every morning; and that the former distinguish themselves by occasional seclusion; whence their appellation of "Khalwetees:"<sup>2</sup> the prayer of this class is repeated before day-break, and is called "wird es-sahar:" that of the Sházilees, which is called "hezbe esh-Sházilee," after day-break. Sometimes, a Khalweteer enters a solitary cell, and remains in it for forty days and nights, fasting from day-break till sunset the whole of this period. Sometimes also a number of the same class confine themselves, each in a separate cell, in the sepulchral mosque of the sheykh Ed-Demirdáshee, on the north of Cairo, and remain there three days and nights, on the occasion of the moolid of that saint, and only eat a little rice, and drink a cup of sherbet, in the evening: they employ themselves in repeating certain forms of prayer, &c., not imparted to the uninitiated; only coming out of their cells to unite in the five daily prayers in the mosque; and never answering any one who speaks to them but by saying, "There is no deity but God." Those who observe the forty days' fast, and seclude themselves during that long period, practise nearly the same rules; and employ their time in repeating the testimony of the faith, imploring forgiveness, praising God, &c.

Almost all the darweeshes of Egypt are tradesmen or artisans or agriculturists; and only occasionally assist in the rites and ceremonies of their respective orders: but there are some who have no other occupations than those of performing zikrs at the festivals of saints and at private entertainments, and of chanting in funeral-processions. These are termed "fuqarà," or "faqeers;" which is an appellation given also to the poor

<sup>1</sup> For descriptions of the instruments here mentioned, see a subsequent chapter, on the Egyptian music, &c.

<sup>2</sup> From "khalweh," a cell, or closet.



in general, but especially to poor devotees. Some obtain their livelihood as water-carriers, by supplying the passengers in the streets of Cairo, and the visitors at religious festivals, with water, which they carry in an earthen vessel, or a goat's skin, on the back. A few lead a wandering life, and subsist on alms; which they often demand with great importunacy and effrontery. Some of these distinguish themselves in the same manner as certain reputed saints before mentioned, by the "dilk," or coat of patches, and the staff with shreds of cloth of different colours attached to the top: others wear fantastic dresses of various descriptions.

Some Rifá'ee darweeshes (besides those who follow the occupation of charming away serpents from houses) pursue a wandering life; travelling about Egypt, and profiting by a ridiculous superstition which I must here mention. A venerated saint, called See<sup>1</sup> Dá-ood El-'Azab (or Master David the Bachelor), who lived at Tefáhineh, a village in Lower Egypt, had a calf, which always attended him, and brought him water, &c. Since his death, some Rifá'ee darweeshes have been in the habit of rearing a number of calves at his native place, or burial-place, above named; teaching them to walk up stairs, to lie down at command, &c.; and then going about the country, each with his calf, to obtain alms. The calf is called "'Egl El-'Azab" (the Calf of El-'Azab, or—of the Bachelor). I once called into my house one of these darweeshes, with his calf, the only one I have seen: it was a buffalo-calf; and had two bells suspended to it; one attached to a collar round its neck, and the other to a girth round its body. It walked up the stairs very well; but shewed that it had not been very well trained in every respect. The 'Egl El-'Azab is vulgarly believed to bring into the house a blessing from the saint after whom it is called.

There are numerous wandering Turkish and Persian darweeshes in Egypt; and to these, more than to the few Egyptian darweeshes who lead a similar life, must the character for impudence and importunacy be ascribed. Very often, particularly in Ramadán, a foreign darweesh goes to the mosque of the Hasaneyn, which is that most frequented by the Turks and Persians, at the time of the Friday-prayers; and, when the Khaṭeb is reciting the first khuṭbeh, passes between the ranks of persons who are sitting upon the floor, and places before

<sup>1</sup> "See" is a vulgar contraction of "Seedee," which is itself a contraction of "Seyyidee," signifying "My Master," or "Mister."

each a little slip of paper upon which are written a few words, generally exhortative to charity (as "He who giveth alms will be provided for"—"The poor darweesh asketh an alms," &c.); by which proceeding he usually obtains from each, or almost every person, a piece of five or ten faddahs, or more. Many of the Persian darweeshes in Egypt carry an oblong bowl of cocoa-nut or wood or metal, in which they receive their alms, and put their food; and a wooden spoon; and most of the foreign darweeshes wear dresses peculiar to their respective orders: they are chiefly distinguished by the cap: the most common description of cap is of a sugar-loaf, or conical, shape, and made of felt: the other articles of dress are generally a vest and full drawers, or trousers, or a shirt and belt, and a coarse cloak, or long coat. The Persians here all affect to be Sunnees. The Turks are the more intrusive of the two classes.

Here I may mention another superstition of the Egyptians, and of the Arabs in general: namely, their belief that birds and beasts have a language by which they communicate their thoughts to each other, and celebrate the praises of God.

## CHAPTER XI

### SUPERSTITIONS—*continued*

ONE of the most remarkable traits in modern Egyptian superstition is the belief in written charms. The composition of most of these amulets is founded upon magic; and occasionally employs the pen of almost every village-schoolmaster in Egypt. A person of this profession, however, seldom pursues the study of magic further than to acquire the formulæ of a few charms, most commonly consisting, for the greater part, of certain passages of the *Qur-án*, and names of God, together with those of angels, genii, prophets, or eminent saints, intermixed with combinations of numerals, and with diagrams, all of which are supposed to have great secret virtues.

The most esteemed of all "*ḥegábs*" (or charms) is a "*muṣ-ḥaf*" (or copy of the *Qur-án*). It used to be the general custom of the Turks of the middle and higher orders, and of

many other Muslims, to wear a small muṣ-ḥaf in an embroidered leather or velvet case hung upon the right side by a silk string which passed over the left shoulder: but this custom is not now very common. During my first visit to this country, a respectable Turk, in the military dress, was seldom seen without a case of this description upon his side, though it often contained no ḥegáb. The muṣ-ḥaf and other ḥegábs are still worn by many women; generally enclosed in cases of gold, or of gilt or plain silver. To the former, and to many other charms, most extensive efficacy is attributed; they are esteemed preservatives against disease, enchantment, the evil eye, and a variety of other evils. The charm next in point of estimation to the muṣ-ḥaf is a book or scroll containing certain chapters of the *Ḳur-án*; as the 6th, 18th, 36th, 44th, 55th, 67th, and 78th; or some others; generally seven.—Another charm, which is believed to protect the wearer (who usually places it within his cap) from the devil and all evil genii, and many other objects of fear, is a piece of paper inscribed with the following passages from the *Ḳur-án*,<sup>1</sup> “And the *preservation* of both [heaven and earth] is no burden unto Him: and He is the High, the Great” (ch. ii. v. 256). “But God is the best *protector*; and He is the most merciful of those who shew mercy” (ch. xii. v. 64). “They *watch* him by the command of God” (ch. xiii. v. 12). “And we *guard* them from every devil driven away with stones” (ch. xv. v. 17). “And a *guard* against every rebellious devil” (ch. xxxvii. v. 7). “And a *guard*. This is the decree of the Mighty, the Wise” (ch. lxi. v. 11). “And God encompasseth them behind. Verily it is a glorious *Ḳur-án*, [written] on a *preserved* tablet” (ch. lxxxv. vv. 20, 21, 22).—The ninety-nine names, or epithets, of God, comprising all the divine attributes, if frequently repeated, and written on a paper, and worn on the person, are supposed to make the wearer a particular object for the exercise of all the beneficent attributes.—In like manner it is believed that the ninety-nine names, or titles, &c., of the Prophet, written upon anything, compose a charm which (according to his own assertion, as recorded by his cousin and son-in-law the Imám 'Alee,) will, if placed in a house, and frequently read from beginning to end, keep away every misfortune, pestilence and all diseases, infirmity, the envious eye, enchantment, burning, ruin, anxiety, grief, and trouble. After repeating each of these names, the Muslim adds, “God bless

<sup>1</sup> Called “*áyát el-ḥefz*” (the verses of protection, or preservation).

and save him!"<sup>1</sup>—Similar virtues are ascribed to a charm composed of the names of the "Aṣ-ḥāb el-Kahf" (or Companions of the Cave, also called the Seven Sleepers), together with the name of their dog.<sup>2</sup> These names are sometimes engraved in the bottom of a drinking-cup, and more commonly on the round tray of tinned copper which, placed on a stool, forms the table for dinner, supper, &c.—Another charm, supposed to have similar efficacy, is composed of the names of those paltry articles of property which the Prophet left at his decease. These relics<sup>3</sup> were two "sebḥahs" (or rosaries), his "muṣ-ḥaf" (in unarranged fragments), his "muk-ḥulah" (or the vessel in which he kept the black powder with which he painted the edges of his eyelids), two "seggádehs" (or prayer carpets), a hand-mill, a staff, a tooth-stick, a suit of clothes,<sup>4</sup> the ewer which he used in ablution, a pair of sandals, a "burdeh" (or a kind of woollen covering),<sup>5</sup> three mats, a coat of mail, a long woollen coat, his white mule "ed-duldul," and his she-camel "el-'aḍbà."—Certain verses of the *Ḳur-án*

<sup>1</sup> Just before I quitted my house in Cairo to return to England, a friend, who had been my sheykh (or tutor), wrote on a slip of paper, "There is no deity but God: Moḥammad is God's apostle:" then tore it in halves, gave me the latter half (on which was written "Moḥammad is God's apostle"), and concealed the other in a crack in the roof of a little cupboard in my usual sitting-room. This was to insure my coming back to Cairo: for it is believed that the profession of the faith cannot remain incomplete: so that by my keeping the latter half always upon my person, it would bring me back to the former half.

<sup>2</sup> These, it is said, were Christian youths of Ephesus, who took refuge from the persecution of the emperor Decius in a cave, and slept there, guarded by their dog, for the space of 300 [solar] or 309 [lunar] years. (See the *Ḳur-án*, chap. xviii.)

<sup>3</sup> Called "mukhallafát en-nebee."

<sup>4</sup> A shirt which is said to have been worn by the Prophet is preserved in the mosque of El-Ghooree, in Cairo. It is wrapped in a Kashmeer shawl; and not shewn to any but persons of very high rank.

<sup>5</sup> The "burdeh," which is worn by some of the peasants in Egypt, is an oblong piece of thick woollen stuff, resembling the "ḥerám," except in colour, being generally brown or greyish. It appears to have been, in earlier times, always striped; but some modern burdehs are plain, and others have stripes so narrow and near together, that at a little distance the stuff appears to be of one colour. The Prophet's is described as about seven feet and a half in length, and four and a half in width. It was used by him, as burdehs are at present, both to envelop the body by day, and as a night-covering.—I may be excused for remarking here (as it seems to be unknown to some Arabic scholars) that the terms "akhḍar" and "aḥmar," which are applied by different historians to the Prophet's burdeh, are used to signify respectively *grey* and *brown*, as well as *green* and *red*.

are also written upon slips of paper, and worn upon the person as safeguards against various evils, and to procure restoration to health, love and friendship, food, &c. These and other charms, enclosed in cases of gold, silver, tin, leather, or silk, &c., are worn by many of the modern Egyptians, men, women, and children.

It is very common to see children in this country with a charm against the *evil eye*,<sup>1</sup> enclosed in a case, generally of a triangular form, attached to the top of the cap; and horses often have similar appendages. The Egyptians take many precautions against the evil eye; and anxiously endeavour to avert its imagined consequences. When a person expresses what is considered improper or envious admiration of anything, he is generally reproved by the individual whom he has thus alarmed, who says to him, "Bless the Prophet!"<sup>2</sup> and if the envier obeys, saying, "O God, bless him!"<sup>3</sup> no ill effects are apprehended. It is considered very improper for a person to express his admiration of another, or of any object which is not his own property, by saying, "God preserve us!"<sup>4</sup> "How pretty!" or, "Very pretty!" The most approved expression in such cases is "Má sháa-lláh!" (or "What God willeth [cometh to pass!"]); which implies both admiration, and submission to, or approval of, the will of God. A person who has exclaimed "How pretty!" or used similar words, is often desired to say, rather, "Má sháa-lláh!" as well as to bless the Prophet. In the second chapter of this work a remarkable illustration has been given of the fear which mothers in Egypt entertain of the effect of the evil eye upon their children. It is the custom in this country, when a person takes the child of another into his arms, to say, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:" and, "O God, bless our lord Mohammad:" and then to add, "Má sháa-lláh!" It is also a common custom of the people of Egypt, when admiring a child, to say, "I seek refuge with the Lord of the Day-break for thee:" alluding to the Chapter of the Day-break (the 113th chapter of the *Kur-án*); in the end of which, protection is implored against the mischief of the envious. The parents, when they

<sup>1</sup> This superstition explains many customs which would otherwise seem unaccountable.

<sup>2</sup> "Şallee 'a-n-nebee," for "'ala-n-nebee."

<sup>3</sup> "Alláhum (for "Alláhumma") şallee 'aleyh."

<sup>4</sup> The ejaculation which I thus translate is "Yá selám," or "Yá selámu sellim." "Es-Selám" is one of the names of the Deity.

see a person stare at, or seem to envy, their young offspring, sometimes cut off a piece of the skirts of his clothes, burn it with a little salt (to which some add coriander-seed, alum, &c.), and fumigate with the smoke, and sprinkle with the ashes, the child or children. This, it is said, should be done a little before sunset, when the sun becomes red.

Alum is very generally used, in the following manner, by the people of Egypt, to counteract the effects of the evil eye. A piece of about the size of a walnut is placed upon burning coals, and left until it has ceased to bubble. This should be done a short time before sunset; and the person who performs the operation should repeat three times, while the alum is burning, the first chapter of the *Kur-án*, and the last three chapters of the same; all of which are very short. On taking the alum off the fire, it will be found (we are told) to have assumed the form of the person whose envy or malice has given occasion for this process: it is then to be pounded, put into some food, and given to a black dog, to be eaten. I have once seen this done, by a man who suspected his wife of having looked upon him with an evil eye; and in this case, the alum did assume a form much resembling that of a woman, in what the man declared was a peculiar posture in which his wife was accustomed to sit. But the shape which the alum takes depends almost entirely upon the disposition of the coals; and can hardly be such that the imagination may not see in it some resemblance to a human being.—Another supposed mode of obviating the effects of the envious eye is, to prick a paper with a needle, saying, at the same time, "This is the eye of such a one, the envier;" and then to burn the paper.—Alum is esteemed a very efficacious charm against the evil eye: sometimes, a small, flat piece of it, ornamented with tassels, is hung to the top of a child's cap. A tassel of little shells and beads is also used in the same manner, and for the same purpose. The small shells called cowries are especially considered preservatives against the evil eye; and hence, as well as for the sake of ornament, they are often attached to the trappings of camels, horses, and other animals, and sometimes to the caps of children. Such appendages are evidently meant to attract the eye to themselves, and so to prevent observation and envy of the object which they are designed to protect.

To counteract the effects of the evil eye, many persons in Egypt, but mostly women, make use of what is called "mey'ah mubárah" (or blessed storax), which is a mixture of various

ingredients that will be mentioned below, prepared and sold only during the first ten days of the month of Moḥarram. During this period we often see, in the streets of Cairo, men carrying about this mixture of mey'ah, &c., for sale; and generally crying some such words as the following—"Mey'ah mubárah! A new year and blessed 'Áshoorà!<sup>1</sup> The most blessed of years [may this be] to the believers! Yá mey'ah mubárah!"—The man who sells it bears upon his head a round tray, covered with different-coloured sheets of paper, red, yellow, &c.; upon which is placed the valued mixture. In the middle is a large heap of "tifl" (or refuse) of a dark reddish material for dyeing, mixed with a little "mey'ah" (or storax), coriander-seed,<sup>2</sup> and seed of the fennel-flower:<sup>3</sup> round this large heap are smaller heaps: one consisting of salt dyed blue with indigo; another, of salt dyed red; a third, of salt dyed yellow; a fourth, of "sheeh" (a kind of wormwood); a fifth, of dust of "libán" (or frankincense). These are all the ingredients of the "mey'ah mubárah." The seller is generally called into the house of the purchaser. Having placed his tray before him, and received a plate, or a piece of paper, in which to put the quantity to be purchased, he takes a little from one heap, then from another, then from a third, and so on, until he has taken some from each heap; after which, again and again, he takes an additional quantity from each kind. While he does this, he chants a long spell, generally commencing thus:—"In the name of God! and by God! There is no conqueror that conquereth God, the Lord of the East and the West: we are all his servants: we must acknowledge his unity: his unity is an illustrious attribute." After some words on the virtues of salt, he proceeds to say, "I charm thee from the eye of girl, sharper than a spike; and from the eye of woman, sharper than a pruning-knife; and from the eye of boy, more painful than a whip; and from the eye of man, sharper than a chopping-knife;" and so on. Then he relates how Solomon deprived the evil eye of its influence; and afterwards enumerates every article of property that the house is likely to contain, and that the person who purchases his wonderful mixture may be conjectured to possess; all of which he charms against the influence of the eye. Many of the expressions which he employs in this spell are

<sup>1</sup> This is the name of the tenth day of Moḥarram.

<sup>2</sup> "Kuzbarah."

<sup>3</sup> "Ḥabbeh sódá," or "ḥabbet el-barakeh."

very ridiculous: words being introduced merely for the sake of rhyme.—The *mey'ah mubarakah*, a handful of which may be purchased for five *faddahs*,<sup>1</sup> is treasured up by the purchaser during the ensuing year; and whenever it is feared that a child or other person is affected by the evil eye, a little of it is thrown upon some burning coals in a chafing-dish; and the smoke which results is generally made to ascend upon the supposed sufferer.

It is a custom among the higher and middle classes in Cairo, on the occasion of a marriage, to hang chandeliers in the street before the bridegroom's house; and it often happens that a crowd is collected to see a very large and handsome chandelier suspended: in this case, it is a common practice to divert the attention of the spectators by throwing down and breaking a large jar, or by some other artifice, lest an envious eye should cause the chandelier to fall. Accidents which confirm the Egyptians in their superstitions respecting the evil eye often occur: for instance, a friend of mine has just related to me, that, a short time ago, he saw a camel carrying two very large jars of oil: a woman stopped before it, and exclaimed, "God preserve us! What large jars!"—The conductor of the camel did not tell her to bless the Prophet; and the camel, a few minutes after, fell, and broke both the jars, and one of its own legs.

While writing these notes on modern Egyptian superstitions, I have been amused by a complaint of one of my *Maşree*<sup>2</sup> friends, which will serve to illustrate what I have just stated.—"The *Báshà*," he said, "having, a few days ago, given up his monopoly of the meat, the butchers now slaughter for their own shops; and it is quite shocking to see fine sheep hung up in the streets, quite whole, tail<sup>3</sup> and all, before the public eye; so that every beggar who passes by envies them; and one might, therefore, as well eat poison as such meat."—My cook has made the same complaint to me; and, rather than purchase from one of the shops near at hand, takes the trouble of going to one in a distant quarter, kept by a man who conceals his meat from the view of the passengers in the street.

Many of the tradesmen of the metropolis, and of other towns of Egypt, place over their shops (generally upon the hanging shutter which is turned up in front) a paper inscribed with the

<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to about a farthing and one-fifth.

<sup>2</sup> That is, Caireen.

<sup>3</sup> The fat of the tail is esteemed a dainty.



name of God, or that of the Prophet, or both, or the profession of the faith ("There is no deity but God: Moḥammad is God's Apostle"), the words "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," or some maxim of the Prophet, or a verse of the *Ḳur-án* (as, "Verily we have granted thee a manifest victory" [ch. *xlvi*. v. 1], and "Assistance from God, and a speedy victory: and do thou bear good tidings to the believers" [ch. *lxi*. v. 13]), or an invocation to the Deity, such as, "O Thou Opener [of the doors of prosperity, or subsistence]! O Thou Wise! O Thus Supplier of our wants! O Thou Bountiful!"<sup>1</sup>—This invocation is often pronounced by the tradesman when he first opens his shop in the morning, and by the pedestrian vender of small commodities, bread, vegetables, &c., when he sets out on his daily rounds. It is a custom also among the lower orders to put the first piece of money that they receive in the day to the lips and forehead before putting it in the pocket.

Besides the inscriptions over shops, we often see, in Cairo, the invocation "O God!"<sup>2</sup> sculptured over the door of a private house; and the words "The Great Creator is the Everlasting," or "He is the Great Creator, the Everlasting," painted in large characters upon the door, both as a charm, and to remind the master of the house, whenever he enters it, of his own mortality.<sup>3</sup> These words are often inscribed upon the door of a house when its former master, and many or all of its former inhabitants, have been removed by death.

The most approved mode of charming away sickness or disease is to write certain passages of the *Ḳur-án*<sup>4</sup> on the inner surface of an earthenware cup or bowl; then to pour in some water, and stir it until the writing is quite washed off; when the water, with the sacred words thus infused in it, is to be drunk by the patient. These words are as follow: "And He will *heal* the breasts of the people who believe" (ch. *ix*. v. 14). "O men, now hath an admonition come unto you from your Lord; and a *remedy* for what is in your breasts" (ch. *x*. v. 58). "Wherein is a *remedy* for men" (ch. *xvi*. v. 71). "We send down, of the *Ḳur-án*, that which is a *remedy* and mercy to the believers" (ch. *xvii*. v. 84). "And when I am sick He *healeth*

<sup>1</sup> "Yá fettáh! Yá 'aleem! Yá rezzák! Yá kereem!"

<sup>2</sup> "Yá Alláh!"

<sup>3</sup> See the engraving of a door with this inscription inserted in the Introduction.

<sup>4</sup> Called "*áyát esh-shifé*" (the verses of restoration).

me" (ch. xxii. v. 80). "Say, It is, to those who believe, a guide and a *remedy*" (ch. xli. v. 44).—Four of these verses, notwithstanding they are thus used, refer not to diseases of the *body*, but of the *mind*; and another (the third) alludes to the virtues of *honey*!—On my applying to my sheykh (or tutor) to point out to me in what chapters these verses were to be found, he begged me not to translate them into my own language; because the translation of the *Qur-án*, unaccompanied by the original text, is prohibited: not that he seemed ashamed of the practice of employing these words as a charm, and did not wish my countrymen to be informed of the custom: for he expressed his full belief in their efficacy, even in the case of an infidel patient, provided he had proper confidence in their virtue; "Seeing," he observed, "that the Prophet (God bless and save him) has said, 'If thou confide in God, with true confidence, He will sustain thee as He sustaineth the birds.'" I silenced his scruples on the subject of translating these verses by telling him that we had an English translation of the whole of the *Qur-án*.—Sometimes, for the cure of diseases, and to counteract poisons, &c., a draught of water from a metal cup, having certain passages of the *Qur-án*, and talismanic characters and figures, engraved in the interior, is administered to the patient. I have a cup of this description, lately given to me<sup>1</sup> here (in Cairo), much admired by my Muslim acquaintances. On the exterior is an inscription enumerating its virtues: it is said to possess charms that will counteract all poisons, &c., and the evil eye, and cure "sicknesses and diseases, except the sickness of death." I have seen, here, another cup which appeared to have been exactly similar to that above mentioned; but its inscriptions were partly effaced.—The secret virtues of the *Qur-án*<sup>2</sup> are believed to be very numerous. One day, on my refusing to eat of a dish that I feared would do me harm, I was desired to repeat the Soorat *Qureysh* (106th chapter of the *Qur-án*) to the end of the words "supplieth them with food against hunger;" and to repeat these last words three times. This, I was assured, would be a certain preventive of any harm that I might have feared.

There are various things which are regarded in the same light as written charms; such as dust from the tomb of the Prophet, water from the sacred well of Zemzem, in the Temple of Mekkeh, and pieces of the black brocade covering of the

<sup>1</sup> By Robert Hay, Esq., who purchased it from a peasant at Thebes.

<sup>2</sup> "Asrár el-*Qur-án*."

Kaabeh.<sup>1</sup> The water of Zemzem is much valued for the purpose of sprinkling upon grave-clothes.—An Arab, to whom I had given some medicine which had been beneficial to him, in the Şa'eed, during my first visit to this country, heard me inquire for some Zemzem-water (as several boats full of pilgrims on their return from Mekkeh were coming down the Nile), and perhaps thought, from my making this inquiry, that I was a pious Muslim: accordingly, to shew his gratitude to me, he gave me what I was seeking to obtain. Having gone to the house of a friend, he returned to my boat, bringing a small bundle, which he opened before me. "Here," said he, "are some things which, I know, you will value highly. Here are two tin flasks of the water of Zemzem: one of them you shall have: you may keep it to sprinkle your grave-clothing with it. This is a 'miswák' (a tooth-stick) dipped in the water of Zemzem: accept it from me: clean your teeth with it, and they will never ache, nor decay. And here," he added (shewing me three small, oblong and flat cakes, of a kind of greyish earth, each about an inch in length, and stamped with Arabic characters, "In the name of God: Dust of our land [mixed] with the saliva of some of us"), "these are composed of earth from over the grave of the Prophet (God bless and save him): I purchased them myself in the noble tomb, on my return from the pilgrimage: one of them I give to you: you will find it a cure for every disease: the second I shall keep for myself; and the third we will eat together."—Upon this, he broke in halves one of the three cakes; and we each ate our share. I agreed with him that it was delicious; and I gladly accepted his presents.—I was afterwards enabled to make several additions to my Mekkeh curiosities; comprising a piece of the covering of the Kaabeh, brought from Mekkeh by the skeykh Ibráheem (Burckhardt), and given to me by his legatee 'Osmán. A cake composed of dust from the Prophet's tomb is sometimes sewed up in a leathern case, and worn as an amulet. It is also formed into lumps of the shape and size of a small pear, and hung to the railing or screen which surrounds the monument over the grave of a saint, or to the monument itself, or to the windows or door of the apartment which contains it.

So numerous are the charms which the Egyptians employ to insure good fortune, or to prevent or remove evils of every

<sup>1</sup> Every year, on the first day of the Great Festival, which immediately follows the pilgrimage, a new covering is hung upon the Kaabeh. The old one is cut up; and the greater part of it is sold to the pilgrims.

kind, and so various are the superstitious practices to which they have recourse with these views, that a large volume would scarcely suffice to describe them in detail. These modes of endeavouring to obtain good, and to avoid or dispel evil, when they are not founded upon religion or magic or astrology, are termed matters of "ilm er-rukkeh," or the science of the distaff (that is, of the women); which designation is given to imply their absurdity, and because women are the persons who most confide in them. This term is considered, by some, as a vulgar corruption of "ilm er-rukyeh," or "the science of enchantment:" by others, it is supposed to be substituted for the latter term by way of a pun. Some practices of the nature just described have already been incidentally mentioned: I shall only give a few other specimens.

It is a very common custom in Cairo to hang an aloe-plant over the door of a house; particularly over that of a new house, or over a door newly built: and this is regarded as a charm to insure long and flourishing lives to the inmates, and long continuance to the house itself.<sup>1</sup> The women also believe that the Prophet visits the house where this plant is suspended. The aloe, thus hung, without earth or water, will live for several years; and even blossom. Hence it is called "şabr," which signifies "patience;" but more properly "şabbárah;" "şabr," a contraction of "şabir," being generally applied to the expressed juice.

When any evil is apprehended from a person, it is customary to break a piece of pottery behind his back. This is also done with the view of preventing further intercourse with such a person.

As ophthalmia is very prevalent in Egypt, the ignorant people of this country resort to many ridiculous practices of a superstitious nature for its cure. Some, for this purpose, take a piece of dried mud, from the bank of the Nile at or near Boolák, the principal port of Cairo, and, crossing the river, deposit it on the opposite bank, at Imbábeh. This is considered sufficient to insure a cure.—Others, with the same view, hang to the head-dress, over the forehead, or over the diseased eye, a Venetian sequin;<sup>2</sup> but it must be one of a particular description, in which the figures on each side correspond, head

<sup>1</sup> It has been said, by a traveller, that this is only done at pilgrims' houses: but such is not the case, at least in Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> "Bendukee."

to head, and feet to feet.<sup>1</sup> Yet, if a person having a Venetian sequin, or a dollar, in his pocket, enters the room of one who is suffering from ophthalmia or fever, his presence is thought to aggravate the complaint. It is also a general belief, here, that, if an individual in a state of religious uncleanness enters a room in which is a person afflicted with ophthalmia, the patient's disease will consequently be aggravated, and that a speck will appear in one or each of his eyes. A man with whom I am acquainted has, at the time I write this, just come out of a room in which he had confined himself, while suffering from ophthalmia, for about three months, from this fear; never allowing any person to enter; his servant always placing his food outside his door. He has, however, come out with a speck in one of his eyes.

Another practice, which is often adopted in similar cases, but mostly by women, and frequently with the view of preventing barrenness, is very singular and disgusting. The large open place called the Rumeyleh, on the west of the Citadel of Cairo, is a common scene of the execution of criminals; and the decapitation of persons convicted of capital offences in the metropolis was formerly almost always performed there, rather than in any other part of the town. On the south of this place is a building called "Maghsil es-Sultán," or the Sultán's washing-place for the dead; where is a table of stone, upon which the body of every person who is decapitated is washed, previously to its burial, and there is a trough to receive the water, which is never poured out, but remains tainted with the blood, and fetid. Many a woman goes thither, and, for the cure of ophthalmia, or to obtain offspring, or to expedite delivery in the case of a protracted pregnancy, without speaking (for silence is deemed absolutely necessary), passes under the stone table above mentioned, with the left foot foremost, and then over it; and does this seven times; after which, she washes her face with the polluted water that is in the trough, and gives five or ten faddahs to an old man and his wife, who keep the place; then goes away, still without speaking. Men, in the case of ophthalmia, often do the same. The Maghsil is said to have been built by the famous Beybars, before he became Sultán; in consequence of his observing that the remains of persons decapitated in Cairo were often kicked about, and buried without being previously washed.

<sup>1</sup> A sequin of this description is termed "benduķee musháharah."

Some women step over the body of a decapitated man seven times, without speaking, to become pregnant; and some, with the same desire, dip in the blood a piece of cotton wool, of which they afterwards make use in a manner I must decline mentioning.

A ridiculous ceremony is practised for the cure of a pimple on the edge of the eye-lid, or what we commonly call a "sty," and which is termed in Egypt "shahháteh;" a word which literally signifies "a female beggar."<sup>1</sup> The person affected with it goes to any seven women of the name of Fá'meh, in seven different houses, and begs from each of them a morsel of bread: these seven morsels constitute the remedy.—Sometimes, in a similar case, and for the same purpose, a person goes out before sunrise, and, without speaking, walks round several tombs, from right to left, which is the reverse of the regular course made in visiting tombs.—Another supposed mode of cure in a case of the same kind is, to bind a bit of cotton on the end of a stick; then to dip it in one of the troughs out of which the dogs drink in the streets of Cairo, and to wipe the eye with it. The patient is thus careful to preserve his hand from the polluted water, when he is about to apply this to another part of his person.

As an imaginary cure for ague, some of the women of Egypt (I mean those of the Muslim faith) hang to their necks the finger of a Christian or Jew, cut off a corpse, and dried. This and other practices mentioned before are striking proofs of the degrading effects of superstition, and of its powerful influence over the mind: for, in general, the Muslims are scrupulously careful to conform with that precept of their religion which requires them to abstain from everything polluting or unclean.

When a child is unable to walk, after having attained the age when it is usual to begin to do so, it is a common custom for the mother to bind its feet together with a palm-leaf tied in three knots, and to place it at the door of a mosque during the period when the congregation are engaged in performing the Friday-prayers: when the prayers are ended, she asks the first, second, and third persons who come out of the mosque to untie each a knot of the palm-leaf; and then carries the child home, confident that this ceremony will soon have the desired effect.

There are several pretended antidotes for poison, and

<sup>1</sup> Being a corruption of "shahhádheh."

remedies for certain diseases, to which the Egyptians often have recourse, and which may perhaps have some efficacy: but superstition attributes to them incredible virtues. Of the beneficial and the injurious properties of various vegetable and animal substances, either in themselves or in particular circumstances, the most absurd notions are entertained, even by the generality of the more learned and enlightened; being sanctioned in some instances by traditions related as being precepts of Moḥammad, and in general by the authority of their most eminent physicians. The bezoar-stone<sup>1</sup> is used as an antidote for poison, by rubbing it in a cup with a little water: the cup is then filled with water, which the patient drinks. In the same manner, and for the same purpose, a cup made of the horn of the rhinoceros<sup>2</sup> is used: a piece of the same material (the horn) is rubbed in it.—As a cure for the jaundice, many persons in Cairo drink the water of a well in this city, called “beer el-yaraḳán,” or “the well of the jaundice.” It is the property of an old woman, who reaps considerable advantage from it: for it has two mouths, under one of which is a dry receptacle for anything that may be thrown down: and the old woman desires the persons who come to use the medicinal water to drop through this mouth whatever she happens to be in need of; as sugar, coffee, &c.

The Muslims have recourse to many superstitious practices to determine them when they are in doubt as to any action which they contemplate, whether they shall do it or not. Some apply, for an answer, to a table called a “zâirgeh.” There is a table of this kind ascribed to Idrees, or Enoch. It is divided into a hundred little squares, in each of which is written some Arabic letter. The person who consults it repeats, three times, the opening chapter of the *Ḳur-án*, and the 59th verse of the *Soorat el-An’ám* (or 6th chapter)—“With Him are the keys of the secret things: none knoweth them but He: and He knoweth whatever is on the land and [what is] in the sea: and there falleth not a leaf, but He knoweth it, nor a grain in the dark parts of the earth, nor a moist thing nor a dry thing, but [it is noted] in a distinct writing.”—Having done this, without looking directly at the table, he places his finger upon it: he then looks to see upon what letter his finger is placed; writes that letter; the fifth following it; the fifth following this; and so on, until he comes again to the first which he wrote; and

<sup>1</sup> “Ḥagar el-benzaheer.”

<sup>2</sup> “Ḳarn kharteet.”

these letters together compose the answer. The construction of the table may be shewn by translating it, thus:—

d	w	w	a	w	o	h	a	b	h
i	o	i	s	o	t	d	t	t	w
w	o	a	a	a	i	e	n	i	i
t	s	d	n	t	h	i	a	a	e
o	t	t	n	t	u	w	t	d	h
t	i	a	e	s	f	l	i	n	u
e	l	n	j	c	a	d	t	o	c
r	o	h	y	e	o	w	y	p	e
f	r	w	e	d	i	o	i	a	e
l	n	s	c	t	l	g	h	e	h

For an example, suppose the finger to be placed on the letter *e* in the sixth line: we take, from the table, the letters *enjoypeaceabstainand*, which compose this sentence: "Abstain, and enjoy peace:" the sentence always commencing with the first of the letters taken from the uppermost line. It will be seen that the table gives only five answers; and that, if we proceed as above directed, we must obtain one of these answers, with whatever letter of the table we commence. It will also be observed, that the framer of the table, knowing that men very frequently wish to do what is wrong, and seldom to do what is right, and that it is generally safer for them to abstain when in doubt, has given but one affirmative answer, and four negative.<sup>1</sup>

Some persons have recourse to the *Qur-án* for an answer to their doubts. This they call making an "istikhárah," or application for the favour of heaven, or for direction in the right course. Repeating, three times, the opening chapter, the 112th chapter, and the verse above quoted, they let the book fall open, or open it at random, and, from the seventh line of the right-hand page, draw their answer. The words often will not convey a direct answer; but are taken as affirmative or negative

<sup>1</sup> The more approved *záirgehs* are extremely complicated; and the process of consulting them involves intricate astrological calculations.



according as their general tenour is good or bad; promising a blessing, or denouncing a threat, &c. Instead of reading the seventh line of this page, some count the number of the letters "khá" and "sheen" which occur in the whole page; and if the "khás" predominate, the inference is favourable: "khá" represents "kheyr," or "good:" "sheen," "sharr," or "evil."

There is another mode of istikhárah; which is, to take hold of any two points of a "sebħah" (or rosary), after reciting the Fát'ħah three times, and then to count the beads between these two points, saying, in passing the first bead through the fingers, "[I extol] the perfection of God;"<sup>1</sup> in passing the second, "Praise be to God;"<sup>2</sup> in passing the third, "There is no deity but God;"<sup>3</sup> and repeating these expressions in the same order, to the last bead: if the first expression fall to the last bead, the answer is affirmative and favourable: if the second, indifferent: if the last, negative. This is practised by many persons.

Some, again, in similar cases, on lying down to sleep, at night, beg of God to direct them by a dream; by causing them to see something white or green, or water, if the action which they contemplate be approved, or if they are to expect approaching good fortune; and if not, by causing them to see something black or red, or fire: they then recite the Fát'ħah ten times; and continue to repeat these words—"O God, bless our lord Moħammad!"—until they fall asleep.

The Egyptians place great faith in dreams, which often direct them in some of the most important actions of life. They have two large and celebrated works on the interpretation of dreams, by Ibn-Sháheen and Ibn-Seereen; the latter of whom was the pupil of the former. These books are consulted, even by many of the learned, with implicit confidence. When one person says to another, "I have seen a dream," the latter usually replies, "Good"<sup>4</sup> (*i. e.* may it be of good omen), or, "Good, please God."<sup>5</sup> When a person has had an evil dream, it is customary for him to say, "O God, bless our lord Moħammad:" and to spit over his left shoulder three times, to prevent an evil result.

In Egypt, as in most other countries, superstitions are entertained respecting days of the week; some being considered fortunate; and others unfortunate.—The Egyptians regard

<sup>1</sup> "Subħána-lláh."

<sup>2</sup> "El-ħamdu li-lláh."

<sup>3</sup> "Lá iláha illa-lláh."

<sup>4</sup> "Kheyr."

<sup>5</sup> "Kheyr in sháa-lláh."

*Sunday* as an *unfortunate* day, on account of the night which follows it.—This night, which (according to the system already mentioned) is called the night of *Monday*, the learned Muslims, and many of the inferior classes, consider *unfortunate*, because it was that of the death of their Prophet; but some regard it as *fortunate*, particularly for the consummation of marriage; though not so auspicious for this affair as the eve of *Friday*. The day following it is also considered, by some, as *fortunate*; and by others, as *unfortunate*.—*Tuesday* is generally thought *unfortunate*, and called “the day of blood;” as it is said that several eminent martyrs were put to death on this day; and hence, also, it is commonly esteemed a proper day for being bled.—*Wednesday* is regarded as *indifferent*.—*Thursday* is called “el-mubárák” (or, the blessed); and is considered *fortunate*; particularly deriving a blessing from the following night and day.—The eve, or night, of *Friday* is *very fortunate*; especially for the consummation of marriage. *Friday* is blessed above all other days as being the sabbath of the Muslims: it is called “el-faḍeeleh” (or, the excellent).—*Saturday* is the *most unfortunate* of days. It is considered very wrong to commence a journey, and, by most people in *Egypt*, to shave, or cut the nails, on this day.—A friend of mine here was doubting whether he should bring an action against two persons on so unfortunate a day as *Saturday*: he decided, at last, that it was the best day of the week for him to do this, as the ill fortune must fall upon one of the two parties only, and doubtless upon his adversaries, because they were two to one.—There are some days of the *year* which are esteemed very fortunate; as those of the two grand festivals, &c.: and some which are regarded as unfortunate; as, for instance, the last *Wednesday* in the month of *Şafar*: when many persons make a point of not going out of their houses, from the belief that numerous afflictions fall upon mankind on that day.<sup>1</sup>—Some persons draw lucky or unlucky omens from the first object they see on going out of the house in the morning: according as that object is pleasant or the reverse, they say, “our morning is good” or “—bad.” A one-eyed person is regarded as of evil omen; and especially one who is blind of the *left eye*.

<sup>1</sup> This superstition, however, was condemned by the Prophet.

## CHAPTER XII

## MAGIC, ASTROLOGY, AND ALCHEMY

IF we might believe some stories which are commonly related in Egypt, it would appear that, in modern days, there have been, in this country, magicians not less skilful than Pharaoh's "wise men and sorcerers" of whom we read in the Bible.

The more intelligent of the Muslims distinguish two kinds of magic, which they term "Er-Rooḥanee" (*vulgo*, "Rowḥanee") and "Es-Seemiyà:" the former is *spiritual* magic, which is believed to effect its wonders by the agency of angels and genii, and by the mysterious virtues of certain names of God, and other supernatural means: the latter is *natural* and *deceptive* magic; and its chief agents, the less credulous Muslims believe to be certain perfumes and drugs, which affect the vision and imagination nearly in the same manner as opium: this drug, indeed, is supposed, by some persons, to be employed in the operations of the latter branch of magic.

"Er-Rooḥanee," which is universally considered, among the Egyptians, as *true* magic, is of two kinds, "ilwee" (or high) and "suflee" (or low); which are also called "raḥmānee" (or divine, or, literally, relating to "the Compassionate," which is an epithet of God,) and "sheytānee" (or satanic).—The 'ilwee, or raḥmānee, is said to be a science founded on the agency of God, and of his angels, and good genii, and on other lawful mysteries; to be always employed for good purposes, and only attained and practised by men of probity, who, by tradition, or from books, learn the names of those superhuman agents, and invocations which insure compliance with their desires. The writing of charms for good purposes belongs to this branch of magic, and to astrology, and to the science of the mysteries of numbers. The highest attainment in divine magic consists in the knowledge of the "Ism el-Aẓam." This is "the most great name" of God, which is generally believed, by the learned, to be known to none but prophets and apostles of God. A person acquainted with it can, it is said, by merely uttering it, raise the

dead to life, kill the living, transport himself instantly wherever he pleases, and perform any other miracle. Some suppose it to be known to eminent welees.—The suflee is believed to depend on the agency of the devil, and other evil genii; and to be used for bad purposes, and by bad men. To this branch belongs the science called, by the Arabs, “essehr;” which is a term they give only to wicked enchantment.—Those who perform what is called “darb el-mendel” (of which I purpose to relate some examples) profess to do it by the agency of genii; that is, by the science called er-roohanee: but there is another opinion on this subject which will be presently mentioned.—One of the means by which genii are believed to assist magicians has been explained in the second paragraph of Chapter X.

“Es-Seemiyà” is generally pronounced, by the learned, to be a false science, and deceptive art, which produces surprising effects by those natural means which have been above mentioned; and the “darb el-mendel,” as perfumes are employed in the performance of it, is considered, by such persons, as pertaining to es-seemiyà.

“Ilm en-Nugoom,” or Astrology, is studied by many persons in Egypt. It is chiefly employed in casting nativities, and in determining fortunate periods, &c.; and very commonly, to divine by what sign of the zodiac a person is influenced; which is usually done by a calculation founded upon the numerical values of the letters composing his or her name, and that of the mother: this is often done in the case of two persons who contemplate becoming man and wife, with the view of ascertaining whether they will agree.—The science called “darb er-raml,” or geomancy, by which, from certain marks made at random on paper, or on sand (whence it is said to derive its name), the professors pretend to discover past, passing, and future events, is, I am informed, mainly founded on astrology.

“El-Keemiyà,” or Alchymy, is also studied by many persons in Egypt, and by some possessed of talents by which they might obtain a better reputation than this pursuit procures them, and who, in spite of the derision which they experience from a few men of sounder minds, and the reproaches of those whom they unintentionally make their dupes, continue, to old age, their fruitless labours. Considerable knowledge of chemistry is, however, sometimes acquired in the study of this false science;

and in the present degraded state of physical knowledge in this country, it rather evinces a superior mind when a person gives his attention to alchymy.

There is, or was,<sup>1</sup> a native of Egypt very highly celebrated for his performances in the higher kind of that branch of magic called er-rooḥanee; the sheykh Isma'eel Aboo-Ru-oos, of the town of Dasook. Even the more learned and sober of the people of this country relate most incredible stories of his magical skill; for which some of them account by asserting his having been married to a "ginneeyeh" (or female genie); and others, merely by his having "ginn" at his service, whom he could mentally consult and command, without making use of any such charm as the lamp of 'Alá-ed-Deen.<sup>2</sup> He is said to have always employed this supernatural power either for good or innocent purposes; and to have been much favoured by Moḥammad 'Alee, who, some say, often consulted him. One of the most sensible of my Muslim friends, in this place (Cairo), informs me that he once visited Aboo-Ru-oos, at Dasook, in company with the sheykh El-Emeer, son of the sheykh El-Emeer el-Kebeer, sheykh of the sect of the Málikees. My friend's companion asked their host to shew them some proof of his skill in magic; and the latter complied with the request. "Let coffee be served to us," said the sheykh El-Emeer, "in my father's set of fingáns and zarfs, which are in Maṣr." They waited a few minutes; and then the coffee was brought; and the sheykh El-Emeer looked at the fingáns and zarfs, and said that they were certainly his father's. He was next treated with sherbet, in what he declared himself satisfied were his father's kullehs. He then wrote a letter to his father, and, giving it to Aboo-Ru-oos, asked him to procure an answer to it. The magician took the letter, placed it behind a cushion of his deewán, and, a few minutes after, removing the cushion, shewed him that this letter was gone, and that another was in its place. The sheykh El-Emeer took the latter; opened and read it; and found in it, in a handwriting which, he said, he could have sworn to be that of his father, a complete answer to what he had written, and an account of the state of his

<sup>1</sup> I was informed that he had died during my second visit to Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> I must be excused for deviating from our old and erroneous mode of writing the name of the master of "the wonderful lamp." It is vulgarly pronounced 'Aláy-ed-Deen.

family which he proved, on his return to Cairo, a few days after, to be perfectly true.<sup>1</sup>

A curious case of magic fell under the cognizance of the government during my former visit to this country; and became a subject of general talk and wonder throughout the metropolis. I shall give the story of this occurrence precisely as it was related to me by several persons in Cairo; without curtailing it of any of the exaggerations with which they embellished it; not only because I am ignorant how far it is true, but because I would shew how great a degree of faith the Egyptians in general place in magic, or enchantment.

Muṣṭafā Ed-Digwee, chief secretary in the Kāḍee's court, in this city, was dismissed from his office, and succeeded by another person of the name of Muṣṭafā, who had been a ṣeyrefee, or money-changer. The former sent a petition to the Báshà, begging to be reinstated; but before he received an answer, he was attacked by a severe illness, which he believed to be the effect of enchantment: he persuaded himself that Muṣṭafā the ṣeyrefee had employed a magician to write a spell which should cause him to die; and therefore sent a second time to the Báshà, charging the new secretary with this crime. The accused was brought before the Báshà; confessed that he had done so; and named the magician whom he had employed. The latter was arrested; and, not being able to deny the charge brought against him, was thrown into prison, there to remain until it should be seen whether or not Ed-Digwee would die. He was locked up in a small cell; and two soldiers were placed at the door, that one of them might keep watch while the other slept.—Now for the marvellous part of the story.—At night, after one of the guards had fallen asleep, the other heard a strange, murmuring noise, and, looking through a crack of the door of the cell, saw the magician sitting in the middle of the floor, muttering some words which he (the guard) could not understand. Presently, the candle which was before him became extinguished; and, at the same instant, four other candles appeared; one in each corner of the cell. The magician then rose, and, standing on one side of the cell, knocked his forehead three times against the wall; and each time that he did so, the wall opened, and a man appeared to

<sup>1</sup> Of a more famous magician, the sheykh Aḥmad Šádoomeh, who flourished in Egypt in the latter half of the last century, an account is given in my translation of 'The Thousand and One Nights,' chap. i., note 15.

come forth from it. After the magician had conversed for some minutes with the three personages whom he thus produced, they disappeared; as did, also, the four candles; and the candle that was in the midst of the cell became lighted again, as at first: the magician then resumed his position on the floor; and all was quiet. Thus the spell that was to have killed Ed-Digwee was dissolved. Early the next morning, the invalid felt himself so much better, that he called for a basin and ewer, performed the ablution, and said his prayers; and from that time he rapidly recovered. He was restored to his former office; and the magician was banished from Egypt.—Another enchanter (or “sahhár”) was banished a few days after, for writing a charm which caused a Muslimeh girl to be affected with an irresistible love for a Copt Christian.

A few days after my first arrival in this country, my curiosity was excited on the subject of magic by a circumstance related to me by Mr. Salt, our Consul-general. Having had reason to believe that one of his servants was a thief, from the fact of several articles of property having been stolen from his house, he sent for a celebrated Maghrabee magician, with the view of intimidating them, and causing the guilty one (if any of them were guilty) to confess his crime. The magician came; and said that he would cause the exact image of the person who had committed the thefts to appear to any youth not arrived at the age of puberty; and desired the master of the house to call in any boy whom he might choose. As several boys were then employed in a garden adjacent to the house, one of them was called for this purpose. In the palm of this boy's right hand, the magician drew, with a pen, a certain diagram, in the centre of which he poured a little ink. Into this ink, he desired the boy stedfastly to look. He then burned some incense, and several bits of paper inscribed with charms; and at the same time called for various objects to appear in the ink. The boy declared that he saw all these objects, and, last of all, the image of the guilty person; he described his stature, countenance, and dress; said that he knew him; and directly ran down into the garden, and apprehended one of the labourers, who, when brought before the master, immediately confessed that he was the thief.

The above relation made me desirous of witnessing a similar performance during my first visit to this country; but not being acquainted with the name of the magician here alluded to, or his place of abode, I was unable to obtain any tidings of him.

I learned, however, soon after my return to England, that he had become known to later travellers in Egypt; was residing in Cairo; and that he was called the sheykh 'Abd-El-Kádír El-Maghrabee. A few weeks after my second arrival in Egypt, my neighbour 'Osmán, interpreter of the British consulate, brought him to me; and I fixed a day for his visiting me, to give me a proof of the skill for which he is so much famed. He came at the time appointed, about two hours before noon; but seemed uneasy; frequently looked up at the sky, through the window; and remarked that the weather was unpropitious: it was dull and cloudy; and the wind was boisterous. The experiment was performed with three boys; one after another. With the first, it was partly successful; but with the others, it completely failed. The magician said that he could do nothing more that day; and that he would come in the evening of a subsequent day. He kept his appointment; and admitted that the time was favourable. While waiting for my neighbour, before mentioned, to come and witness the performances, we took pipes and coffee; and the magician chatted with me on indifferent subjects. He is a fine, tall, and stout man, of a rather fair complexion, with a dark-brown beard; is shabbily dressed; and generally wears a large green turban, being a descendant of the Prophet. In his conversation, he is affable and unaffected. He professed to me that his wonders were effected by the agency of *good* spirits; but to others, he has said the contrary: that his magic is satanic.

In preparing for the experiment of the magic mirror of ink, which, like some other performances of a similar nature, is here termed "darb el-mendel," the magician first asked me for a reed-pen and ink, a piece of paper, and a pair of scissors; and, having cut off a narrow strip of paper, wrote upon it certain forms of invocation, together with another charm, by which he professes to accomplish the object of the experiment. He did not attempt to conceal these; and on my asking him to give me copies of them, he readily consented, and immediately wrote them for me; explaining to me, at the same time, that the object he had in view was accomplished through the influence of the first two words, "Ṭarshun" and "Ṭaryoosh-un,"<sup>1</sup> which, he said, were the names of two genii, his "familiar spirits." I compared the copies with the originals;

<sup>1</sup> Or, "Ṭarsh" and "Ṭaryoosh;" the final "un" being the inflexion which denotes the nominative case.



and found that they exactly agreed. Fac-similes of them are here inserted, with a translation.

طرش طريوش انزلوا  
انزلوا احضروا اسي مذهب  
الامير وجنوده الى الاحمر  
الامير وجنوده احضروا  
يا خدام هذه الاسماء

وهذا الاكشاف فكشفنا عنك  
عطاءك فبصرك اليوم  
حديدي صحيح صح

MAGIC INVOCATION AND CHARM.

“Tarshun ! Taryooshun ! Come down !  
Come down ! Be present ! Whither are gone  
the prince and his troops ? Where are El-Ahmar  
the prince and his troops ? Be present  
ye servants of these names !”

“And this is the removal. ‘And we have removed from thee  
thy veil ; and thy sight to-day  
is piercing.’ Correct : correct.”

Having written these, the magician cut off the paper containing the forms of invocation from that upon which the other charm was written ; and cut the former into six strips. He then explained to me that the object of the latter charm (which contains part of the 21st verse of the Soorat Káf, or 50th chapter of the Qur-án) was to open the boy's eyes in a supernatural manner ; to make his sight pierce into what is to us the invisible world.

I had prepared, by the magician's direction, some frankincense and coriander-seed,<sup>1</sup> and a chafing-dish with some live charcoal in it. These were now brought into the room, together with the boy who was to be employed: he had been called in, by my desire, from among some boys in the street, returning from a manufactory; and was about eight or nine years of age. In reply to my inquiry respecting the description of persons who could see in the magic mirror of ink, the magician said that they were a boy not arrived at puberty, a virgin, a black female slave, and a pregnant woman. The chafing-dish was placed

before him and the boy; and the latter was placed on a seat. The magician now desired my servant to put some frankincense and coriander-seed into the chafing-dish; then taking hold of the boy's right hand, he drew, in the palm of it, a magic square, of which a copy is here given. The figures which it contains are Arabic numerals.<sup>2</sup> In the centre, he poured a little ink, and desired the boy to look into it, and tell him if he could see his face reflected in it: the boy replied that he saw

3	9	5
2	●	1
4	8	7

MAGIC SQUARE AND MIRROR OF INK.

<sup>1</sup> He generally requires some benzoin to be added to these.

<sup>2</sup> The numbers in this magic square, in our own ordinary characters, are as follow:—

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

It will be seen that the horizontal, vertical, and diagonal rows give, each, the same sum, namely, 15.

his face clearly. The magician, holding the boy's hand all the while,<sup>1</sup> told him to continue looking intently into the ink ; and not to raise his head.

He then took one of the little strips of paper inscribed with the forms of invocation, and dropped it into the chafing-dish, upon the burning coals and perfumes, which had already filled the room with their smoke ; and as he did this, he commenced an indistinct muttering of words, which he continued during the whole process, except when he had to ask the boy a question, or to tell him what he was to say. The piece of paper containing the words from the *Kur-án* he placed inside the fore part of the boy's *taķeeyeh*, or skull-cap. He then asked him if he saw anything in the ink ; and was answered, "No : " but about a minute after, the boy, trembling, and seeming much frightened, said, "I see a man sweeping the ground." "When he has done sweeping," said the magician, "tell me." Presently, the boy said, "He has done." The magician then again interrupted his muttering to ask the boy if he knew what a "*beyrak*" (or flag) was ; and, being answered, "Yes," desired him to say, "Bring a flag." The boy did so ; and soon said, "He has brought a flag." "What colour is it ?" asked the magician : the boy replied, "Red." He was told to call for another flag ; which he did ; and soon after he said that he saw another brought ; and that it was black. In like manner, he was told to call for a third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh ; which he described as being successively brought before him ; specifying their colours, as white, green, black, red, and blue. The magician then asked him (as he did, also, each time that a new flag was described as being brought), "How many flags have you now before you ?" "Seven," answered the boy. While this was going on, the magician put the second and third of the small strips of paper upon which the forms of invocation were written into the chafing-dish ; and fresh frankincense and coriander-seed having been repeatedly added, the fumes became painful to the eyes. When the boy had described the seven flags as appearing to him, he was desired to say, "Bring the *Sulţán's* tent ; and pitch it." This he did ; and in about a minute after, he said, "Some men have brought the tent ; a large green tent : they are pitching it ;" and presently, he added, "They have set it up." "Now," said the magician, "order the soldiers to come, and to pitch

<sup>1</sup> This reminds us of animal magnetism.

their camp around the tent of the Sultán." The boy did as he was desired; and immediately said, "I see a great many soldiers, with their tents: they have pitched their tents." He was then told to order that the soldiers should be drawn up in ranks; and, having done so, he presently said that he saw them thus arranged. The magician had put the fourth of the little strips of paper into the chafing-dish; and soon after, he did the same with the fifth. He now said, "Tell some of the people to bring a bull." The boy gave the order required, and said, "I see a bull: it is red: four men are dragging it along; and three are beating it." He was told to desire them to kill it, and cut it up, and to put the meat in saucepans, and cook it. He did as he was directed; and described these operations as apparently performed before his eyes. "Tell the soldiers," said the magician, "to eat it." The boy did so; and said, "They are eating it. They have done; and are washing their hands." The magician then told him to call for the Sultán; and the boy, having done this, said, "I see the Sultán riding to his tent, on a bay horse; and he has, on his head, a high red cap: he has alighted at his tent, and sat down within it." "Desire them to bring coffee to the Sultán," said the magician, "and to form the court." These orders were given by the boy; and he said that he saw them performed. The magician had put the last of the six little strips of paper into the chafing-dish. In his mutterings I distinguished nothing but the words of the written invocation, frequently repeated, except on two or three occasions, when I heard him say, "If they demand information, inform them; and be ye veracious." But much that he repeated was inaudible, and as I did not ask him to teach me his art, I do not pretend to assert that I am fully acquainted with his invocations.

He now addressed himself to me; and asked me if I wished the boy to see any person who was absent or dead. I named Lord Nelson; of whom the boy had evidently never heard; for it was with much difficulty that he pronounced the name, after several trials. The magician desired the boy to say to the Sultán—"My master salutes thee, and desires thee to bring Lord Nelson: bring him before my eyes, that I may see him, speedily." The boy then said so; and almost immediately added, "A messenger is gone, and has returned, and brought a man, dressed in a black<sup>1</sup> suit of European clothes: the man

<sup>1</sup> Dark blue is called by the modern Egyptians "eswed," which properly signifies *black*, and is therefore so translated here.

has lost his left arm." He then paused for a moment or two ; and, looking more intently, and more closely, into the ink, said, "No, he has not lost his left arm ; but it is placed to his breast." This correction made his description more striking than it had been without it : since Lord Nelson generally had his empty sleeve attached to the breast of his coat : but it was the *right* arm that he had lost. Without saying that I suspected the boy had made a mistake, I asked the magician whether the objects appeared in the ink as if actually before the eyes, or as if in a glass, which makes the right appear left. He answered, that they appeared as in a mirror. This rendered the boy's description faultless.<sup>1</sup>

The next person I called for was a native of Egypt, who had been for many years resident in England, where he had adopted our dress ; and who had been long confined to his bed by illness before I embarked for this country : I thought that his name, one not very uncommon in Egypt, might make the boy describe him incorrectly ; though another boy, on the former visit of the magician, had described this same person as wearing a European dress, like that in which I last saw him. In the present case the boy said, "Here is a man brought on a kind of a bier, and wrapped up in a sheet." This description would suit, supposing the person in question to be still confined to his bed, or if he were dead.<sup>2</sup> The boy described his face as covered ; and was told to order that it should be uncovered. This he did ; and then said, "His face is pale ; and he has mustaches, but no beard : " which is correct.

Several other persons were successively called for ; but the boy's descriptions of them were imperfect, though not altogether incorrect. He represented each object as appearing

<sup>1</sup> Whenever I desired the boy to call for any person to appear, I paid particular attention both to the magician and to 'Osmán. The latter gave no direction either by word or sign ; and indeed he was generally unacquainted with the personal appearance of the individual called for. I took care that he had no previous communication with the boys ; and have seen the experiment fail when he *could* have given directions to them, or to the magician. In short, it would be difficult to conceive any precaution which I did not take. It is important to add, that the dialect of the magician was more intelligible to me than to the boy. When I understood him perfectly at once, he was sometimes obliged to vary his words to make the *boy* comprehend what he said.

<sup>2</sup> A few months after this was written, I had the pleasure of hearing that the person here alluded to was in better health. Whether he was confined to his bed at the time when this experiment was performed, I have not been able to ascertain.

less distinct than the preceding one; as if his sight were gradually becoming dim: he was a minute, or more, before he could give any account of the persons he professed to see towards the close of the performance; and the magician said it was useless to proceed with him. Another boy was then brought in; and the magic square, &c., made in his hand; but he could see nothing. The magician said he was too old.

Though completely puzzled, I was somewhat disappointed with his performances, for they fell short of what he had accomplished, in many instances, in presence of certain of my friends and countrymen. On one of these occasions, an Englishman present ridiculed the performance, and said that nothing would satisfy him but a correct description of the appearance of his own father, of whom, he was sure, no one of the company had any knowledge. The boy, accordingly, having called by name for the person alluded to, described a man in a Frank dress, with his hand placed to his head, wearing spectacles, and with one foot on the ground, and the other raised behind him, as if he were stepping down from a seat. The description was exactly true in every respect: the peculiar position of the hand was occasioned by an almost constant headache; and that of the foot or leg, by a stiff knee, caused by a fall from a horse, in hunting. I am assured that, on this occasion, the boy accurately described each person and thing that was called for. On another occasion, Shakspeare was described with the most minute correctness, both as to person and dress; and I might add several other cases in which the same magician has excited astonishment in the sober minds of Englishmen of my acquaintance. A short time since, after performing in the usual manner, by means of a boy, he prepared the magic mirror in the hand of a young English lady, who, on looking into it for a little while, said that she saw a broom sweeping the ground without anybody holding it, and was so much frightened that she would look no longer.

I have stated these facts partly from my own experience, and partly as they came to my knowledge on the authority of respectable persons. The reader may be tempted to think, that, in each instance, the boy saw images produced by some reflection in the ink; but this was evidently not the case; or that he was a confederate, or guided by leading questions. That there was no collusion, I satisfactorily ascertained, by selecting the boy who performed the part above described in my presence from a number of others passing by in the street,

and by his rejecting a present which I afterwards offered him with the view of inducing him to confess that he did not really see what he had professed to have seen. I tried the veracity of another boy on a subsequent occasion in the same manner; and the result was the same. The experiment often entirely fails; but when the boy employed is right in one case, he generally is so in all: when he gives, at first, an account altogether wrong, the magician usually dismisses him at once, saying that he is too old. The perfumes, or excited imagination, or fear, may be supposed to affect the vision of the boy who describes objects as appearing to him in the ink; but, if so, why does he see exactly what is required, and objects of which he can have had no previous particular notion? Neither I nor others have been able to discover any clue by which to penetrate the mystery; and if the reader be alike unable to give the solution, I hope that he will not allow the above account to induce in his mind any degree of scepticism with respect to other portions of this work.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have been gratified by finding that this hope has been realized. I wish I could add that the phenomena were now explained. In No. 117 of the 'Quarterly Review,' pp. 202 and 203, it has been suggested that the performances were effected by means of pictures and a concave mirror; and that the images of the former were reflected from the surface of the mirror, and received on a cloud of smoke under the eyes of the boy. This, however, I cannot admit; because such means could not have been employed without my perceiving them; nor would the images be reversed (unless the pictures were so) by being reflected from the surface of a mirror and received upon a *second surface*; for the boy was looking down upon the palm of his hand, so that an image could not be formed upon the smoke (which was copious, but not dense,) between his eye and the supposed mirror. The grand difficulty of the case is the exhibition of "the correct appearance of private individuals unknown to fame," as remarked in the 'Quarterly Review,' in which a curious note, presenting "some new features of difficulty," is appended. With the most remarkable of the facts there related I was acquainted; but I was not bold enough to insert them. I may now, however, here mention them. Two travellers (one of them, M. Leon De Laborde; the other, an Englishman), both instructed by the magician 'Abd-El-Kádir, are stated to have succeeded in performing similar feats. Who this Englishman was, I have not been able to learn. He positively denied all collusion, and asserted that he did nothing but repeat the forms taught him by the magician.

Since the foregoing note was written, I have twice witnessed performances of this now-notorious magician, which were absolute failures; and so, I have been informed by others, have been almost all of his later attempts. Hence, and from an observation made to me by him in the presence of the late Lord Nugent (that he was generally successful in the life-time of 'Osmán, who was his usual interpreter, and who died shortly after my second visit to Egypt), I can hardly help inferring that, in most cases, leading questions

## CHAPTER XIII

## CHARACTER

THE natural or innate character of the modern Egyptians is altered, in a remarkable degree, by their religion, laws, and government, as well as by the climate and other causes; and to form a just opinion of it is, therefore, very difficult. We may, however, confidently state, that they are endowed, in a higher degree than most other people, with some of the more important mental qualities; particularly, quickness of apprehension, a ready wit, and a retentive memory. In youth, they generally possess these and other intellectual powers; but the causes above alluded to gradually lessen their mental energy.

Of the leading features of their character, none is more remarkable than their religious pride. They regard persons of every other faith as the children of perdition; and such, the Muslim is early taught to despise.<sup>1</sup> It is written in the Kur-án, "O ye who have believed, take not the Jews and Christians as friends: they are friends, one to another; and whosoever of you taketh them as his friends, verily he is [one] of them."<sup>2</sup> From motives of politeness, or selfish interest, these people will sometimes talk with apparent liberality of sentiment, and

put *unconsciously* by 'Osman, as well as by others, who were persons of education and intelligence, and in other cases shrewd guesses, were the main causes of his success. I cannot, by the supposition of leading questions, account for his succeeding in the cases that fell under my own observation; but these, as I have stated above, "fell short of what he had accomplished, in many instances, in presence of certain of my friends and countrymen."

<sup>1</sup> I am credibly informed that children in Egypt are often taught, at school, a regular set of curses to denounce upon the persons and property of Christians, Jews, and all other unbelievers in the religion of Moḥammad. See Appendix D.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. v. ver. 56. Verses 62 and 63 of the same chapter explain the reason of this precept:—"O ye who have believed, take not those who have made your religion a laughing-stock and a jest, of those who have received the Scripture before you, and the unbelievers [or polytheists], as friends; (but fear God, if ye be believers;) and [those who], when ye call to prayer, make it [namely, the prayer,] a laughing-stock and a jest. This [they do] because they are a people who do not understand." (The words enclosed in brackets are from the commentary of the Geláleyn.)



even make professions of friendship, to a Christian (particularly to a European), whom, in their hearts, they contemn: but as the Muslims of Egypt judge of the Franks in general from the majority of those in their towns, some of whom are outcasts from their native countries, and others (though not *all* the rest, of course), men under no moral restraint, they are hardly to be blamed for despising them. The Christians are, however, generally treated with civility by the people of Egypt: the Muslims being as remarkable for their toleration as for their contempt of unbelievers.

It is considered the highest honour, among the Muslims, to be religious; but the desire to appear so leads many into hypocrisy and pharisaical ostentation. When a Muslim is unoccupied by business or amusement or conversation, he is often heard to utter some pious ejaculation. If a wicked thought, or the remembrance of a wicked action that he has committed, trouble him, he sighs forth, "I beg forgiveness of God, the Great!"<sup>1</sup> The shop-keeper, when not engaged with customers, nor enjoying his pipe, often employs himself, in the sight and hearing of the passengers in the street, in reciting a chapter of the *Kur-án*, or in repeating to himself those expressions in praise of God which often follow the ordinary prayers and are counted with the beads; and in the same public manner he prays.—The Muslims frequently swear by God (but not irreverently); and also, by the Prophet, and by the head, or beard, of the person they address. When one is told anything that excites his surprise and disbelief, he generally exclaims, "Wa-llah?" or, "Wa-lláhi?" (by God?); and the other replies, "Wa-lláhi!"—As on ordinary occasions before eating and drinking, so, too, on taking medicine, commencing a writing or any important undertaking, and before many a trifling act, it is their habit to say, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful;" and after the act, "Praise be to God."—When two persons make any considerable bargain, they recite together the first chapter of the *Kur-án* (the *Fát'hah*). In case of a debate on any matter of business or of opinion, it is common for one of the parties, or a third person who may wish to settle the dispute, or to cool the disputants, to exclaim, "Blessing on the Prophet!"<sup>2</sup>—"O God, bless him!"<sup>3</sup> is said,

<sup>1</sup> "Astaghfir Alláh el-'Azeem."

<sup>2</sup> "Eş-şalah 'a-n-nebee" (for "'ala-n-nebee"); or "Bless ye (or bless thou) the Prophet!"—"Şaloo (or şallee) 'a-n-nebee."

<sup>3</sup> "Alláhum (for Alláhumma) şallee 'aleyh."

in a low voice, by the other or others ; and they then continue the argument ; but generally with moderation.

Religious ejaculations often interrupt conversation upon trivial and even licentious subjects, in Egyptian society ; sometimes, in such a manner that a person not well acquainted with the character of this people would perhaps imagine that they intended to make religion a jest. In many of their most indecent songs, the name of God is frequently introduced ; and this is certainly done without any profane motive, but from the habit of often mentioning the name of the Deity in vain, and of praising Him on every trifling occasion of surprise, or in testimony of admiration of anything uncommon. Thus, a libertine, describing his impressions on the first sight of a charming girl (in one of the grossest songs I have ever seen or heard even in the Arabic language), exclaims, "Extolled be He who formed thee, O full moon!"—and this and many similar expressions are common in many other songs and odes : but what is most remarkable in the song particularly alluded to above is a profane comparison with which it terminates. I shall adduce, as an example of the strange manner in which licentiousness and religion are often blended together in vulgar Egyptian poetry and rhyming prose, a translation of the last stanzas of an ode on love and wine :—

"She granted me a reception, the graceful of form, after her distance and coyness. I kissed her teeth and her cheek ; and the cup rang in her hand. The odours of musk and ambergris were diffused by a person whose form surpassed the elegance of a straight and slender branch. She spread a bed of brocade ; and I passed the time in uninterrupted happiness. A Turkish fawn enslaved me.

"Now I beg forgiveness of God, my Lord, for all my faults and sins ; and for all that my heart hath said. My members testify against me. Whenever grief oppresseth me, O Lord, Thou art my hope from whatever afflicteth me. Thou knowest what I say, and what I think. Thou art the Bountiful, the Forgiving ! I implore thy protection : then pardon me.

"And I praise that benignant being<sup>1</sup> whom a cloud was wont to shade ; the comely : how great was his comeliness ! He will intercede for us on the day of judgment, when his haters, the vile, the polytheists, shall be repentant. Would that I might always, as long as I live, accompany the pilgrims, to perform the circuits and worship and courses, and live in uninterrupted happiness !"

In translating the first of the above stanzas, I have substituted the feminine for the masculine pronoun : for, in the original, the former is meant, though the latter is used ; as is commonly the case in similar compositions of the Egyptians.—One of my

<sup>1</sup> The Prophet.

Muslim friends having just called on me, after my writing the above remarks, I read to him the last four stanzas of this ode ; and asked him if he considered it proper thus to mix up religion with debauchery. He answered, "Perfectly proper : a man relates his having committed sins ; and then prays to God for forgiveness, and blesses the Prophet." "But," said I, "this is an ode written to be chanted for the amusement of persons who take pleasure in unlawful indulgences : and see here, when I close the leaves, the page which celebrates a debauch comes in contact, face to face, with that upon which are written the names of the Deity : the commemoration of the pleasures of sin is placed upon the prayer for forgiveness." "That is nonsense," replied my friend : "turn the book over : place that side upwards which is now downwards ; and then the case will be the reverse ; sin covered by forgiveness : and God, whose name be exalted, hath said in the Excellent Book, 'Say, O my servants who have transgressed against your own souls, despair not of the mercy of God ; seeing that God forgiveth all sins [unto those who repent] : for He is the Very Forgiving ; the Merciful.'" <sup>1</sup>—His answer reminds me of what I have often observed, that the generality of Arabs, a most inconsistent people, are every day breaking their law in some point or other, trusting that two words ("Astaghfir Alláh," or "I beg forgiveness of God,") will cancel every transgression.—He had a copy of the *Ḳur-án* in his hand ; and on my turning it over to look for the verse he had quoted, I found in it a scrap of paper containing some words from the venerated volume : he was about to burn this piece of paper, lest it should fall out, and be trodden upon ; and on my asking him whether it was allowable to do so, he answered that it might either be burnt, or thrown into running water ; but that it was better to burn it, as the words would ascend in the flames, and be conveyed by angels to heaven.—Sometimes the *Ḳur-án* is quoted in jest, even by persons of strict religious principles. For instance, the following equivocal and evasive answer was once suggested to me on a person's asking of me a present of a watch, which, I must previously mention, is called "sá'ah," a word which signifies an "hour," and the "period of the general judgment :"—"Verily, the sá'ah shall come : I will surely make it to appear" (ch. xx. v. 15).

There are often met with, in Egyptian society, persons who will introduce an apposite quotation from the *Ḳur-án* or the

<sup>1</sup> *Ḳur-án*, ch. xxxix. v. 54.

Traditions of the Prophet in common conversation, whatever be the topic; and an interruption of this kind is not considered, as it would be in general society in our own country, either hypocritical or annoying; but rather occasions expressions, if not feelings, of admiration, and often diverts the hearers from a trivial subject to matters of a more serious nature. The Muslims of Egypt, and, I believe, those of other countries, are generally fond of conversing on religion; and the most prevalent mode of entertaining a party of guests among the higher and middle ranks in this place (Cairo) is the recital of a "khatmeh" (or the whole of the *Ḳur-án*), which is chanted by *fiķees*, hired for the purpose; or the performance of a "zīkr," which has been before mentioned. Few persons among them would venture to say that they prefer hearing a concert of music to the performance of a khatmeh or zīkr; and they certainly do take great pleasure in the latter performances. The manner in which the *Ḳur-án* is sometimes chanted is, indeed, very pleasing; though I must say that a complete khatmeh is, to me, extremely tiresome. With the religious zeal of the Muslims, I am daily struck: yet I have often wondered that they so seldom attempt to make converts to their faith. On my expressing my surprise, as I have frequently done, at their indifference with respect to the propagation of their religion, contrasting it with the conduct of their ancestors of the early ages of *El-Islám*, I have generally been answered, "Of what use would it be if I could convert a thousand infidels? Would it increase the number of the faithful? By no means: the number of the faithful is decreed by God; and no act of man can increase or diminish it." The contending against such an answer would have led to an interminable dispute: so I never ventured a reply. I have heard quoted, by way of apology for their neglecting to make proselytes, the following words of the *Ḳur-án*: "Dispute not against those who have received the Scriptures"<sup>1</sup> (namely, the Christians and Jews), without the words immediately following, "unless in the best manner; except against such of them as behave injuriously [towards you]: and say [unto them], We believe in [the revelation] that hath been sent down unto us, and [also in that] which hath been sent down unto you: and our God and your God is one."<sup>2</sup> If this precept were acted

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxix. v. 45.

<sup>2</sup> In the first edition of the present work, copying Sale, who gives no authority for the remark, I here added, "This precept is, however,

upon by the Muslims, it might perhaps lead to disputes which would make them more liberal-minded, and much better informed.

The respect which most modern Muslims pay to their Prophet is almost idolatrous. They very frequently swear by him; and many of the most learned, as well as the ignorant, often implore his intercession. Pilgrims are generally much more affected on visiting his tomb than in performing any other religious rite. There are some Muslims who will not do anything that the Prophet is not recorded to have done; and who particularly abstain from eating anything that he did not eat, though its lawfulness be undoubted. The Imám Aḥmad Ibn-Ḥambal would not even eat water-melons, because, although he knew that the Prophet ate them, he could not learn whether he ate them with or without the rind, or whether he broke, bit, or cut them: and he forbade a woman, who questioned him as to the propriety of the act, to spin by the light of torches passing in the street by night, which were not her own property, because the Prophet had not mentioned whether it was lawful to do so, and was not known to have ever availed himself of a light belonging to another person without that person's leave.—I once, admiring some very pretty pipe-bowls, asked the maker why he did not stamp them with his name. He answered, "God forbid! My name is Aḥmad" (one of the names of the Prophet): "would you have me put it in the fire?"—I have heard adduced as one of the subjects of complaint against the Báshà, his causing the camels and horses of the government to be branded with his names, "Moḥammad 'Alee." "In the first place," said a friend of mine, who mentioned this fact to me, "the iron upon which are engraved these names, names which ought to be so much venerated, the names of the Prophet (God bless and save him), and his Cousin (may God be well pleased with him), is put into the fire, which is shocking: then it is applied to the neck of a camel; and causes blood, which is impure, to flow, and to pollute the sacred names both upon the iron and upon the animal's skin: and when the wound is healed, how probable is it, and almost certain and unavoidable, that the camel will, when he lies down, lay his neck upon something unclean!"

A similar feeling is the chief reason why the Muslims object generally considered as abrogated by that of the sword." These words might lead the reader into error, as is shewn by what I have said on the subject of war in page 95.

to printing their books. They have scarcely a book (I do not remember to have seen one) that does not contain the name of God: it is a rule among them to commence every book with the words, "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," and to begin the preface or introduction by praising God, and blessing the Prophet; and they fear some impurity might be contracted by the ink that is applied to the name of the Deity, in the process of printing, or by the paper to be impressed with that sacred name, and perhaps with words taken from the *Ḳur-án*. They fear, also, that their books, becoming very cheap by being printed, would fall into the hands of infidels; and are much shocked at the idea of using a brush composed of hogs' hair (which was at first done here) to apply the ink to the name, and often to the words, of God. Hence, books have hitherto been printed in Egypt only by order of the government: but two or three persons have lately applied for, and received, permission to make use of the government-press. I am acquainted with a bookseller here who has long been desirous of printing some books which he feels sure would bring him considerable profit; but cannot overcome his scruples as to the lawfulness of doing so.

The honour which the Muslims shew to the *Ḳur-án* is very striking. They generally take care never to hold it, or suspend it, in such a manner as that it shall be below the girdle; and they deposit it upon a high and clean place; and never put another book, or anything else, on the top of it. On quoting from it, they usually say, "He whose name be exalted" (or "God, whose name be exalted") "hath said, in the Excellent Book." They consider it extremely improper that the sacred volume should be touched by a Christian or a Jew, or any other person not a believer in its doctrines; though some of them are induced, by covetousness, but very rarely, to sell copies of it to such persons. It is even forbidden to the Muslim to touch it unless he be in a state of legal purity; and hence, these words of the book itself—"None shall touch it but they who are purified"<sup>1</sup>—are often stamped upon the cover. The same remarks apply, also, to anything upon which is inscribed a passage of the *Ḳur-án*. It is remarkable, however, that most of the old Arab coins bear inscriptions of words from the *Ḳur-án*, or else the testimony of the faith

<sup>1</sup> *Ḳur-án*, ch. lvi. v. 78.

("There is no deity but God : Moḥammad is God's Apostle"); notwithstanding they were intended for the use of Jews and Christians, as well as Muslims : but I have heard this practice severely condemned.—On my once asking one of my Muslim friends whether figs were esteemed wholesome in Egypt, he answered, "Is not the fig celebrated in the *Ḳur-án*? God swears by it : 'By the fig and the olive!'" (ch. xcv. v. 1).

There is certainly much enthusiastic piety in the character of the modern Muslims, notwithstanding their inconsistencies and superstitions : such, at least, is generally the case. There are, I believe, very few professed Muslims who are really unbelievers ; and these dare not openly declare their unbelief, through fear of losing their heads for their apostacy. I have heard of two or three such, who have been rendered so by long and intimate intercourse with Europeans ; and have met with one materialist, who has often had long discussions with me. In preceding chapters of this work, several practices indicative of the religious feeling which prevails among the Muslims of Egypt have been incidentally mentioned. Religious appeals are generally used by the beggars in this country : some examples of these will be given hereafter. Of a similar nature, also, are the cries of many of the persons who sell vegetables, &c. The cry of the nightly watchman in the quarter in which I lived in Cairo during my first visit struck me as remarkable for its beauty and sublimity—"I extol the perfection of the living King, who sleepeth not nor dieth."<sup>1</sup> The present watchman, in the same quarter, exclaims, "O Lord ! O Everlasting!"<sup>2</sup> Many other illustrations of the religious character of the people whom I am endeavouring to portray might be added. I must, however, here acknowledge, that religion has much declined among them and most others of the same faith. Whoever has been in the habit of conversing familiarly with the modern Muslims must often have heard them remark, with a sigh, "It is the end of time!"—"The world has fallen into infidelity."—They are convinced that the present state of their religion is a proof that the end of the world is near. The mention which I have made, in a former chapter, of some of the tenets of the Wahnábees, as being those of the primitive Muslims, shews how much the generality of the modern professors of the faith of the *Ḳur-án*

<sup>1</sup> "Subḥán el-melik el-ḥei el-lezee lá yenám walà yemoot !"

<sup>2</sup> "Yá rabb ! Yá dáím !"

have deviated from the precepts originally delivered to its disciples.

Influenced by their belief in predestination, the men display, in times of distressing uncertainty, an exemplary patience, and, after any afflicting event, a remarkable degree of resignation and fortitude, approaching nearly to apathy;<sup>1</sup> generally exhibiting their sorrow only by a sigh, and the exclamation of "Allah kereem!" (God is bountiful!)—but the women, on the contrary, give vent to their grief by the most extravagant cries and shrieks. While the Christian justly blames himself for every untoward event which he thinks he has brought upon himself, or might have avoided, the Muslim enjoys a remarkable serenity of mind in all the vicissitudes of life. When he sees his end approaching, his resignation is still conspicuous: he exclaims, "Verily to God we belong; and verily to Him we return!" and to those who inquire respecting his state, in general his reply is, "Praise be to God! Our Lord is bountiful."—His belief in predestination does not, however, prevent his taking any step to attain an object that he may have in view; not being perfectly absolute, or unconditional: nor does it in general make him careless of avoiding danger; for he thinks himself forbidden to do so by these words of the *Kur-án*,<sup>2</sup> "Throw not yourselves<sup>3</sup> into perdition;" except in some cases; as in those of pestilence and other sicknesses; being commanded, by the Prophet, not to go into a city where there is a pestilence, nor to come out from it. The lawfulness of quarantine is contested among Muslims; but the generality of them condemn it.

The same belief in predestination renders the Muslim utterly devoid of presumption with regard to his future actions, or to any future events. He never speaks of anything that he intends to do, or of any circumstance which he expects and hopes may come to pass, without adding, "If it be the will of God;"<sup>4</sup> and, in like manner, in speaking of a past event of which he is not certain, he generally prefaces or concludes

<sup>1</sup> They are not, however, so apathetic as some travellers have supposed; for it is not uncommon to see them weep; and such a demonstration of feeling is not considered by them as unmanly: even heroes are frequently represented, in their romances and histories, as weeping under heavy affliction.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. ii. v. 191.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, "your hands;" but in the Commentary of the *Geláleyn*, the meaning is said to be "yourselves."

<sup>4</sup> "In-sháa-lláh."



what he says with the expression, "God is all-knowing" (or, "—most knowing").<sup>1</sup>

Benevolence and charity to the poor are virtues which the Egyptians possess in an eminent degree, and which are instilled into their hearts by religion; but from their own profession it appears that they are as much excited to the giving of alms by the expectation of enjoying corresponding rewards in heaven, as by pity for the distresses of their fellow-creatures, or a disinterested wish to do the will of God. It may be attributed, in some measure, to the charitable disposition of the inhabitants, that beggars are so numerous in Cairo. The many handsome "Sebeels," or public fountains (buildings erected and endowed for the gratuitous supply of water to passengers), which are seen in this city, and the more humble structures of the same kind in the villages and fields, are monuments of the same virtue.<sup>2</sup>

In my earlier intercourse with the people of Egypt, I was much pleased at observing their humanity to dumb animals; to see a person, who gathered together the folds of his loose clothes to prevent their coming in contact with a dog, throw, to the impure animal, a portion of the bread which he was eating. Murders, burglaries, and other atrocious and violent crimes, were then very rare among them. Now, however, I find the generality of the Egyptians very much changed for the worse, with respect to their humanity to brutes and to their fellow-creatures. The increased severity of the government seems, as might be expected, to have engendered tyranny, and an increase of every crime, in the people: but I am inclined to think that the conduct of Europeans has greatly conduced to produce this effect; for I do not remember to have seen acts of cruelty to dumb animals except in places where Franks either reside or are frequent visitors, as Alexandria, Cairo, and Thebes. It is shocking to see the miserable asses which are used for carrying dust, &c., in Cairo; many of them with large crimson wounds, like carbuncles, constantly chafed by rough ropes of the fibres of the palm-tree which are attached to the back part of the pack-saddle. The dogs in the streets are frequently beaten, both by boys and men, from mere wantonness; and I often see children amusing themselves with molesting the cats, which were formerly much favoured.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Alláhu aqám."

<sup>2</sup> The larger *sebeels* of Cairo are generally of the period of the Turkish *Báshás* and *Memlook* Beys.

<sup>3</sup> I think it proper to remark here, that I have good reason for believing

Robberies and murders, during two or three months after my second arrival here, were occurrences of almost every week. Most of the Turkish governors of districts used to exercise great oppression over the fellâheen: but since persons of the latter class have been put in the places of the former, they have exceeded their predecessors in tyranny; and it is a common remark, that they are "more execrable than the Turks."<sup>1</sup>

Though I now frequently see the houseless dogs beaten in the streets of Cairo, and that when quite inoffensive and quiet, I still often observe men feeding them with bread, &c.; and the persons who do so are mostly poor men. In every district of this city are many small troughs, which are daily replenished with water for the dogs. In each street where there are shops, a *saḡḡā* receives a small monthly sum from each shopman for sprinkling the street, and filling the trough or troughs for the dogs in that street. There is also a dogs' trough under almost every shop of a "sharbetlee," or seller of sherbets.—It may here be mentioned, that the dogs of Cairo, few of which have masters, compose regular and distinct tribes; and the dogs of each tribe confine themselves to a certain district or quarter, from which they invariably chase away any strange dog that may venture to intrude. These animals are very numerous in Cairo. They are generally careful to avoid coming in contact with the men; as if they knew that the majority of the people of the city regard them as unclean; but they often bark at persons in the Frank dress; and at night they annoy every passenger. They are of use in eating the offal thrown out from the butchers' shops, and from houses. Many dogs also prowl about the mounds of rubbish around the metropolis; and these, with the vultures, feed upon the carcasses of the

Burckhardt to have been misinformed when stating (see his 'Arabic Proverbs,' No. 393) that children in the East (in Egypt, &c.) torture serpents by putting them into a leathern bag, then throwing unslaked lime upon them, and pouring water on it. I find no one who has heard of such cruelty; and it is not likely that boys in this country would dare to put a serpent in a bag (for they are excessively afraid of this reptile), or would give several piasters for a bag to destroy in this manner. The proverb upon which this statement is founded perhaps alludes to a mode of destroying serpents; but not for sport.

<sup>1</sup> "The oppression of the Turks, rather than the justice of the Arabs," is a proverb often heard from the mouth of the Arab peasant; who, in this case, applies the term "Arabs" to his own class, instead of the Bedaweés, to whom it now usually belongs. See Burckhardt's 'Arabic Proverbs,' No. 176.

camels, asses, &c., that die in the town. They are mostly of a sandy colour; and seem to partake of the form and disposition of the jackal.

The general opinion of the Muslims, which holds the dog to be unclean, does not prevent their keeping this animal as a house-guard, and sometimes even as a pet. A curious case of this kind occurred a short time ago. A woman in this city, who had neither husband nor child nor friend to solace her, made a dog her companion. Death took this only associate from her; and, in her grief and her affection for it, she determined to bury it; and not merely to commit it to the earth without ceremony, but to inter it as a Muslim, in a respectable tomb, in the cemetery of the Imám Esh-Sháfe'ee, which is regarded as especially sacred. She washed the dog according to the rules prescribed to be observed in the case of a deceased Muslim, wrapped it in handsome grave-clothes, sent for a bier, and put it in; then hired several wailing-women; and, with them, performed a regular lamentation. This done (but not without exciting the wonder of her neighbours, who could not conjecture what person in her house was dead, yet would not intrude, because she never associated with them), she hired a number of chanters, to head the funeral-procession, and school-boys to sing, and carry the *Kur-án* before the bier; and the train went forth in respectable order; herself and the hired wailing-women following the bier, and rending the air with their shrieks: but the procession had not advanced many steps, when one of the female neighbours ventured to ask the afflicted lady who the person was that was dead; and was answered, "It is my poor child." The inquirer charged her with uttering a falsehood; and the bereaved lady confessed that it was her dog; begging, at the same time, that her inquisitive neighbour would not divulge the secret; but, for an Egyptian woman to keep a secret, and such a secret, was impossible: it was immediately made known to the by-standers; and a mob, in no good humour, soon collected, and put a stop to the funeral. The chanters and the singing-boys and wailing-women vented their rage against their employer (as soon as they had secured their money) for having made fools of them; and if the police had not interfered, she would probably have fallen a victim to popular fury.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> D'Herbelot mentions a somewhat similar case, in which a Turk, having buried a favourite dog with some marks of respect, in his garden,

It is a curious fact, that, in Cairo, houseless cats are fed at the expense of the *Kádee*; or, rather, almost wholly at his expense. Every afternoon, a quantity of offal is brought into the great court before the *Maħkemeh*; and the cats are called together to eat. The *Sultán Ez-Záhir Beybars* (as I learn from the *Básh-Kátib* of the *Kádee*) bequeathed a garden, which is called "gheyṭ el-ḳuṭṭah" (or the garden of the cat), near his mosque, on the north of Cairo, for the benefit of the cats: but this garden has been sold, over and over again, by the trustees and purchasers: the former sold it on pretence of its being too much out of order to be rendered productive, except at a considerable expense; and it now produces only a "ḥekr" (or quit-rent) of fifteen piasters a year, to be applied to the maintenance of the destitute cats. Almost the whole expense of their support has, in consequence, fallen upon the *Kádee*, who, by reason of his office, is the guardian of this and all other charitable and pious legacies, and must suffer for the neglect of his predecessors. Latterly, however, the duty of feeding the cats has been very inadequately performed. Many persons in Cairo, when they wish to get rid of a cat, send or take it to the *Kádee's* house, and let it loose in the great court.

The affability of the Egyptians towards each other has been mentioned in a preceding chapter. Towards foreigners who do not conform with their manners and customs, and profess the same way of thinking, they are polite in their address, but cold and reserved, or parasitical, in conversation. With such persons, and even among themselves, they often betray much impertinent curiosity. They are generally extremely afraid of making to themselves enemies; and this fear frequently induces them to uphold each other, even when it is criminal to do so.

Cheerfulness is another remarkable characteristic of this people. Some of them profess a great contempt for frivolous amusements; but most take pleasure in such pastimes; and it is surprising to see how easily they are amused: wherever there are crowds, noise, and bustle, they are delighted. In their public festivals, there is little to amuse a person of good

was accused, before the *Kádee*, of having interred the animal with the ceremonies practised at the burial of a Muslim, and escaped punishment (perhaps a severe one) by informing the judge that his dog had made a will, leaving to him (the *Kádee*) a sum of money.—(Bibliothèque Orientale, art. Cadhi.)

education; but the Egyptians enjoy them as much as we do the best of our entertainments. Those of the lower orders seem to be extremely happy with their pipes and coffee, after the occupations of the day, in the society of the coffee-shop.

Hospitality is a virtue for which the natives of the East in general are highly and deservedly admired; and the people of Egypt are well entitled to commendation on this account. A word which signifies literally "a person on a journey" ("musáfir") is the term most commonly employed in this country in the sense of a visiter or guest. There are very few persons here who would think of sitting down to a meal, if there were a stranger in the house, without inviting him to partake of it, unless the latter were a menial; in which case, he would be invited to eat with the servants. It would be considered a shameful violation of good manners if a Muslim abstained from ordering the table to be prepared at the usual time because a visiter happened to be present. Persons of the middle classes in this country, if living in a retired situation, sometimes take their supper before the door of their house, and invite every passenger of respectable appearance to eat with them. This is very commonly done among the lower orders. In cities and large towns, claims on hospitality are unfrequent; as there are many wekálehs, or kháns, where strangers may obtain lodging; and food is very easily procured: but in the villages, travellers are often lodged and entertained by the Sheykh or some other inhabitant; and if the guest be a person of the middle or higher classes, or even not very poor, he gives a present to his host's servants, or to the host himself. In the desert, however, a present is seldom received from a guest. By a Sunneh law, a traveller may claim entertainment, of any person able to afford it to him, for three days.—The account of Abraham's entertaining the three angels, related in the Bible, presents a perfect picture of the manner in which a modern Bedawee sheykh receives travellers arriving at his encampment. He immediately orders his wife or women to make bread; slaughters a sheep or some other animal, and dresses it in haste; and bringing milk and any other provisions that he may have ready at hand, with the bread, and the meat which he has dressed, sets them before his guests. If these be persons of high rank, he stands by them while they eat; as Abraham did in the case above alluded to. Most Bedawees will suffer almost any injury to themselves or their families rather than allow their guests to be

ill-treated while under their protection. There are Arabs who even regard the chastity of their wives as not too precious to be sacrificed for the gratification of their guests;<sup>1</sup> and at an encampment of the Bisháreen, I ascertained that there are many persons in this great tribe (which inhabits a large portion of the desert between the Nile and the Red Sea) who offer their unmarried daughters to their guests, merely from motives of hospitality, and not for hire.

There used to be, in Cairo, a numerous class of persons called "Ṭufeyleeyeh" or "Ṭufeylees" (that is, Spungers), who, taking advantage of the hospitality of their countrymen, subsisted entirely by spunging: but this class has, of late, very much decreased in number. Wherever there was an entertainment, some of these worthies were almost sure to be found; and it was only by a present of money that they could be induced to retire from the company. They even travelled about the country, without the smallest coin in their pockets, intruding themselves into private houses whenever they wanted a meal, or practising various tricks for this purpose. Two of them, I was told, a little while since, determined to go to the festival of the seyyid El-Bedawee, at Ṭanṭà; an easy journey of two days and a half from Cairo. Walking at their leisure, they arrived at the small town of Kalyoob at the end of their first day's journey; and there found themselves at a loss for a supper. One of them went to the Kāḍee; and, after saluting him, said, "O Kāḍee, I am a traveller from the Sharḳeeyeh, going to Maṣr; and I have a companion who owes me fifty purses, which he has with him at present, and refuses to give me; and I am actually in want of them." "Where is he?" said the Kāḍee. "Here, in this town," answered the complainant. The Kāḍee sent a rasool to bring the accused; and in the mean time, expecting considerable fees for a judgment in such a case, ordered a good supper to be prepared; which Kāḍees of country towns or villages generally do in similar circumstances. The two men were invited to sup and sleep before the case was tried. Next morning, the parties were examined: the accused admitted that he had in his possession the fifty purses of his companion; and said that he was ready to give them up; for they were an encumbrance to him; being only the paper purses in which

<sup>1</sup> See Burckhardt's Notes on the Bedouins, &c., 8vo. edition, vol. i. pp. 179 and 180.

coffee was sold. "We are Tufeylees," he added; and the Kádee, in anger, dismissed them.

The natives of Egypt in general, in common with the Arabs of other countries, are (according to our system of morals) justly chargeable with a fault which is regarded by us as one of great magnitude: it is want of gratitude.<sup>1</sup> But this I am inclined to consider a relic of the Bedawee character; and as arising from the very common practice of hospitality and generosity, and, from the prevailing opinion that these virtues are absolute duties which it would be disgraceful and sinful to neglect.

The temperance and moderation of the Egyptians, with regard to diet, are very exemplary. Since my first arrival in Egypt, I have scarcely ever seen a native of this country in a state of intoxication; unless it were a musician at an entertainment, or a dancing girl, or low prostitute. It hardly need be added that they are extremely frugal. They shew a great respect for bread, as the staff of life,<sup>2</sup> and on no account suffer the smallest portion of it to be wasted, if they can avoid it. I have often observed an Egyptian take up a small piece of bread, which had by accident fallen in the street or road, and, after putting it before his lips and forehead three times, place it on one side, in order that a dog might eat it, rather than let it remain to be trodden under foot. The following instance of the excessive and unreasonable respect of the Egyptians for bread has been related to me by several persons; but I must say that I think it hardly credible.—Two servants were sitting at the door of their master's house, eating their dinner, when they observed a Memlook Bey, with several of his officers, riding along the street towards them. One of these servants rose, from respect to the grandee, who, regarding him with indignation, exclaimed, "Which is the more worthy of respect, the bread that is before you, or myself?"—Without waiting

<sup>1</sup> It has been remarked that this is inconsistent with the undeniable gratitude which the Arabs feel towards God. To such an objection they would reply, "We are entitled to the good offices of our fellow-creatures by the law of God; but can claim no benefit from our Maker." I once afforded a refuge to a Bedawee who was in fear for his life; but on parting, he gave me not a word of thanks: had he done so, it would have implied his thinking me a person of mean disposition, who regarded a positive duty as an act imposing obligation. Hence the Arab usually acknowledges a benefit merely by a prayer for the long life, &c., of his benefactor.

<sup>2</sup> The name which they give to it is "eysh," which literally signifies "life."

for a reply, he made, it is said, a well-understood signal with his hand; and the unwitting offender was beheaded on the spot.

The higher and middle orders of Muslims in Egypt are scrupulously cleanly; and the lower orders are more so than in most other countries: but were not cleanliness a point of their religion, perhaps it would not be so much regarded by them. From what has been said in a former chapter of this work,<sup>1</sup> it appears that we must not judge of them, with respect to this quality, from the dirty state in which they generally leave their children. Their religious ablutions were, certainly, very wisely ordained; personal cleanliness being so conducive to health in a hot climate. The Egyptians in general are particularly careful to avoid whatever their religion has pronounced unclean and polluting. One of their objections against wine is, that it is unclean; and I believe that very few of them, if any, could be induced by any means, unless by a considerable bribe, to eat the smallest piece of pig's flesh; except the peasants of the Boḥeyreh (the province on the west of the western branch of the Nile), many of whom eat the flesh of the wild boar, and rats.<sup>2</sup> I was once amused with the remark of a Muslim, on the subject of pork: he observed that the Franks were certainly a much-calumniated people: that it was well known they were in the habit of eating swine's flesh; but that some slanderous persons here asserted that it was not only the flesh of the unclean beast that was eaten by the Franks, but also its skin, and its entrails, and its very blood. On being answered that the accusation was too true, he burst forth with a most hearty curse upon the infidels, devoting them to the lowest place in hell.

Many of the butchers who supply the Muslim inhabitants of the metropolis with meat are Jews. A few years ago, one of the principal 'Ulamà here complained of this fact to the Bâshà; and begged him to put a stop to it. Another of the 'Ulamà, hearing that this person had gone to make the complaint above mentioned, followed him, and urged, before the Bâshà, that the practice was not unlawful. "Adduce your proof," said the former. "Here," answered the other, "is my proof, from the word of God, 'Eat of that whereon the name of God hath

<sup>1</sup> Page 58.

<sup>2</sup> Dogs, too, are eaten by many Maghrabees settled at Alexandria, and by descendants of the same people; of whom there are also a few in Cairo, in the quarter of Teyloon.



been commemorated.'"<sup>1</sup> The chief of the Jewish butchers was then summoned, and asked whether he said anything previously to slaughtering an animal : he answered, " Yes : we always say, as the Muslims, ' In the name of God. God is most great : ' and we never kill an animal in any other way than by cutting its throat."—The complaint was consequently dismissed.

A few days ago, a man, in purchasing a *fateereh* of a baker in this city, saw him take out of his oven a dish of pork which he had been baking for a Frank ; and, supposing that the other things in the oven might have been in contact with the unclean meat, and thus contaminated, immediately brought a soldier from the nearest guard-house, and caused the baker (who was in no slight alarm, and protested that he was ignorant of there being any pig's flesh in his oven,) to be conducted before the *Zábit*. This magistrate considered the case of sufficient importance to be referred to the *Báshà's* *deewán* ; and the president of this council regarded it as of too serious and difficult a nature for him to decide, and accordingly sent the accused to be judged at the *Maḥkemeh*. The *Ḳáḍee* desired the opinion of the *Muftee*, who gave the following sentence :—That all kinds of food, not essentially or radically impure, were purified, of any pollution which they might have contracted, by fire ; and consequently, that whatever thing of this description was in the oven, even if it had been in contact with the pork, was clean as soon as it had been baked.

A short time since, the *Báshà* received from Europe, a set of mattresses and cushions stuffed with horse-hair, to form a *deewán* for his *hareem*. The ladies opened one of the cushions, to ascertain what was the substance which rendered them so agreeably elastic ; and, disgusted in the highest degree at seeing what they supposed to be hogs' hair, insisted upon throwing away the whole *deewán*.

A Frenchman who was employed here, a few years ago, to refine sugar, by the present *Báshà*, made use of blood for this purpose ; and since that, very few of the people of this country have ventured to eat any sugar made by the Franks : the *Báshà* was also obliged to prohibit the use of blood in his own sugar-bakeries ; and the white of eggs has been employed in its stead. Some of the Egyptians, seeing the European sugar to be very superior to that made here, use it ; holding the doctrine that what is originally clean may become clean again

<sup>1</sup> *Ḳur-án*, ch. vi. v. 118.

after pollution : but I am obliged to keep the coarse Egyptian sugar for the purpose of making sherbet for my visitors ; some of whom hold long discussions with me on this subject.

It is a general custom among the Egyptians, after washing clothes, to pour clean water upon them, and to say, in doing so, "I testify that there is no deity but God ; and I testify that Moḥammad is God's Apostle."<sup>1</sup> In speaking of their religion, I have mentioned several other practices instituted for the sake of cleanliness ; most of which are universally observed. But, notwithstanding these cleanly practices and principles, and their custom of frequently going to the bath, the Egyptians do not change their linen so often as some people of more northern climates, who need not so much to do this frequently : they often go to the bath in a dirty shirt ; and, after a thorough washing, put on the same again.

Filial piety is one of the more remarkable virtues of this people. The outward respect which they pay to their parents I have already had occasion to mention. Great respect is also shewn by the young to those far advanced in age ;<sup>2</sup> and more especially to such as are reputed men of great piety or learning.

Love of their country, and more especially of *home*, is another predominant characteristic of the modern Egyptians. In general, they have a great dread of quitting their native land. I have heard of several determining to visit a foreign country, for the sake of considerable advantages in prospect ; but when the time of their intended departure drew near, their resolution failed them. Severe oppression has lately lessened this feeling ; which is doubtless owing, in a great degree, to ignorance of foreign lands and their inhabitants. It was probably from the same feeling prevailing among the Arabs of his time, that Moḥammad was induced to promise such high rewards in a future world to those who fled their country for the sake of his religion. I have heard it remarked as a proof of the extraordinary love which the Egyptians have for their native place, that a woman or a girl in this country will seldom consent, or her parents allow her, to marry a man who will not promise to reside with her in her native town or village ; but I rather think that the reluctance to change the place of abode in this case arises from the risk which the female incurs of wanting the protection of her relations. The Bedawees are so attached to

<sup>1</sup> To express that a person has done this, they say, "sháhad el-ḥawá'ig," for "ghasal el-ḥawá'ig watesbahhad 'aleyhà."<sup>2</sup> See Leviticus xix. 32.

their deserts, and have so great a contempt for people who reside in towns, and for agriculturists, that it is a matter of surprise that so many of them were induced to settle even upon the fertile banks of the Nile. The modern Egyptians, though in a great degree descended from Bedawees, while they resemble the Bedawees in love of their *native* country, have a horror of the desert. One journey in the desert furnishes them with tales of exaggerated hardships, perils, and wonders, which they are extremely fond of relating to their less experienced countrymen.

Indolence pervades all classes of the Egyptians, except those who are obliged to earn their livelihood by severe manual labour. It is the result of the climate, and of the fecundity of the soil. Even the mechanics, who are extremely greedy of gain, will generally spend two days in a work which they might easily accomplish in one; and will leave the most lucrative employment to idle away their time with the pipe: but the porter, the groom, who runs before his master's horse, and the boatmen, who are often employed in towing vessels up the river during calm and very hot weather, as well as many other labourers, endure extreme fatigue.

The Egyptians are also excessively obstinate. I have mentioned, in a former chapter, that they have been notorious, from ancient times, that is, from the period of the Roman domination, for refusing to pay their taxes until they have been severely beaten; and that they often boast of the number of stripes which they have received before they would part with their money. Such conduct is very common among them. I was once told that a felláh, from whom the value of about four shillings was demanded by his governor, endured to severe a bastinading rather than pay this paltry sum, which he declared he did not possess, that the governor ordered him to be dismissed; but, striking him on his face as he limped away, there fell out of his mouth a gold coin of the exact value of the sum demanded of him; so that his beating, terrible as it was, fell short of what was necessary to make him pay. This disposition seems a strange peculiarity in their character; but it is easily accounted for by the fact that they know very well, the more readily they pay, the more will be exacted from them. In other respects, however, they are extremely obstinate and difficult to govern; though very obsequious in their manners and professions. It is seldom that an Egyptian workman can be induced to make a thing exactly to order: he will generally

follow his own opinion in preference to that of his employer ; and will scarcely ever finish his work by the time he has promised.

Though very submissive to their governors, the felláheen of Egypt are not deficient in courage when excited by feuds among each other ; and they become excellent soldiers.

In sensuality, as far as it relates to the indulgence of libidinous passions, the Egyptians, as well as other natives of hot climates, certainly exceed more northern nations ; yet this excess is not to be attributed merely to the climate, but more especially to the institution of polygamy, to the facility with which divorcements are accomplished whenever a man may wish to marry a new wife, and to the custom of concubinage. It is even said, and, I believe, with truth, that, in this respect, they exceed the neighbouring nations, whose religion and civil institutions are similar ;<sup>1</sup> and that their country still deserves the appellation of "the abode of the wicked," which, in the *Qur-án*,<sup>2</sup> is, according to the best commentators, applied to ancient Egypt, if we take the word here translated "wicked" in its more usual modern sense of "debauchees."—A vice for which the Memlooks who governed Egypt were infamous was so spread by them in this country as to become not less rare here than in almost any other country of the East ; but of late years, it is said to have much decreased.

The most immodest freedom of conversation is indulged in by persons of both sexes, and of every station of life, in Egypt ; even by the most virtuous and respectable women, with the exception of a very few, who often make use of coarse language, but not unchaste. From persons of the best education, expressions are often heard so obscene as only to be fit for a low brothel ; and things are named, and subjects talked of, by the most genteel women, without any idea of their being indecorous, in the hearing of men, that many prostitutes in our country would probably abstain from mentioning.

The women of Egypt have the character of being the most licentious in their feelings of all females who lay any claim to be considered as members of a civilized nation ; and this character is freely bestowed upon them by their countrymen, even in conversation with foreigners. Numerous exceptions

<sup>1</sup> This is not meant to reflect upon the Turks, nor upon the Arabs of the desert.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. vii. v. 142.

doubtless exist ; and I am happy to insert the following words translated from a note by my friend the sheykh Moḥammad 'Eiyád Eṭ-Ṭanṭáwee, on a passage in 'The Thousand and One Nights.' "Many persons reckon marrying a second time among the greatest of disgraceful actions. This opinion is most common in the country-towns and villages ; and the relations of my mother are thus characterized, so that a woman of them, when her husband dies while she is young, or divorces her while she is young, passes her life, however long it may be, in widowhood, and never marries a second time."—But with respect to the majority of the Egyptian women, it must, I fear, be allowed that they are very licentious. What liberty they have, many of them, it is said, abuse ; and most of them are not considered safe, unless under lock and key ; to which restraint few are subjected. It is believed that they possess a degree of cunning in the management of their intrigues which the most prudent and careful husband cannot guard against, and consequently that their plots are seldom frustrated, however great may be the apparent risk of the undertakings in which they engage. Sometimes, the husband himself is made the unconscious means of gratifying his wife's criminal propensities. Some of the stories of the intrigues of women in 'The Thousand and One Nights' present faithful pictures of occurrences not unfrequent in the modern metropolis of Egypt. Many of the men of this city are of opinion that almost all the women would intrigue if they could do so without danger ; and that the greater proportion of them do. I should be sorry to think that the former opinion was just ; and I am almost persuaded that it is over-severe, because it appears, from the customs with regard to women generally prevailing here, that the latter must be false. The difficulty of carrying on an intrigue with a female in this place can hardly be conceived by a person who is not moderately well acquainted with Eastern customs and habits. It is not only difficult for a woman of the middle or higher classes to admit her paramour into the house in which she resides, but it is almost impossible for her to have a private interview with a man who has a harem, in his own house ; or to enter the house of a man who is neither married nor has a concubine slave, without attracting the notice of the neighbours, and causing their immediate interference. But as it cannot be denied that many of the women of Egypt engage in intrigues notwithstanding such risks, it may perhaps be true that the difficulties which lie in the way are the chief bar to most

others. Among the females of the lower orders, intrigues are more easily accomplished, and frequent.

The libidinous character of the generality of the women of Egypt, and the licentious conduct of a great number of them, may be attributed to many causes; partly, to the climate, and partly, to their want of proper instruction, and of innocent pastimes and employments:<sup>1</sup> but it is more to be attributed to the conduct of the husbands themselves; and to conduct far more disgraceful to them than the utmost severity that any of them is known to exercise in the regulations of his harem. The generality of husbands in Egypt endeavour to increase the libidinous feelings of their wives by every means in their power; though, at the same time, they assiduously study to prevent their indulging those feelings unlawfully. The women are permitted to listen, screened behind their windows of wooden lattice-work, to immoral songs and tales sung or related in the streets by men whom they pay for this entertainment; and to view the voluptuous dances of the ghawázee, and of the effeminate khāwals. The ghawázee, who are professed prostitutes, are not unfrequently introduced into the hareems of the wealthy, not merely to entertain the ladies with their dances, but to teach them their voluptuous arts; and even indecent puppets are sometimes brought into such hareems for the amusement of the inmates.—Innumerable stories of the artifices and intrigues of the women of Egypt have been related to me. The following narratives of late occurrences will serve as specimens.

A slave-dealer, who had been possessed of property which enabled him to live in comfort, but had lost the greater part of it, married a young and handsome woman in this city, who had sufficient wealth to make up for his losses. He soon, however, neglected her; and as he was past the prime of life, she became

<sup>1</sup> In the first edition of the present work, I included, among these supposed causes, the degree of restraint imposed upon the women, and their seclusion from open intercourse with the other sex. This I did, not because confinement is said to have this effect in the West, where, being contrary to general custom, it is felt as an oppression, but because the assertion of the Egyptians, that the Eastern women in general are more licentiously disposed than the men, seemed to be an argument against the main principle of the constitution of Eastern society. I did not consider that this argument is at least counterbalanced by what I have before mentioned, that the women who are commonly considered the *most licentious* of all Eastern women (namely, those of Egypt,) are those who are said to have *most licence*.

indifferent to him, and placed her affections upon another man, a dustman, who had been in the habit of coming to her house. She purchased, for this person, a shop close by her house; gave him a sum of money to enable him to pursue a less degraded occupation, as a seller of grain and fodder; and informed him that she had contrived a plan for his visiting her in perfect security. Her harem had a window with hanging shutters; and almost close before this window rose a palm-tree, out-topping the house: this tree, she observed, would afford her lover a means of access to her, and of egress from her apartment in case of danger. She had only one servant, a female, who engaged to assist her in the accomplishment of her desires. Previously to her lover's first visit to her, she desired the servant to inform her husband of what was about to take place in the ensuing night. He determined to keep watch; and, having told his wife that he was going out, and should not return that night, concealed himself in a lower apartment. At night, the maid came to tell him that the visitor was in the harem. He went up; but found the harem-door shut. On his trying to open it, his wife screamed; her lover, at the same time, escaping from the window, by means of the palm-tree. She called to her neighbours, "Come to my assistance! Pray come! There is a robber in my house!" Several of them soon came; and, finding her locked in her room, and her husband outside the door, told her there was nobody in the house but her husband and maid. She said that the man they called her husband was a robber: that her husband was gone to sleep out. The latter then informed them of what had passed; and insisted that a man was with her: he broke open the door, and searched the room; but, finding no man, was reprimanded by his neighbours, and abused by his wife, for uttering a slander. The next day, his wife, taking with her, as witnesses of his having accused her of a criminal intrigue, two of the neighbours who had come in on hearing her screams for assistance, arraigned her husband at the Maḥkemeh as the slanderer of a virtuous woman without the evidence of his own sight or of other witnesses. Being convicted of this offence, he was punished with eighty stripes, in accordance with the ordinance of the Kūr-án.<sup>1</sup> His wife now asked him if he would divorce her; but he refused. For three days after this event, they lived peaceably together. On the third night, the wife, having invited her lover to visit her, bound her husband, hand

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xxiv. v. 4.

and foot, while he was asleep, and tied him down to the mattress. Shortly after, her lover came up, and, waking the husband, threatened him with instant death if he should call, and remained with the wife for several hours, in his presence. As soon as the intruder had gone, the husband was unbound by his wife, and called out to his neighbours, beating her at the same time with such violence that she, also, began to call for assistance. The neighbours, coming in, and seeing him in a fury, easily believed her assertion that he had become raving mad, and, trying to soothe him with kind words, and prayers that God would restore him to sanity, liberated her from his grasp. She procured, as soon as possible, a rasool from the Kádee; and went, with him and her husband and several of her neighbours who had witnessed the beating that she had received, before the judge. The neighbours unanimously declared their opinion that her husband was mad; and the Kádee ordered that he should be conveyed to the Máristán<sup>1</sup> (or common mad-house): but the wife, affecting to pity him, begged that she might be allowed to chain him in an apartment in her house, that she might alleviate his sufferings by waiting upon him. The Kádee assented; praising the benevolence of the woman, and praying that God might reward her. She accordingly procured an iron collar and a chain from the Máristán, and chained him in a lower apartment of her house. Every night, in his presence, her lover visited her: after which she importuned him in vain to divorce her; and when the neighbours came in daily to ask how he was, the only answer he received to his complaints and accusations against his wife was, "God restore thee. God restore thee." Thus he continued about a month; and his wife, finding that he still persisted in refusing to divorce her, sent for a keeper of the Máristán to take him. The neighbours came round as he left the house: one exclaimed, "There is no strength nor power but in God! God restore thee." Another said, "How sad! He was really a worthy man."—A third remarked, "Bádingáns<sup>2</sup> are very abundant just now." While he was confined in the Máristán, his wife came daily to him, and asked him if he would divorce her: on his answering, "No," she said, "Then chained you may lie until you die; and my lover shall come to

<sup>1</sup> Vulgarly called "Muristán."

<sup>2</sup> Madness is said to be more common and more violent in Egypt when the black bádingán (the fruit of the black egg-plant) is in season: that is, in the hot weather.



me constantly." At length, after seven months' confinement, he consented to divorce her; upon which she procured his liberation; and he fulfilled his promise. Her lover was of too low a grade to become her husband; so she remained unmarried; and received him whenever she pleased: but the maid revealed the true history of this affair; and it soon became a subject of common talk.

When the wife of a man of wealth or rank engages in a criminal intrigue, both she and her paramour generally incur great danger.<sup>1</sup> A short time ago, the wife of an officer of high rank in the army took advantage of the absence of her husband from the metropolis (where he always resided with her when not on military duty) to invite a Christian merchant, of whom she had been in the habit of buying silks, to pay her a visit. He went to her house at the time appointed, and found a eunuch at the door, who took him to another house, disguised him in the loose outer garments and veil of a lady, and then brought him back, and introduced him to his mistress. He passed nearly the whole of the night with her; and, rising before she awoke, put into his pocket a purse which he had given her, and went down to the eunuch, who conducted him again to the house where he had put on his disguise: having here resumed his own outer clothes, he repaired to his shop. Soon after, the lady, who had missed the purse, came, and taxed him with having taken it: she told him that she did not want money, but only desired his company; and begged him to come to her again in the ensuing evening; which he promised to do: but in the afternoon, a female servant from the house of this lady came to his shop, and told him that her mistress had mixed some poison in a bottle of water which she had ordered to be given him to drink.—This mode of revenge is said to have been often adopted when the woman's paramour has given her even a slight offence.

It is seldom that the wife of a Muslim is guilty of a criminal intrigue without being punished with death if there be four witnesses to the fact, and they or the husband prosecute her; and not always does she escape this punishment if she be detected by any of the officers of justice: in the latter case,

<sup>1</sup> "How many men, in Maşr," said one of my friends to me, "have lost their lives on account of women! A very handsome young libertine, who lived in this house which you now occupy, was beheaded here in the street, before his own door, for an intrigue with the wife of a Bey; and all the women of Maşr wept for him."

four witnesses are not required, and often the woman, if of a respectable family, is put to death, generally in private, on the mere arbitrary authority of the government: but a bribe will sometimes save her; for it will always be accepted, if it can with safety. Drowning is the punishment now almost always inflicted, publicly, upon women convicted of adultery in Cairo and other large towns of Egypt, instead of that ordained by the law, which is stoning.—A poor woman of this city, a few months before her story was related to me, married a man whose trade was that of selling fowls, and, while living with him and her mother, took three other lodgings, and married three other husbands, all of whom were generally absent from the metropolis: so she calculated that when any of these three persons came to town for a few days, she might easily find an excuse to go to him. They happened, unfortunately for her, to come to town on the same day; and all of them went, the same evening, to inquire for her at her mother's house. Being much embarrassed by their presence, and her first husband being also with her, she feigned to be ill, and soon to become insensible; and was taken, by her mother, to an inner room. One of the husbands proposed to give her something to restore her: another wished to try a different remedy: they began to contend which was the best medicine; and one of them said, "I shall give her what I please: is not she my wife?" "Your wife!" exclaimed each of the three other husbands at the same time: "she is *my* wife."—Each proved his marriage: the woman was taken to the Maḥkemeh; tried; condemned to death; and thrown into the Nile.—During my first visit to this country, a similar case occurred: a woman married three soldiers, of the nizám, or regular troops. She was buried in a hole, breast-deep, and then shot.

A woman may sometimes, but very rarely, trust in palliating circumstances, or the support of powerful friends, to save her from the penalty of death, in case of her detection in a criminal intercourse; as in the following instance.—The Bâshâ gave one of the slaves in his ḥareem in marriage to a rich slave-merchant, from whom he had purchased many of his memlooks and female slaves. This man was not only unfaithful to her, but utterly neglected her; and she, in consequence, formed an improper intimacy with a merchant of whom she was a frequent customer. One day, when her husband was out, a black slave belonging to him happened to see a man's head at a small aperture in a window of the ḥareem. He immediately went up

to search the room of the wife ; who, hearing him coming, locked her paramour in an adjoining closet. The slave broke open the door of the closet ; and the man within rushed at him with a dagger which he wore in his girdle ; but the former seized the blade in his hand ; and the woman held him until her lover had escaped : she then kissed the slave's hand, and implored him not to cause her death by informing her husband of what had passed : she, however, found him inexorable : he immediately went to his master, shewing his bleeding hand, and telling him the cause of the wound. The woman, meanwhile, fled to the Báshà's harem, for protection. Her husband demanded of the Báshà that she should be given up, and put to death ; and, the request being deemed a proper one, she was brought before her former master to answer for her crime. She threw herself at his feet ; kissed the skirt of his clothing ; and acquainted him with her husband's vicious conduct, and his utter neglect of her ; and the Báshà, feeling *himself* insulted by the husband's conduct, spat in his face ; and sent back the wife to his own harem. Her paramour did not live long after this : he was smothered in the house of some courtesans ; but none of these women was punished ; as it could not be proved which of them committed the act.

For their sentiments with regard to women, and their general conduct towards the fair sex, the Egyptians, in common with other Muslims, have been reprehended with too great severity. It is true that they do not consider it necessary, or even delicate, to consult the choice of a girl under age previously to giving her away in matrimony ; but it is not less true that a man of the middle or higher classes, almost always, makes his choice of a wife from hearsay, or as a person blindfold ; having no means of seeing her until the contract is made, and she is brought to his house. It is impossible, therefore, that there should be any mutual attachment before marriage. Both sexes, in truth, are oppressed by tyrannical laws and customs ; but, happily, they regard their chains as becoming and honourable : they would feel themselves disgraced by shaking them off. As to the restraint which is exercised towards the women, I have before remarked that it is in a great degree voluntary on their part, and that I believe it to be less strict in Egypt than in any other country of the Turkish empire : it is certainly far less so than it has been represented to be by many persons. They generally look upon this restraint with a degree of pride, as evincing the husband's care for them ; and value themselves upon their

being hidden as treasures.<sup>1</sup> In good society, it is considered highly indecorous to inquire, in direct terms, respecting the health of a friend's wife, or of any female in his house, unless she be a relation of the person who makes the inquiry.—One of my Egyptian acquaintances asking another native of this country, who had been in Paris, what was the most remarkable thing that he had seen in the land of the infidels, the latter, thinking lightly of all that he had observed really worthy of exciting the admiration of an unprejudiced and a sensible man, gave the following answer:—"I witnessed nothing so remarkable as this fact. It is a custom of every person among the rich and great, in Paris and other cities of France, frequently to invite his friends and acquaintances, both men and women, to an entertainment in his house. The rooms in which the company are received are lighted with a great number of candles and lamps. There, the men and women assemble promiscuously; the women, as you well know, unveiled; and a man may sit next to another's wife, whom he has never seen before, and may walk, talk, and even dance with her, in the very presence of her own husband, who is neither angry nor jealous at such disgraceful conduct."

The Egyptians are equally remarkable for generosity and cupidity. That two such opposite qualities should be united in the same mind is not a little surprising; but such is generally the case with this people. An overreaching and deceitful disposition in commerical transactions, which is too common among all nations, is one of the most notorious faults of the Egyptian: in such cases, he seldom scruples to frame a falsehood which may better his bargain. Among people who groan beneath the yoke of a tyrannical and rapacious government (and such has long been the government of Egypt), a disposition to avarice invariably predominates: for a man is naturally most tenacious of that which is most liable to be taken from him; and hence the oppressed Egyptian, when he has a sum of money which he does not require for necessary expenses, and cannot profitably employ, generally lays it out in the purchase of ornaments for his wife or wives; which ornaments he can easily convert again into money. Hence, also, it is a common practice in this country (as it is, or has been, in almost every country under similar political circumstances,) for a man

<sup>1</sup> A respectable female is generally addressed, in a letter, as "the guarded lady, and concealed jewel" ("es-sitt el-ma'ooneh wa-l-góharah el-mek-nooneh")

to hide treasure in his house, under the paved floor, or in some other part; and as many a person who does so dies suddenly, without being able to inform his family where is his "makhbà," or hiding-place, money is not unfrequently discovered on pulling down houses.—A vice near akin to cupidity, namely envy, I believe to be equally prevalent among the modern Egyptians, in common with the whole Arab race; for many of them are candid enough to confess their own opinion that this hateful disposition is almost wholly concentrated in the minds of their nation.

The Egyptians are generally honest in the payment of debts. Their Prophet asserted that even martyrdom would not atone for a debt undischarged. Few of them ever accept interest for a loan of money; as it is strictly forbidden by their law.

Constant veracity is a virtue extremely rare in modern Egypt. Falsehood was *commended* by the Prophet when it tended to reconcile persons at variance with each other: also, when practised in order to please one's wife; and to obtain any advantage in a war with the enemies of the faith: though highly reprobated in other cases. This offers some little palliation of the general practice of lying which prevails among the modern Arabs; for if people are allowed to lie in certain cases, they insensibly contract a habit of doing so in others. Though most of the Egyptians often lie designedly, they are seldom heard to retract an unintentional misstatement without expressing themselves thus: "No: I beg forgiveness of God: <sup>1</sup> it was so and so;" as, in stating anything of which they are not quite certain, they say, "God is all-knowing."<sup>2</sup>—I may here mention (and I do it with some feeling of national pride) that, some years ago, there was an Armenian jeweller in this city (Cairo) so noted for his veracity, that his acquaintances determined to give him some appellation significant of his possessing a virtue so rare among them; and the name they gave him was "El-Ingileezee," or *The Englishman*, which has become his family name. It is common to hear tradesmen in this place, when demanding a price which they do not mean to abate, say, "One word; the word of the English:"<sup>3</sup> they also often say, "The word of the Franks," in this sense: but I have never heard any particular nation thus honourably distinguished except the English and the Maghrabees, or Western Arabs, which latter people have acquired this re-

<sup>1</sup> "Lá: astaghfir Alláh."

<sup>2</sup> "Alláhu aqám."

<sup>3</sup> "Kilmel el-Ingileez."

putation by being rather more veracious than most other Arabs.

I have before mentioned the practice of swearing by God which prevails among the Egyptians: I must here add, that many of them scruple not to make use of an oath with the view of obtaining credit to a falsehood. In this case, they sometimes say, "Wa-lláhi" ("By God"); but more commonly, "Wa-llah;"—for, though the latter expression has the same meaning as the former, they pretend that it may also be used as an ejaculation in praise of God; whereas "Wa-lláhi" is a decided oath, and, if uttered to a falsehood, is a heinous sin. Such an oath, if violated, must be expiated by once feeding or clothing ten poor men, liberating a Muslim slave, or captive, or fasting three days.<sup>1</sup> This, however, is the expiation allowed by the *Kur-án* only for an inconsiderate oath: yet the modern Muslims sometimes observe it in order to free themselves from the guilt of a deliberate false oath; and they generally prefer the fast to either of the other modes of expiation. There are some oaths which, I believe, few Muslims would falsely take; such as saying, three times, "By God, the Great;"<sup>2</sup>—and the oath upon the *muṣ-ḥaf* (or copy of the *Kur-án*)—saying, "By what this contains of the word of God!"—but a form of oath which is still more to be depended upon is that of saying, "I impose upon myself divorcement"<sup>3</sup> (that is, the divorce of my wife, if what I say be false); or, "I impose upon myself interdiction;"<sup>4</sup> which has a similar meaning ("My wife be unlawful to me"); or, "I impose upon myself a triple divorcement;"<sup>5</sup> which binds by the irrevocable divorce of the wife. If a man use any one of these three forms of oath falsely, his wife, if he have but one, is divorced by the oath itself, if proved to be false, without further ceremony; and if he have two or more wives, he must, in such circumstances, choose one of them to put away. There are, however, abandoned liars who will swear falsely by the oath that is generally held most binding. A poet, speaking of a character of this description, says,

"But Abu-l-Mo'allà is most false  
When he swears by the oath of divorce."

The generality of the Egyptians are easily excited to quarrel;

<sup>1</sup> *Kur-án*, ch. v., v. 91.

<sup>2</sup> "Wa-lláhi-l-azem."

<sup>3</sup> "'Aleiya-ṭ-ṭalák."

<sup>4</sup> "'Aleiya-l-ḥarám."

<sup>5</sup> "'Aleiya-ṭ-ṭalák bi-t-teláteh."

particularly those of the lower orders, who, when enraged, curse each other's fathers, mothers, beards, &c.; and lavish upon each other a variety of opprobrious epithets; such as "son of the dog, pimp, pig," and an appellation which they think still worse than any of these, namely, "Jew." When one curses the father of the other, the latter generally retorts by cursing the father and mother, and sometimes the whole household, of his adversary. They menace each other; but seldom proceed to blows. In a few instances, however, I have seen low persons in this country so enraged as to bite, and grasp each other by the throat. I have also witnessed many instances of forbearance on the part of individuals of the middle and lower classes, when grossly insulted: I have often heard an Egyptian say, on receiving a blow from an equal, "God bless thee." "God requite thee good." "Beat me again." In general, a quarrel terminates by one or both parties saying, "Justice is against me:"<sup>1</sup> often, after this, they recite the Fát'hah together; and then, sometimes, embrace and kiss one another.

The Egyptians are particularly prone to satire; and often display considerable wit in their jeers and jests. Their language affords them great facilities for punning, and for ambiguous conversation, in which they very frequently indulge. The lower orders sometimes lampoon their rulers in songs, and ridicule those enactments of the government by which they themselves most suffer. I was once much amused with a song which I found to be very popular in the town and district of Aswán, on the southern frontier of Egypt: its burden was a plain invocation to the plague to take their tyrannical governor and his Copt clerk. Another song, which was popular throughout Egypt during my first visit to this country, and which was composed on the occasion of an increase of the income-tax called "firdeh," began thus: "You who have [nothing on your head but] a libdeh! sell it, and pay the firdeh." The libdeh, I have before mentioned, is a felt cap, which is worn under, or instead of, the turban; and the man must be very poor who has no other covering than this for his head.

<sup>1</sup> "El-ḥaḳḳ 'aleiya."

## CHAPTER XIV

## INDUSTRY

It is melancholy to contrast the present poverty of Egypt with its prosperity in ancient times, when the variety, elegance, and exquisite finish displayed in its manufactures attracted the admiration of surrounding nations, and its inhabitants were in no need of foreign commerce to increase their wealth, or to add to their comforts. Antiquarian researches shew us that a high degree of excellence in the arts of civilized life distinguished the Egyptians in the age of Moses, and at a yet earlier period. Not only the Pharaohs and the priests and military chiefs, but also a great proportion of the wealthy agriculturists, and other private individuals, in those remote times, passed a life of the most refined luxury, were clad in linen of the most delicate fabric, and reclined on couches and chairs which have served as models for the furniture of our modern saloons. Nature is as lavish of her favours as she was of old to the inhabitants of the valley of the Nile; but, for many centuries, they have ceased to enjoy the benefit of a steady government: each of their successive rulers, during this long lapse of time, considering the uncertain tenure of his power, has been almost wholly intent upon increasing his own wealth; and thus, a large portion of the nation has gradually perished, and the remnant, in general, been reduced to a state of the most afflicting poverty. The male portion of the population of Egypt being scarcely greater than is sufficient for the cultivation of as much of the soil as is subject to the natural inundation, or easily irrigated by artificial means, the number of persons who devote themselves to manufactures in this country is comparatively very small; and as there are so few competitors, and, at present, few persons of wealth to encourage them, their works in general display but little skill. But the low state of the manual arts has, in a great degree, been occasioned by another cause: the Turkish Sultan Seleem, after his conquest of Egypt, took with him thence to his own country, as related by El-Gabartee,<sup>1</sup> so many masters of crafts

<sup>1</sup> Near the beginning of his History.



which were not practised in Turkey, that more than fifty manual arts ceased to be pursued in Egypt.

Painting and sculpture, as applied to the representation of living objects, are, I have already stated, absolutely prohibited by the religion of El-Islám: there are, however, some Muslims in Egypt who attempt the delineation of men, lions, camels, and other animals, flowers, boats, &c., particularly in (what they call) the decoration of a few shop-fronts, the doors of pilgrims' houses, &c.; though their performances would be surpassed by children of five or six years of age in our own country. But the Muslim religion especially promotes industry, by requiring that every man be acquainted with some art or occupation by which he may, in case of necessity, be able to support himself and those dependant upon him, and to fulfil all his religious and moral duties. The art in which the Egyptians most excel is architecture. The finest specimens of Arabian architecture are found in the Egyptian metropolis and its environs; and not only the mosques and other public buildings are remarkable for their grandeur and beauty, but many of the private dwellings, also, attract our admiration, especially by their interior structure and decorations. Yet this art has, of late years, much declined, like most others in this country: a new style of architecture, derived from the Turks, partly Oriental and partly European, and of a very plain description, being generally preferred. The doors, ceilings, windows, and pavements, of the buildings in the older style, which have already been described, display considerable taste, of a peculiar kind; and so, too, do most of the Egyptian manufactures; though many of them are rather clumsy, or ill finished. The turners of wood, whose chief occupation was that of making the lattice-work of windows, were very numerous, and their work was generally neater than it is at present: they have less employment now, as windows of modern houses are often made of glass. The turner, like most other artisans in Egypt, sits to his work. In the art of glass-making, for which Egypt was so much celebrated in ancient times, the modern inhabitants of this country possess but little skill: they have lost the art of manufacturing coloured glass for windows; but for the construction of windows of this material they are still admired, though not so much as they were a few years ago, before the adoption of a new style of architecture diminished the demand for their work. Their pottery is generally of a rude kind: it mostly consists of

porous bottles and jars, for cooling, as well as keeping, water. For their skill in the preparation of morocco leather, they are justly celebrated. The branches and leaves of the palm-tree they employ in a great variety of manufactures: of the former, they make seats, coops, chests, frames for beds, &c.: of the latter, baskets, panniers, mats, brooms, fly-whisks, and many other utensils. Of the fibres also that grow at the foot of the branches of the palm-tree are made most of the ropes used in Egypt. The best mats (which are much used instead of carpets, particularly in summer,) are made of rushes. Egypt has lost the celebrity which it enjoyed in ancient times for its fine linen: the linen and cotton and woollen cloths, and the silks now woven in this country, are generally of coarse or poor qualities.

The Egyptians have long been famous for the art of hatching fowls' eggs by artificial heat. This practice, though obscurely described by ancient authors, appears to have been common in Egypt in very remote times. The building in which the process is performed is called, in Lower Egypt, "maamal el-firakh," and in Upper Egypt, "maamal el-farroog:" in the former division of the country, there are more than a hundred such establishments; and in the latter, more than half that number. Most of the superintendents, if not all, are Copts. The proprietors pay a tax to the government. The maamal is constructed of burnt or sun-dried bricks; and consists of two parallel rows of small ovens and cells for fire, divided by a narrow, vaulted passage; each oven being about nine or ten feet long, eight feet wide, and five or six feet high, and having above it a vaulted fire-cell, of the same size, or rather less in height. Each oven communicates with the passage by an aperture large enough for a man to enter; and with its fire-cell by a similar aperture: the fire-cells, also, of the same row, communicate with each other; and each has an aperture in its vault (for the escape of the smoke), which is opened only occasionally: the passage, too, has several such apertures in its vaulted roof. The eggs are placed upon mats or straw, and one tier above another, usually to the number of three tiers, in the ovens; and burning "gelleh" (a fuel before mentioned, composed of the dung of animals, mixed with chopped straw, and made into the form of round flat cakes,) is placed upon the floors of the fire-cells above. The entrance of the maamal is well closed. Before it are two or three small chambers for the attendant, and

the fuel, and the chickens when newly hatched. The operation is performed only during two or three months in the year, in the spring; earliest in the most southern parts of the country. Each maamal in general contains from twelve to twenty-four ovens; and receives about a hundred and fifty thousand eggs during the annual period of its continuing open; one quarter or a third of which number generally fail. The peasants of the neighbourhood supply the eggs: the attendant of the maamal examines them, and afterwards usually gives one chicken for every two eggs that he has received. In general, only half the number of ovens are used for the first ten days, and fires are lighted only in the fire-cells above these. On the eleventh day, these fires are put out, and others are lighted in the other fire-cells, and fresh eggs placed in the ovens below these last. On the following day, some of the eggs in the former ovens are removed, and placed on the floor of the fire-cells above, where the fires have been extinguished. The general heat maintained during the process is from  $100^{\circ}$  to  $103^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit's thermometer. The manager, having been accustomed to this art from his youth, knows, from his long experience, the exact temperature that is required for the success of the operation, without having any instrument, like our thermometer, to guide him. On the twentieth day, some of the eggs first put in are hatched; but most, on the twenty-first day; that is, after the same period as is required in the case of natural incubation. The weaker of the chickens are placed in the passage: the rest, in the innermost of the anterior apartments, where they remain a day or two before they are given to the persons to whom they are due. When the eggs first placed have been hatched, and the second supply half hatched, the ovens in which the former were placed, and which are now vacant, receive the third supply; and, in like manner, when the second supply is hatched, a fourth is introduced in its place. I have not found that the fowls produced in this manner are inferior in point of flavour, or in other respects, to those produced from the egg by incubation. The fowls and their eggs in Egypt are, in both cases, and with respect to size and flavour, very inferior to those in our country. In one of the Egyptian newspapers published by order of the government (No. 248, for the 18th of Ramadán, 1246, or the 3rd of March, 1831, of our era,) I find the following statement:—

	Lower Egypt.	Upper Egypt.
Number of establishments for the hatching of fowls' eggs in the present year . . . . .	105	59
Number of eggs used . . . . .	19,325,600	6,878,900
Number spoiled . . . . .	6,255,867	2,529,660
Number hatched . . . . .	13,069,733	4,349,240

Though the commerce of Egypt has much declined since the discovery of the passage from Europe to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and in consequence of the monopolies and exactions of Moḥammad 'Alee and his successors, it is still considerable; and during the last few years it has been much improved by the numerous steam-vessels plying between Alexandria and England, France, and Austria, and between Suez and India, and by the establishment of railways in Lower Egypt.

The principal *imports* from Europe are woollen cloths (chiefly from France), calico, plain muslin, figured muslin (of Scotch manufacture, for turbans), silks, velvet, crape, shawls (Scotch, English, and French), in imitation of those of Kashmeer, writing-paper (chiefly from Venice), fire-arms, straight sword-blades (from Germany) for the Nubians, &c., watches and clocks, coffee-cups and various articles of earthenware and glass (mostly from Germany), many kinds of hardwares, planks, metal, beads, wine and liqueurs; and white slaves, silks, embroidered handkerchiefs and napkins, mouth-pieces of pipes, slippers, and a variety of made goods, copper and brass wares, &c., from Constantinople:—from Asia Minor, carpets (among which, the seggádehs, or small prayer-carpets), figs, &c.:—from Syria, tobacco, striped silks, 'abáyehs (or woollen cloaks), soap:—from Arabia, coffee, spices, several drugs, Indian goods (as shawls, silks, muslin, &c.):—from Abyssinia and Sennár and the neighbouring countries, slaves, gold, ivory, ostrich-feathers, kurbágs (or whips of hippopotamus' hide), tamarind in cakes, gums, senna:—from El-Gharb, or the West (that is, northern Africa, from Egypt westwards), ṭarbooshes (or red cloth skull-caps), burnooses (or white woollen hooded cloaks), ḥeráms (or white woollen sheets, used for night-coverings and for dress), yellow morocco shoes.

The principal *exports* to Europe are wheat, maize, rice, beans, cotton, flax, indigo, coffee, various spices, gums, senna, ivory, ostrich-feathers:—to Turkey, male and female Abyssinian and black slaves (including a few eunuchs), rice, coffee, spices, ḥennà, &c.:—to Syria, slaves, rice, &c.:—to Arabia, chiefly corn:—to Sennár and the neighbouring countries, cotton and

linen and woollen goods, a few Syrian and Egyptian striped silks, small carpets, beads and other ornaments, soap, the straight sword-blades mentioned before, fire-arms, copper wares, writing-paper.

To convey some notion of the value of money in Cairo, in late years, I insert the following list of the prices of certain common articles of food, &c., made during my second visit. (Since Egypt has again become a highway to India, and a resort of travellers far more numerous than they were a few years ago, the prices of commodities of every kind have very greatly increased.) In the country towns and villages, most kinds of provisions are cheaper than in the metropolis: meat, fowls, and pigeons, about half the prices here mentioned: wheat and bread, from about one-third to half.

	P.	F.	( $\mathcal{L}$ s. d.)
Wheat, the ardebb (or about five bushels), from 50 P. to . . . . .	63	0	(0 13 2½)
Rice, the ardebb, about . . . . .	240	0	(2 8 0)
Mutton or lamb, the raṭl . . . . .	1	0	(0 0 2½)
Beef, do. . . . .	0	35	(0 0 2½)
Fowls, each, 1 P. 10 F. to . . . . .	1	20	(0 0 3½)
Pigeons, the pair, 1 P. 10 F. to . . . . .	1	20	(0 0 3½)
Eggs, three for . . . . .	0	5	(0 0 0½)
Fresh butter, the raṭl . . . . .	2	0	(0 0 4½)
Clarified butter, do. 2 P. to . . . . .	2	10	(0 0 5½)
Coffee, do. 6 P. to . . . . .	7	0	(0 1 4½)
Gebelee tobacco, the uḳḳah, 15 P. to . . . . .	18	0	(0 3 7½)
Sooree do. do. 5 P. to . . . . .	10	0	(0 2 0)
Egyptian loaf-sugar, the raṭl . . . . .	2	0	(0 0 4½)
European do. do. . . . .	2	10	(0 0 5½)
Summer grapes do. . . . .	0	10	(0 0 0½)
Later do. do. 20 F. to . . . . .	0	30	(0 0 1½)
Fine biscuit, the ḳanṭār . . . . .	160	0	(1 12 0)
Water, the kirbeh (or goat's skin), 10 F. to . . . . .	0	20	(0 0 1½)
Firewood, the donkey-load . . . . .	11	0	(0 2 2½)
Charcoal, the uḳḳah, 20 F. to . . . . .	0	30	(0 0 1½)
Soap, the raṭl . . . . .	1	30	(0 0 4½)
Tallow candles, the uḳḳah . . . . .	8	20	(0 1 8½)
Best wax do. do. . . . .	25	0	(0 5 0)

*Note.*—The “raṭl” is about 15½ oz., and the “uḳḳah” nearly 2½ lbs., avoirdupois. The “ḳanṭār” is 100 raṭls. P. denotes Piasters: F., Faḍdahs. For a full account of Egyptian measures, weights, and moneys, see the Appendix.

There are in Cairo numerous buildings called “wekálehs,”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Wekáleh” (generally pronounced by the Franks *occaleh*, *occal*, &c.,) is for “Dár el-Wekáleh,” signifying a *factory*.

chiefly designed for the accommodation of merchants, and for the reception of their goods. The wekáleh is a building surrounding a square or oblong court. Its ground-floor consists of vaulted magazines for merchandise, which face the court; and these magazines are sometimes used as shops. Above them are generally lodgings, which are entered from a gallery extending along each of the four sides of the court; or, in the place of these lodgings, there are other magazines; and in many wekálehs, which have apartments intended as lodgings, these apartments are used as magazines. In general, a wekáleh has only one common entrance; the door of which is closed at night, and kept by a porter. There are about two hundred of these buildings in Cairo; and three-fourths of that number are within that part which constituted the original city.

It has already been mentioned, in the Introduction to this work, that the great thoroughfare-streets of Cairo generally have a row of shops along each side, not communicating with the superstructures. So, too, have many of the by-streets. Commonly, a portion of a street, or a whole street, consists chiefly, or solely, of houses with shops appropriated to one particular trade;<sup>1</sup> and is called the Sook (or Market) of that trade; or is named after a mosque there situate. Thus, a part of the main street of the city is called "Sook en-Nahháseen," or the market of the sellers of copper wares (or simply "the Nahháseen," the word "Sook" being usually dropped); another part is called "the Góhargeeyeh," or [market of] the jewellers; another, "the Khurdageeyeh," or [market of] the sellers of hardwares; another, "the Ghooreeyeh," or [market of] the Ghooreeyeh, which is the name of a mosque situate there. These are some of the chief sooks of the city. The principal Turkish sook is called "Khán El-Khaleelee." Some of the sooks are covered over with matting, or with planks, supported by beams extending across the street, a little above the shops, or above the houses.<sup>2</sup>

The shop ("dukkán") is a square recess, or cell, generally about six or seven feet high; and between three and four feet in width: or it consists of two cells, one behind the other; the

<sup>1</sup> This has long been the case in other Eastern countries. See Jeremiah xxxvii. 21.

<sup>2</sup> When I last quitted Egypt, it was said that most of these coverings were about to be removed.

inner one serving as a magazine.<sup>1</sup> The floor of the shop is even with the top of a "maṣṭabah," or raised seat of stone or brick, built against the front.<sup>2</sup> This is usually about two feet and a half, or three feet, in height; and about the same in breadth. The front of the shop is furnished with folding shutters, commonly consisting of three leaves, one above another: the uppermost of these is turned up in front: the two other leaves, sometimes folded together, are turned down upon the maṣṭabah, and form an even seat, upon which is spread a mat or carpet, with, perhaps, a cushion or two. Some shops have folding doors instead of the shutters above described. The shopkeeper generally sits upon the maṣṭabah, unless he be obliged to retire a little way within his shop to make room for two or more customers, who mount upon the seat, taking off their shoes before they draw up their feet upon the mat or carpet. To a regular customer, or one who makes any considerable purchase, the shopkeeper generally presents a pipe (unless the former have his own with him, and it be filled and lighted), and he calls or sends to the boy of the nearest coffee-shop, and desires him to bring some coffee, which is served in the same manner as in the house, in small china cups placed within cups of brass. Not more than two persons can sit conveniently upon the maṣṭabah of a shop, unless it be more spacious than is commonly the case; but some are three or four feet broad; and the shops to which they belong, five or six feet in width; and consequently these afford room enough for four persons, or more, sitting in the Eastern fashion. The shopman generally says his prayers upon the maṣṭabah in the sight of the passengers in the street. When he leaves his shop for a few minutes, or for about half an hour, he either relies for the protection of his property upon the next shopkeepers, or those opposite, or hangs a net before his shop. He seldom thinks it necessary to close and lock the shutters, except at night, when he returns to his house, or when he goes to the mosque, on the Friday, to join in the noon-prayers of that day.—The apartments above the shops have been described in the Introduction.

Buying and selling are here very tiresome processes to persons unaccustomed to such modes of bargaining. When a shop-

<sup>1</sup> The tradesman keeps his main stock of goods (if more than his shop will contain) in this magazine, or in his private dwelling, or in a wekálch.

<sup>2</sup> Since this was written, the maṣṭabahs in most of the streets have been removed by order of the government.

keeper is asked the price of any of his goods, he generally demands more than he expects to receive; the customer de-



SHOPS IN A STREET OF CAIRO.

The principal object in this view is the shop of an "attâr," who sells drugs, perfumes, wax candles, &c. The inscription on the shutter is "Yâ Fettâh." See Chapter xi.

clares the price exorbitant, and offers about half or two-thirds



of the sum first-named; the price thus bidden is, of course, rejected: but the shopkeeper lowers his demand; and then the customer, in his turn, bids somewhat higher than before: thus they usually go on until they meet about half-way between the sum first demanded and that first offered, and so the bargain is concluded. But I believe that most of the tradesmen are, by European travellers, unjustly blamed for thus acting, since I have ascertained that many an Egyptian shopkeeper will sell an article for a profit of one *per cent.*, and even less. When a person would make any but a trifling purchase, having found the article that exactly suits him, he generally makes up his mind for a long altercation: he mounts upon the *maṣṭabah* of the shop, seats himself at his ease, fills and lights his pipe, and then the contest of words commences, and lasts often half an hour or even more. Sometimes the shopkeeper, or the customer, interrupts the bargaining by introducing some irrelevant topic of conversation, as if the one had determined to abate his demand no further, or the other to bid no higher: then again the haggling is continued. The bargain being concluded, and the purchaser having taken his leave, his servant generally receives, from the tradesman, a small present of money, which, if not given spontaneously, he scruples not to demand. In many of the *soḳs* in Cairo auctions are held on stated days, once or twice a week. They are conducted by "*delláls*" (or brokers), hired either by private persons who have anything that they wish to sell in this manner, or by shopkeepers; and the purchasers are of both these classes. The "*delláls*" carry the goods up and down, announcing the sums bidden with cries of "*ḥarág*" or "*ḥaráj*," &c.—Among the lower orders, a bargain of the most trifling nature is often made with a great deal of vehemence of voice and gesture: a person ignorant of their language would imagine that the parties engaged in it were quarrelling, and highly enraged. The peasants will often say, when a person asks the price of anything which they have for sale, "Receive it as a present:"<sup>1</sup> this answer having become a common form of speech, they know that advantage will not be taken of it; and when desired again to name the price, they will do so; but generally name a sum that is exorbitant.

It would be tedious and uninteresting to enumerate all the

<sup>1</sup> As Ephron did to Abraham, when the latter expressed his wish to purchase the cave and field of Machpelah. (See Genesis xxiii. 11.) It is commonly said with the view of avoiding the effect of an evil eye.

trades pursued in Cairo. The principal of them are those of the draper, or seller of materials for dress (who is simply called



SHOP OF A TURKISH MERCHANT IN THE SOOQ CALLED KHÂN EL-KHALEELIE.

“tâgir,” or merchant), and of the seller of ready-made dresses, arms, &c. (who has the same appellation); the jeweller

("góhargee"); the goldsmith and silversmith ("sáigh"), who only works by order; the seller of hardwares ("khurdagee"); the seller of copper wares ("nahhás"); the tailor ("kheiyát"); the dyer ("shabbágh"); the darner ("reffá"); the ornamental sewer and maker of shereet, or silk lace, &c. ("habbák"); the maker of silk cords, &c. ("akkkád"); the maker of pipes ("shibukshee"); the druggist and perfumer ("attár"), who also sells wax candles, &c.; the tobacconist ("dakhákhinee"); the fruiterer ("fákihánee"); the seller of dried fruits ("nuḡalee"); the seller of sherbet ("sharbetlee"); the oilman ("zeiyát"), who sells butter, cheese, honey, &c., as well as oil; the greengrocer ("khudaree"); the butcher ("gezzár"); and the baker ("farrán"), to whom bread, meat, &c., are sent to be baked. There are many cooks' shops, where kebáb and various other dishes are cooked and sold; but it is seldom that persons eat at these shops, generally sending to them for provisions when they cannot conveniently prepare food in their own houses. Shopkeepers often procure their breakfast or dinner from one of these cooks, who are called "ṭabbákhs." There are also many shops in which faṭerehs, and others in which boiled beans (fool mudemmes), are sold. Both these articles of food have been described in a former chapter. Many persons of the lower orders eat at the shop of the "fatátiree" (or seller of faṭerehs), or at that of the "fowwál" (or bean-seller).

Bread, vegetables, and a variety of eatables, are carried about for sale. The cries of some of the hawkers are curious, and deserve to be mentioned. The seller of "tirmis" (or lupins) often cries, "Aid! O Imbábee! Aid!"<sup>1</sup> This is understood in two senses; as an invocation for aid to the sheykh El-Imbábee, a celebrated Muslim saint, buried at the village of Imbábeh, on the west bank of the Nile opposite Cairo, in the neighbourhood of which village the best tirmis is grown; and also as implying that it is through the aid of the saint above mentioned that the tirmis of Imbábeh is so excellent. The seller of this vegetable also cries, "The tirmis of Imbábeh surpasses the almond!"<sup>2</sup> Another cry of the seller of tirmis is, "O how sweet the little offspring of the river!"<sup>3</sup> This last cry, which is seldom heard but in the country towns and villages of Egypt, alludes to the manner in which the tirmis is prepared

<sup>1</sup> "Meded yá Imbábee meded."

<sup>2</sup> "Tirmis Imbábeh yeghlib el-lóz."

<sup>3</sup> "Yá ma-ḡlà (for "má aḡlà") bunef el-baḡr."

for food. To deprive it of its natural bitterness, it is soaked, for two or three days, in a vessel full of water, then boiled; and, after this, sewed up in a basket of palm-leaves (called "fard"), and thrown into the Nile, where it is left to soak again two or three days, after which it is dried, and eaten cold, with a little salt.—The seller of sour limes cries, "God make them light [or easy of sale]! O limes!"<sup>1</sup>—The toasted pips of a kind of melon called "'abdalláwee," and of the water-melon, are often announced by the cry of "O consoler of the embarrassed! O pips!"<sup>2</sup> though more commonly by the simple cry of "Roasted pips!"<sup>3</sup>—A curious cry of the seller of a kind of sweetmeat ("ḥaláweh"), composed of treacle fried with some other ingredients, is, "For a nail! O sweetmeat!"<sup>4</sup> He is said to be half a thief: children and servants often steal implements of iron, &c., from the house in which they live, and give them to him in exchange for his sweetmeat.—The hawker of oranges cries, "Honey! O oranges! Honey!"<sup>5</sup> And similar cries are used by the sellers of other fruits and vegetables, so that it is sometimes impossible to guess what the person announces for sale, as when we hear the cry of "Sycamore-figs! O grapes!"<sup>6</sup> except by the rule that what is for sale is the least excellent of the fruits, &c., mentioned; as sycamore-figs are not so good as grapes.—A very singular cry is used by the seller of roses: "The rose was a thorn; from the sweat of the Prophet it blossomed."<sup>7</sup> This alludes to a miracle related of the Prophet.—The fragrant flowers of the ḥennà-tree (*Lawsonia inermis*, or Egyptian privet,) are carried about for sale, and the seller cries, "Odours of paradise! O flowers of the ḥennà!"<sup>8</sup>—A kind of cotton-cloth, made by machinery which is put in motion by a bull, is announced by the cry of "The work of the bull! O maidens!"<sup>9</sup>

As the water of the wells in Cairo is slightly brackish, numerous "saḳḳàs" (carriers or sellers of water) obtain their livelihood by supplying its inhabitants with water from the Nile. During the season of the inundation, or rather during

1 "Allah yehowwinhè (for "yuhowwinhà") yá leymoon."

2 "Yá muselli-l-ghalbán yá libb."

3 "El-libb el-moḥammaṣ."

4 "Bi-mismár yá ḥaláweh."

5 "'Asal yá burtuḳán 'asal."

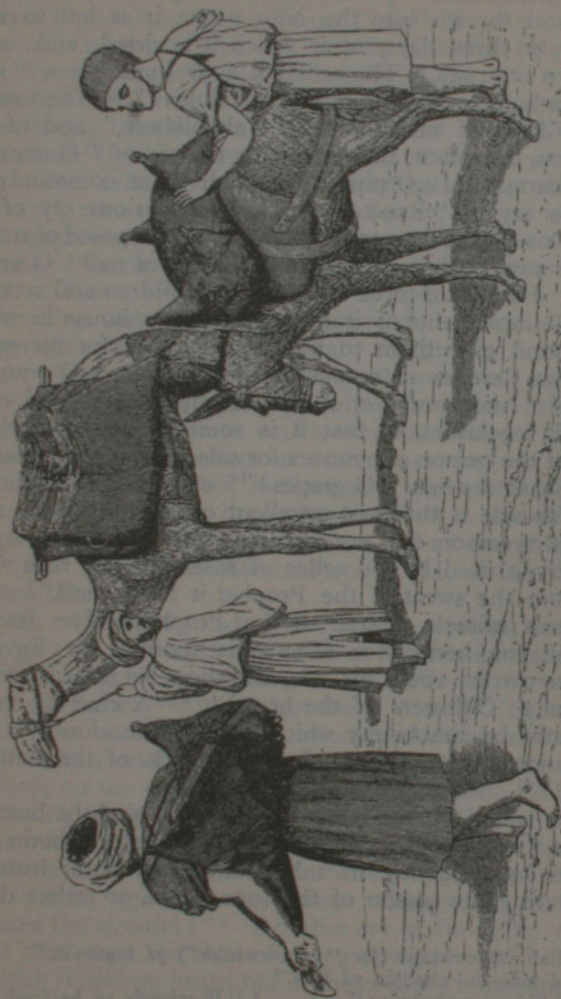
6 "Gemmeyz yá 'eneb."

7 "El-ward kán shók min 'arāk en-nebee fettaḥ."

8 "Rawáyeh (for "rawáeh") el-genneh yá temer ḥennà."

9 "Shughl et-tór yá benát."

the period of about four months after the opening of the canal which runs through the metropolis, the saḳḳàs draw their water



SAḲḲÀS.

from this canal: at other times they bring it from the river. It is conveyed in skins by camels and asses, and sometimes, when the distance is short, and the skin small, by the saḳḳà

himself. The water-skins of the camel (which are called "rei") are a pair of wide bags of ox-hide. The ass bears a goat's skin (called "ķirbeh"); so too does the saķķà, if he have no ass. The rei contain three or four ķirbehs. The general cry of the saķķà is, "O I may God compensate [me]!"<sup>1</sup> Whenever this cry is heard, it is known that a saķķà is passing. For a goat's skin of water, brought from the distance of a mile and a half, or two miles, he obtains scarcely more than a penny

There are also many saķķàs who supply passengers in the streets of the metropolis with water. One of this occupation is called "saķķà sharbeh:" his ķirbeh has a long brass spout, and he pours the water into a brass cup, or an earthen ķulleh, for any one who would drink.—There is a more numerous class who follow the same occupation, called "hemalees." These are mostly darweeshes, of the order of the Rifá'ees, or that of the Beiyoomes, and are exempt from the income-tax called firdeh. The hemalee carries, upon his back, a vessel (called "ibreeķ") of porous gray earth. This vessel cools the water. Sometimes the hemalee has an earthen ķulleh of water scented with "móyet zahr" (or orange-flower-water), prepared from the flowers of the "náring" (a bitter orange), for his best customers; and often a sprig of náring is stuck in the mouth of his ibreeķ. He also, generally, has a wallet hung by his side. From persons of the higher and middle orders he receives from one to five fađđahs for a draught of water; from the poor, either nothing, or a piece of bread or some other article of food, which he puts in his wallet. Many hemalees, and some saķķàs who carry the goat's skin, are found at the scenes of religious festivals, such



SAĶĶÀ SHARBEH.

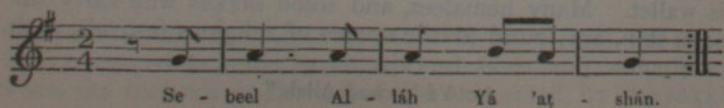
<sup>1</sup> "Yá 'owwađ Allah."

as the moolids of saints, &c., in Cairo and its neighbourhood. They are often paid, by visitors to the tomb of a saint on such occasions, to distribute the water which they carry to passengers; a cupful to whoever desires. This work of charity is called "tesbeel;" and is performed for the sake of the saint, and on other occasions than moolids. The water-carriers who are thus employed are generally allowed to fill their ibreeks or

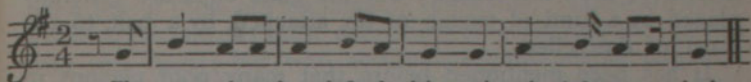


HEMALEES.

ķirbehs at a public fountain, as they demand nothing from the passengers whom they supply. When employed to distribute water to passengers in the streets, &c., they generally chant a short cry, inviting the thirsty to partake of the charity offered them in the name of God, most commonly in the words, and to the air, here following:—



and praying that paradise and pardon may be the lot of him who affords the charitable gift; thus—



El - gen - neh wa - l - magh - fi - reh lak, ya sha - heb es - se - beel.

There are numerous other persons who follow occupations similar to that of the *hemalee*. Among these are sellers of "er $\dot{k}$ -soos," or infusion of licorice, mentioned in a former chapter. The "er $\dot{k}$ -soosee" (or seller of this beverage) generally carries a red earthen jar of the liquid on his left side, partly supported by a strap and chain, and partly by his left arm: the mouth having some leaf (or fibres of the palm-tree) stuffed into it. He also carries two or more brass or china cups, which he knocks together.—In the same manner, many "sharbetlees" (or sellers of sherbet) carry about for sale "zebeeb" (or infusion of raisins). The sharbetlee commonly bears, in his left hand, the glass vessel of a "sheesh," filled with zebeeb; and a large tin or copper jug full of the same, and several glass cups,<sup>1</sup> in his right hand. Some sharbetlees carry, on the head, a round tinned copper tray, with a number of glass cups of "teen meblool," or "belah meblool," which are figs and dates steeped in water; and a copper vessel,<sup>2</sup> or a china bowl, of the same. Sa $\dot{h}$ lab (a thin jelly, made of water, wheat-starch, and sugar, boiled, with a little cinnamon or ginger sprinkled upon it, or made as a drink without starch,) is likewise carried about in the same manner; and "soobiya"<sup>3</sup> (which is a drink made of the pips of the 'abdalláwee melon, moistened and pounded, and steeped in water, which is then



"ERK-SOOSSEER.

<sup>1</sup> "Kullehs."

<sup>2</sup> "Sa $\dot{h}$ leh."

<sup>3</sup> Or "soobiyeh."



strained, and sweetened with sugar, or made with rice instead of the pips,) is also vended in a similar way, and carried in vessels like those used for zebeeb; but the glass cups are generally placed in a kind of trough of tin, attached, by a belt, to the waist of the seller.

It has been mentioned before, that many poor persons in Cairo gain their livelihood by going about to clean pipes. The



MUSSELLIKÁTEE.

pipe-cleaner ("musellikátee") carries a number of long wires for this purpose, in three or four hollow canes, or tubes of tin, which are bound together, and slung to his shoulder. A small leathern bag, full of tow, to wind round the top of the wire with which the pipe is cleaned, is attached to the canes or tin tubes. The musellikátee generally obtains no more than a "nuṣṣ<sup>1</sup> fadḍah" (or about a quarter of a farthing) for each pipe that he cleans.

<sup>1</sup> A corruption of "nuṣf."

A very great number of persons of both sexes among the lower orders in Cairo, and many in other towns of Egypt, obtain their subsistence by begging. As might be expected, not a few of these are abominable impostors. There are some whose appearance is most distressing to every humane person who sees them; but who accumulate considerable property. A case of this kind was made public here a few months ago. A blind felláh, who was led through the streets of the metropolis by a young girl, his daughter, both of whom were always nearly naked, was in the daily habit of bringing to his house a blind Turkish beggar, to sup with him. One evening, he was not at home; but his daughter was there, and had prepared the supper for his Turkish friend, who sat and ate alone; and, in doing this, happened to put his hand on one side, and felt a jar full of money, which, without scruple, he carried away with him. It contained the sum of a hundred and ten purses (then equivalent to rather more than five hundred and fifty guineas), in kheyreeyehs, or small coins of nine piasters each. The plundered beggar sought redress at the Citadel, and recovered his property, with the exception of forty kheyreeyehs, which the thief had spent; but was interdicted from begging in future.—Children are often seen in Cairo perfectly naked; and I have several times seen females from twelve to twenty years of age, and upwards, with only a narrow strip of rag round the loins, begging in the streets of this city. They suffer little from exposure of the bare person to the cold of winter, or the scorching sun of summer, being accustomed to it from infancy; and the men may, if they choose, sleep in some of the mosques. In other respects, also, their condition is not quite so bad as their appearance might lead a stranger to suppose. They are almost sure of obtaining either food or money sufficient for supplying the absolute wants of nature, in consequence of the charitable disposition of their countrymen, and the common habit which the tradespeople have of eating in their shops, and generally giving a morsel of their food to those who ask for it. There are many beggars who spend the greater part of the day's gains to indulge themselves at night with the intoxicating *hasheesh*, which, for a few hours, renders them, in imagination, the happiest of mankind.

The cries of the beggars of Cairo are generally appeals to God. Among the most common are—"O Exciter of compassion! O Lord!"<sup>1</sup>—"For the sake of God! O ye

<sup>1</sup> "Yá Mohánnin yá Rabb."

charitable!"<sup>1</sup>—"I am seeking from my Lord a cake of bread!"<sup>2</sup>—"O how bountiful Thou art! O Lord!"<sup>3</sup>—"I am the guest of God and the Prophet!"<sup>4</sup>—in the evening, "My supper must be thy gift! O Lord!"<sup>5</sup>—on the eve of Friday, "The night of the excellent Friday!"<sup>6</sup>—and on Friday, "The excellent day of Friday!"<sup>7</sup>—One who daily passed my door used to exclaim, "Place thy reliance upon God! There is none but God!"<sup>8</sup> and another, a woman, I now hear crying, "My supper must be thy gift! O Lord! from the hand of a bountiful believer, a testifier of the unity of God! O masters!"<sup>9</sup>—The answers which beggars generally receive (for they are so numerous that a person cannot give to all who ask of him) are, "God help thee!"<sup>10</sup>—"God will sustain!"<sup>11</sup>—"God give thee!"<sup>12</sup>—"God content, or enrich, thee!"<sup>13</sup>—They are not satisfied by any denial but one implied by these or similar answers. In the more frequented streets of Cairo, it is common to see a beggar asking for the price of a cake of bread, which he or she holds in the hand, followed by the seller of the bread. Some beggars, particularly darweeshes, go about chanting verses in praise of the Prophet; or beating cymbals, or a little kettle-drum. In the country, many darweeshes go from village to village begging alms. I have seen them on horseback; and one I lately saw thus mounted, and accompanied by two men bearing each a flag, and by a third beating a drum: this beggar on horseback was going from hut to hut asking for bread.

The most important of the occupations which employ the modern Egyptians, and that which (as before mentioned) engages all but a very small proportion of them, is agriculture.

The greater portion of the cultivable soil is fertilized by the natural annual inundation; but the fields in the vicinity of the river and of the large canals, and some others, in which pits are dug for water, are irrigated by means of machines of different kinds. The most common of these machines is the

<sup>1</sup> "Li-lláh yá moħsineen."

<sup>2</sup> "Anà ʔalib min 'and Rabbee ragheef 'eysh."

<sup>3</sup> "Yá ma-ntà (for "má entà") kereem yá Rabb."

<sup>4</sup> "Aná ɗeyf Alláh wa-n-nebee."

<sup>5</sup> "'Asháya 'aleyk yá Rabb."

<sup>6</sup> "Leylet el-gum'ah el-faɗeeleh."

<sup>7</sup> "Yóm el-gum'ah el-faɗeeleh."

<sup>8</sup> "Allah yesá'édak" (for "yusá'édak").

<sup>9</sup> "Allah yerzuk."

<sup>10</sup> "Allah yaɗteek" (for "yoɗteek").

<sup>11</sup> "Allah yeghneek" (for "yughneek").

"shádoof," which consists of two posts or pillars of wood, or of mud and canes or rushes, about five feet in height, and less



THE SHÁDOOF.

than three feet apart, with a horizontal piece of wood extending from top to top, to which is suspended a slender lever, formed of a branch of a tree, having at one end a weight chiefly

composed of mud, and at the other, suspended to two long palm-sticks, a vessel in the form of a bowl, made of basket-work, or of a hoop and a piece of woollen stuff or leather: with this vessel, the water is thrown up to the height of about eight feet, into a trough hollowed out for its reception. In the southern parts of Upper Egypt, four or five shádoofs are required, when the river is at the lowest, to raise the water to the level of the fields. There are many shádoofs with two levers, &c., which are worked by two men. The operation is extremely laborious.—Another machine much used for the same purpose, and almost the only one employed for the irrigation of gardens in Egypt, is the “sákiyeh.” This mainly consists of a vertical wheel, which raises the water in earthen pots attached to cords, and forming a continuous series; a second vertical wheel fixed to the same axis, with cogs; and a large, horizontal, cogged wheel, which, being turned by a pair of cows or bulls, or by a single beast, puts in motion the two former wheels and the pots. The construction of this machine is of a very rude kind; and its motion produces a disagreeable creaking noise.—There is a third machine, called “táboot,” used for the irrigation of lands in the northern parts of Egypt, where it is only requisite to raise the water a few feet. It somewhat resembles the “sákiyeh:” the chief difference is, that, instead of the wheel with pots, it has a large wheel with hollow jaunts, or fellies, in which the water is raised.—In the same parts of Egypt, and often to raise the water to the channel of the “táboot,” a vessel like that of the “shádoof,” with four cords attached to it, is also used. Two men, each holding two of the cords, throw up the water by means of this vessel, which is called “kaṭweh.”—In the process of artificial irrigation, the land is divided into small squares, by ridges of earth, or into furrows; and the water, flowing from the machine along a narrow gutter, is admitted into one square or furrow after another.

The “rei” lands (or those which are naturally inundated) are, with some exceptions, cultivated but once during the year. After the waters have retired, about the end of October or beginning of November, they are sown with wheat, barley, lentils, beans, lupins, chick-peas, &c. This is called the “shitawee” (or winter) season. But the “sharákee” lands (those which are too high to be subject to the natural inundation), and some parts of the rei, by artificial irrigation are made to produce three crops every year; though not *all* the sharákee lands

are thus cultivated. The lands artificially irrigated produce, first, their shitawee crops; being sown at the same period as the rei lands, generally with wheat or barley. Secondly, in what is called the "şeyfee," or, in the southern parts of Egypt, the "keydee," or "geydee" (that is, the summer), season, commencing about the vernal equinox, or a little later, they are sown with millet ("durah şeyfee"), or with indigo, or cotton, &c. Thirdly, in the "demeereh" season, or period of the rise of the Nile, commencing about, or soon after, the summer solstice, they are sown with millet again, or with maize ("durah shámeé"), &c., and thus crowned with a third harvest.—Sugar is cultivated throughout a large portion of Upper Egypt; and rice, in the low lands near the Mediterranean.

For the purpose of separating the grain of wheat, barley, &c., and cutting the straw, which serves as fodder, the Egyptians use a machine called "nórag," in the form of a chair, which moves upon small iron wheels, or thin circular plates, generally eleven, fixed to three thick axle-trees; four to the foremost, the same number to the hindmost, and three to the intermediate axle-tree. This machine is drawn, in a circle, by a pair of cows or bulls, over the corn. The plough, and the other implements which they use in husbandry, are of rude and simple kinds.

The navigation of the Nile employs a great number of the natives of Egypt. The boatmen of the Nile are mostly strong, muscular men. They undergo severe labour in rowing, poling, and towing; but are very cheerful; and often the most so when they are most occupied; for then they frequently amuse themselves by singing. In consequence of the continual changes which take place in the bed of the Nile, the most experienced pilot is liable frequently to run his vessel aground: on such an occurrence, it is often necessary for the crew to descend into the water, to shove off the boat with their backs and shoulders. On account of their being so liable to run aground, the boats of the Nile are generally made to draw rather more water at the head than at the stern; and hence the rudder is necessarily very wide. The better kind of boats used on the Nile, which are very numerous, are of a simple but elegant form; mostly between thirty and forty feet in length; with two masts, two large triangular sails, and a cabin, next the stern, generally about four feet high,<sup>1</sup> and occupying about a fourth, or a third,

<sup>1</sup> Of late, the cabins of the better kinds of boats have been made higher, to suit the requirements of European travellers.

of the length of the boat. In most of these boats, the cabin is divided into two or more apartments. Sudden whirlwinds and squalls being very frequent on the Nile, a boatman is usually employed to hold the main-sheet in his hand, that he may be able to let it fly at a moment's notice: the traveller should be especially careful with respect to this precaution, however light the wind.

## CHAPTER XV

### USE OF TOBACCO, COFFEE, HEMP, OPIUM, ETC.

THE interdiction of wine, and other fermented and intoxicating liquors, which is one of the most important laws in the code of El-Islám, has caused the greater number of the disciples of this faith to become immoderately addicted to other means of inducing slight intoxication, or different kinds of pleasurable excitement.

The most prevalent means, in most Muslim countries, of exciting what the Arabs term "keyf," which I cannot more nearly translate than by the term "placid enjoyment," is tobacco. It appears that tobacco was introduced into Turkey, Arabia, and other countries of the East, shortly before the beginning of the seventeenth century of the Christian era:<sup>1</sup> that is, not many years after it had begun to be regularly imported into Western Europe, as an article of commerce, from America. Its lawfulness to the Muslim has often been warmly disputed;<sup>2</sup> but is now generally allowed. In the character of the Turks and Arabs who have become addicted to its use, it has induced considerable changes, particularly rendering them more inactive than they were in earlier times; leading them to waste, over the pipe, many hours which might

<sup>1</sup> El-Is-hákee states that the custom of smoking tobacco began to be common in Egypt between the years of the Flight 1010 and 1012 (A. D. 1601 and 1603).

<sup>2</sup> El-Gabartee relates, that about a century ago, in the time of Mohámad Báshà El-Yedekshee (or Yedekchee), who governed Egypt in the years of the Flight 1156-8, it frequently happened that when a man was found with a pipe in his hand in Cairo, he was made to eat the bowl with its burning contents. This may seem incredible; but a pipe-bowl *may* be broken by strong teeth. The tobacco first used in the East was probably very strong.

be profitably employed: but it has had another and a better effect; that of superseding, in a great measure, the use of wine, which, to say the least, is very injurious to the health of the inhabitants of hot climates. In the tales of 'The Thousand and One Nights,' which were written before the introduction of tobacco into the East, and which we may confidently receive as presenting faithful pictures of the state of Arabian manners and customs at the period when they appeared, we have abundant evidence that wine was much more commonly and more openly drunk by Muslims of that time, or of the age immediately preceding, than it is by those of the present day. It may further be remarked, in the way of apology for the pipe, as employed by the Turks and Arabs, that the mild kinds of tobacco generally used by them have a very gentle effect; they calm the nervous system, and, instead of stupefying, sharpen the intellect. The pleasures of Eastern society are certainly much heightened by the pipe, and it affords the peasant a cheap and sober refreshment, and probably often restrains him from less innocent indulgences.

The cup of coffee, which, when it can be afforded, generally accompanies the pipe, is commonly regarded as an almost equal luxury, and doubtless conduced with tobacco to render the use of wine less common among the Arabs: its name, "kahweh," an old Arabic term for wine, strengthens this supposition. It is said that the discovery of the refreshing beverage afforded by the berry of the coffee-plant was made in the latter part of the seventh century of the Flight (or, of the thirteenth of the Christian era), by a certain devotee named the sheykh 'Omar, who, driven by persecution to a mountain of El-Yemen, with a few of his disciples, was induced, by the want of provisions, to make an experiment of the decoction of coffee-berries, as an article of food; the coffee-plant being there a spontaneous production. It was not, however, till about two centuries after this period that the use of coffee began to become common in El-Yemen. It was imported into Egypt between the years 900 and 910 of the Flight (towards the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century of our era, or about a century before the introduction of tobacco into the East), and was then drunk in the great mosque El-Azhar, by the faḳeers of El-Yemen and Mekkeh and El-Medeeneh, who found it very refreshing to them while engaged in their exercises of reciting prayers, and the praises of God, and freely indulged themselves with it. About half a century after,



it was introduced into Constantinople.<sup>1</sup> In Arabia, in Egypt, and in Constantinople, it was often the subject of sharp disputes among the pious and learned; many doctors asserting that it possessed intoxicating qualities, and was, therefore, an unlawful beverage to Muslims; while others contended that, among many other virtues, it had that of repelling sleep, which rendered it a powerful help to the pious in their nocturnal devotions: according to the fancy of the ruling power, its sale was therefore often prohibited and again legalized. It is now, and has been for many years, acknowledged as lawful by almost all the Muslims, and is immoderately used even by the Wahhábees, who are the most rigid in their condemnation of tobacco, and in their adherence to the precepts of the *Qur-án*, and the Traditions of the Prophet. Formerly, it was generally prepared from the berries and husks together; and it is still so prepared, or from the husks alone, by many persons in Arabia. In other countries of the East, it is prepared from the berries alone, freshly roasted and pounded.

Cairo contains above a thousand "*Ḳahwehs*,"<sup>2</sup> or coffee-shops. The *ḳahweh* is, generally speaking, a small apartment, whose front, which is towards the street, is of open wooden work, in the form of arches.<sup>3</sup> Along the front, except before the door, is (or was) a "*maṣṭabah*," or raised seat, of stone or brick, two or three feet in height, and about the same in width, which is covered with matting; and there are similar seats in the interior, on two or three sides. The coffee-shops are most frequented in the afternoon and evening; but by few except persons of the lower orders, and tradesmen. The exterior *maṣṭabah* is generally preferred. Each person brings with him his own tobacco and pipe. Coffee is served by the "*ḳahwegee*" (or attendant of the shop), at the price of five *faddahs* a cup, or ten for a little "*bekreg*" (or pot) of three or four cups.<sup>4</sup> The *ḳahwegee* also keeps two or three *nárgeelehs* or *sheeshehs*, and *gózehs*,<sup>5</sup> which latter are used for smoking both the *tumbák* (or Persian tobacco) and the *ḥasheesh* (or hemp); for *ḥasheesh* is sold at some coffee-shops.

<sup>1</sup> See De Sacy's '*Chrestomathie Arabe*,' vol. i pp. 412-483, 2nd ed.

<sup>2</sup> "*Ḳahweh*," being the name of the *beverage* sold at the coffee-shop, is hence applied to the shop itself.

<sup>3</sup> See an engraving accompanying Chapter XXI.

<sup>4</sup> A decoction of ginger, sweetened with sugar, is likewise often sold at the *Ḳahwehs*, particularly on the nights of festivals.

<sup>5</sup> These instruments have been described in a former chapter.

Musicians and story-tellers frequent some of the *kahwehs*; particularly on the evenings of religious festivals.

The leaves and capsules of hemp, called, in Egypt, "*hasheesh*," were employed in some countries of the East in very ancient times to induce an exhilarating intoxication. Herodotus (lib. iv. cap. 75) informs us that the Scythians had a custom of burning the seeds of this plant, in religious ceremonies, and that they became intoxicated with the fumes. Galen also mentions the intoxicating properties of hemp. The practice of chewing the leaves of this plant to induce intoxication prevailed, or existed, in India, in very early ages: thence it was introduced into Persia; and about six centuries ago (before the middle of the thirteenth century of our era) this pernicious and degrading custom was adopted in Egypt, but chiefly by persons of the lower orders; though several men eminent in literature and religion, and vast numbers of *faḳeers* (or poor devotees), yielded to its fascinations, and contended that it was lawful to the Muslim. The habit is now very common among the lower orders in the metropolis and other towns of Egypt. There are various modes of preparing it; and various names, as "*sheerā*,"<sup>1</sup> "*bast*," &c., are given to its different preparations. Most commonly, I am told, the young leaves are used alone, or mixed with tobacco, for smoking; and the capsules, without the seeds, pounded and mixed with several aromatic substances for an intoxicating conserve. Acids counteract its operation. The preparation of hemp used for smoking generally produces boisterous mirth. Few inhalations of its smoke, but the last very copious, are usually taken from the *gózeh*. After the emission of the last draught, from the mouth and nostrils, commonly a fit of coughing, and often a spitting of blood, ensues, in consequence of the lungs having been filled with the smoke. *Hasheesh* is to be obtained not only at some of the coffee-shops: there are shops of a smaller and more private description solely appropriated to the sale of this and other intoxicating preparations: they are called "*maḥsheshehs*." It is sometimes amusing to observe the ridiculous conduct, and to listen to the conversation, of the persons who frequent these shops. They are all of the lower orders. The term "*ḥashshásh*," which signifies "a smoker, or an eater, of hemp," is an appellation of obloquy: noisy and riotous people are often called "*ḥashshásheen*," which is the plural of that appellation, and the origin of our word "assassin;" a

<sup>1</sup> Or "*sheereh*."

name first applied to Arab warriors in Syria, in the time of the Crusades, who made use of intoxicating and soporific drugs in order to render their enemies insensible.<sup>1</sup>

The use of opium and other drugs to induce intoxication is not so common in Egypt as in many other countries of the East: the number of Egyptians addicted to this vice is certainly not nearly so great, in proportion to the whole population, as is the relative number of persons in our own country who indulge in habitual drunkenness. Opium is called, in Arabic, "afiyoon;" and the opium-eater, "afiyoonee." This latter appellation is a term of less obloquy than that of "hashsháhsh," because there are many persons of the middle and higher classes to whom it is applicable. In its crude state, opium is generally taken, by those who have not long been addicted to its use, in the dose of three or four grains, for the purpose above mentioned; but the "afiyoonee" increases the dose by degrees. The Egyptians make several conserves composed of hellebore, hemp, and opium, and several aromatic drugs, which are more commonly taken than the simple opium. A conserve of this nature is called "maagoon;" and the person who makes or sells it, "maagungee." The most common kind is called "barsh." There is one kind which, it is said, makes the person who takes it manifest his pleasure by singing; another which will make him chatter; a third which excites to dance; a fourth which particularly affects the vision, in a pleasurable manner; a fifth which is simply of a sedative nature. These are sold at the "mahshesheh."

The fermented and intoxicating liquor called "boozeh," or "boozah," which is drunk by many of the boatmen of the Nile, and by other persons of the lower orders in Egypt, has been mentioned in a former chapter. I have seen, in tombs at Thebes, many large jars containing the dregs of beer of this kind prepared from barley.

<sup>1</sup> See, on this subject, the close of Chapter XXII. A reviewer seems to have inferred from the remark above, that I took to myself the credit of discovering this derivation. A reference to the words "Assassin" and "De Sacy" in the Index would have shewn that this was not the case. I thought the observation of the illustrious De Sacy respecting this word to be too generally known to require my mentioning it in *two* places.

## CHAPTER XVI

## THE BATH

BATHING is one of the greatest luxuries enjoyed by the people of Egypt. The inhabitants of the villages of this country, and those persons who cannot afford the trifling expense incurred in the public bath, often bathe in the Nile. Girls and young women are not unfrequently seen thus indulging themselves in the warm weather, and generally without any covering; but mostly in unfrequented places. The rich, I have before mentioned, have baths in their own houses; but men who have this convenience often go to the public bath; and so too do the ladies, who, on many occasions, are invited to accompany thither their female friends.

There are, in Cairo, between sixty and seventy "Hammáms," or baths, to which the public have access for a small expense. Some of these are for men only; others, only for women and young children; and some for both sexes; for men during the forenoon, and in the afternoon for females. When the bath is appropriated to women, a napkin, or any piece of linen or drapery, is hung over the entrance, to warn the men from entering: all the male servants having gone out a short time before, and females having taken their places. The front of the bath is generally ornamented in a manner similar to that in which most of the mosques are decorated, but usually more fanciful, in red and white, and sometimes other colours, particularly over and about the entrance. The building consists of several apartments, all of which are paved with marble, chiefly white, with an intermixture, in some parts, of black marble, and small pieces of fine red tile, in the same manner as the *durká'ah* of a room in a private house, of which a sketch has been inserted in the introduction to this work. The inner apartments are covered with domes, which have a number of small, round, glazed apertures, for the admission of light. The materials chiefly employed in the construction of the walls and domes are bricks and plaster, which, after having been exposed to the steam that is produced in the bath when it is in use, are liable to crack and fall if the heat be intermitted even for a few days. A *sákiyeh* (or water-wheel), turned by a cow or bull, is

constructed upon a level with the higher parts of the building, to raise water from a well or tank for the supply of the boiler, &c.

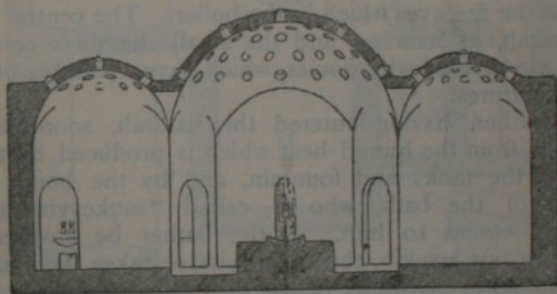
The bath is believed to be a favourite resort of ginn (or genii), and therefore when a person is about to enter it, he should offer up an ejaculatory prayer for protection against evil spirits, and should put his left foot first over the threshold. For the same reason, he should not pray nor recite the *Qur-án* in it.<sup>1</sup> On entering, if he have a watch, and a purse containing more than a trifling sum of money, he gives these in charge to the "m'allim" (or keeper of the bath), who locks them in a chest: his pipe, and sword (if he have one), he commits to a servant of the bath, who takes off his shoes, and supplies him with a pair of wooden clogs; the pavement being wet. The first apartment is called the "meslakh." It generally has two, three, or four "leewáns," similar to *maştabahs*, or considerably wider, cased with marble, and a fountain (called "faşkeeyeh") of cold water, which rises from an octagonal basement constructed of stone cased with marble, &c. (similar to that in the inner apartment represented in a section accompanying this description) in the centre. One of the leewáns, being designed for the accommodation of persons of the higher and middle orders, is furnished with mattresses and cushions: upon the other, or others, which are for the lower orders, there is usually no furniture except mats. In many baths there is also, in the meslakh, a small kind of stall, for coffee.

In warm weather, the bathers mostly prefer to undress in the meslakh: in winter, they undress in an inner, closed apartment, called the "beyt-owwal;" between which and the first apartment is a short passage, with two or three latrinæ on one side. "Beyt-owwal" signifies "first chamber;" and this name is given to the chamber here mentioned because it is the first of the warm apartments; but it is less warm than the principal apartment, of which it is the ante-chamber. In general, it has two *maştabahs*, one higher than the other, cased with marble like the pavement. The higher accommodates but one person; and is for the higher classes: the other is sufficiently large for two. When the former is occupied, and another high seat is wanted, two or three mattresses are placed one upon another on the lower *maştabah*, or on the leewán (or raised part of the floor). A *seggádeh* (or small prayer-carpet) is spread on the *maştabah* for a person of the higher orders. The bather

<sup>1</sup> The prohibition here mentioned, although imposed by several well-known traditions, is, like many others, often disregarded by the ignorant.

receives a napkin in which to put his clothes; and another to put round his waist: this reaches to the knees, or a little lower; and is termed "maḥzam:" a third, if he require it, is brought to him to wind round his head, in the manner of a turban, leaving the top of the head bare; a fourth to put over his chest, and a fifth to cover his back. It is generally a boy, or beardless young man, who attends the bather while he undresses, and while he puts on his maḥzam, &c.: he is called a "láwingee" (as the word is vulgarly pronounced), which is a corruption of "leewánee," or "attendant of the leewán."<sup>1</sup>

When the bather has undressed, and attired himself in the manner above described, the láwingee opens to him the door of the inner and principal apartment, which is called "ḥararah."<sup>2</sup>



SECTION OF THE ḤARÁRAH.

This, in general, has four low leewáns, like those of most rooms in private houses, which give it the form of a cross; and, in the centre, a "fasḳeeyh" (or fountain) of hot water, rising from a small shallow basin in the middle of a high octagonal seat, cased with white and black marble, and pieces of red tile. The ḥararah, together with several chambers connected with it, may generally be described as occupying almost an exact square. The beyt-owwal is at one of the angles. Two small chambers, which adjoin each other, and

<sup>1</sup> See the Plan (p. 347), of which the following is an explanation.—A, General entrance and vestibule. B, B, Meslakh. C, C, C, C, C, Leewáns. D, Station of the M'allim. E, Fasḳeeyh. F, Coffee-stall. G, G, Latrinæ. H, Beyt-owwal. I, I, Leewán. K, K, Maṣṭabáhs. L, L, Ḥararah. M, M, M, M, Leewáns. N, Fasḳeeyh. O, O, Two chambers, each containing a magḥṭas (or tank). P, P, Ḥanafeeyehs. Q, Place of the fire, over which is the boiler.

<sup>2</sup> For "beyt el-ḥararah."

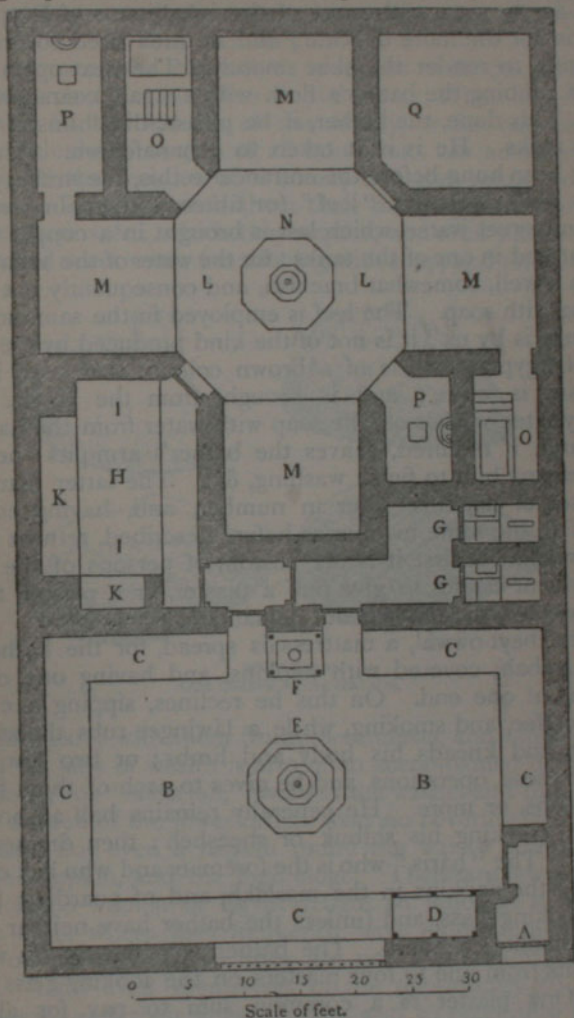
occupy a second angle of the square, contain, the one, a "maghtas," or tank, of warm water, to which there is an ascent of a few steps; the other, a "ḥanafeeyeh," consisting of two taps, projecting from the wall; one of hot, and one of cold water; with a small trough beneath, before which is a seat: the name of ḥanafeeyeh is commonly given, not merely to the taps above mentioned, but to the chamber which contains them. A third angle of the square is occupied by two other small chambers similar to those just described; one containing a second maghtas, of water not quite so warm as the former; the other, a second ḥanafeeyeh. Each maghtas is filled by a stream of water pouring down from the dome of the chamber. The fourth angle of the square is generally occupied by a chamber which has no communication with the ḥararah; and which contains the fire over which is the boiler. The central part of the ḥararah, its leewáns, and the small chambers connected with it, are covered with domes, which have a number of small, glazed apertures.

The bather, having entered the ḥararah, soon perspires profusely, from the humid heat which is produced by the hot water of the tanks and fountain, and by the boiler. The operator of the bath, who is called "mukeyyisátee," immediately comes to him. If the bather be covered with more than one napkin, the mukeyyisátee takes them off, and gives him a wet maḥzam; or the former maḥzam is retained, and wetted. The bather sits on the marble seat of the faškeeyeh, or lies upon a napkin on one of the leewáns, or by the edge of one of the tanks, to submit to the first operation, which is that of cracking his joints.<sup>1</sup> The operator cracks almost every joint of his frame: he wrings the body, first one way, and then the other, to make several of the vertebræ crack: even the neck is made to crack twice, by wrenching the head round, each way, which produces a sensation rather alarming to an inexperienced person; and each ear is generally twisted round until it cracks: the limbs are wrested with apparent violence; but with such skill, that an untoward accident in this operation is never heard of. The main object of this process is to render the joints supple. The mukeyyisátee also kneads the bather's flesh. After this, or previously, he rubs the soles of his feet with a kind of rasp,<sup>2</sup> of baked clay. There are two kinds of rasps used for this purpose: one is very porous and rough; and its rasping surface is scored with several lines: the

<sup>1</sup> This is called "ṭaḩṭaḩah."

<sup>2</sup> Called "ḥagar el-ḥammám."

other is of a fine close clay; and the surface with which the rubbing is performed is rendered rough artificially: both are of



PLAN OF A BATH.

a dark, blackish colour. Those which are used by ladies are generally encased (the lower, or rasping, surface of course



excepted) in thin, embossed silver. The rougher rasp is of indispensable utility to persons who do not wear stockings; which is the case with most of the inhabitants of Egypt: the other is for the more delicate; and is often used for rubbing the limbs, to render the skin smooth. The next operation is that of rubbing the bather's flesh with a small, coarse, woollen bag.<sup>1</sup> This done, the bather, if he please, dips himself in one of the tanks. He is next taken to a ḥanafeeyeh. A napkin having been hung before the entrance to this, the mukeyyisátee lathers the bather with "leef" (or fibres of the palm-tree) and soap and sweet water, which last is brought in a copper vessel, and warmed in one of the tanks; for the water of the ḥanafeeyeh is from a well, somewhat brackish, and consequently not fit for washing with soap. The leef is employed in the same manner as sponge is by us; it is not of the kind produced by the palm-trees of Egypt, which is of a brown colour: that used in the ḥammám is white; and is brought from the Ḥejáz. The mukeyyisátee washes off the soap with water from the ḥanafeeyeh; and, if required, shaves the bather's arm-pits: he then goes, leaving him to finish washing, &c. The latter then calls for a set of napkins,<sup>2</sup> four in number, and, having covered himself in the same manner as before described, returns to the beyt-owwal; but first it is the custom of persons of the more independent classes to give half a piaster, or a piaster, to the mukeyyisátee, though it is not demanded.

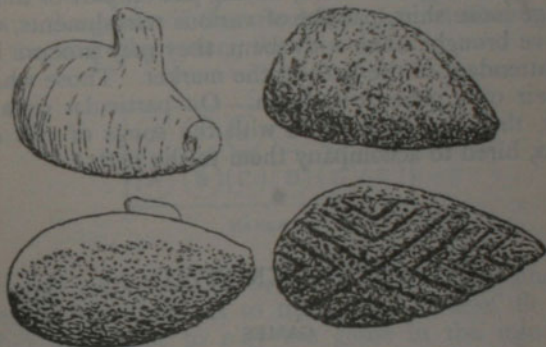
In the beyt-owwal, a mattress is spread, for the bather, on the maṣṭabah, covered with napkins, and having one or two cushions at one end. On this he reclines, sipping a cup or two of coffee, and smoking, while a láwingee rubs the soles of his feet, and kneads his body and limbs; or two láwingees perform these operations, and he gives to each of them five or ten faddahs, or more. He generally remains half an hour, or an hour, smoking his shibuk or sheesheh: then dresses, and goes out. The "ḥáris," who is the foreman, and who has charge of drying the napkins in the meslakh, and of guarding, brings him a looking-glass, and (unless the bather have neither beard nor mustaches) a comb. The bather asks him for his watch, &c.; puts from one to four piasters on the looking-glass; and goes. One piaster is a common sum to pay for all the operations above described.

<sup>1</sup> This operation is termed "tekyees;" and the bag, "kees el-ḥammám:" hence the operator is called "mukeyyisátee," or more properly, "mukeyyis."

<sup>2</sup> "Edeh."

Many persons go to the bath twice a week: others, once a week, or less frequently; but some are merely washed with soap and water, and then plunge into one of the tanks; for which, of course, they pay less.

The women who can afford to do so visit the *ḥammám* frequently; but not so often as the men. When the bath is not hired for the females of one family, or for one party of ladies, exclusively, women of all conditions are admitted. In general, all the females of a house, and the young boys, go together. They take with them their own *seggádehs*, and the napkins, basins, &c., which they require, and even the necessary quantity of sweet water for washing with soap, and for drinking;



FOOT-RASPS.  
One quarter of the real size.

and some carry with them fruits, sweetmeats, and other refreshments. A lady of wealth is also often accompanied by her own "belláneḥ," or "másh'tah,"<sup>1</sup> who is the washer and tire-woman. Many women of the lower orders wear no covering whatever in the bath; not even a napkin round the waist: others always wear the napkin, and the high clogs. There are few pleasures in which the women of Egypt delight so much as in the visit to the bath, where they frequently have entertainments; and often, on these occasions, they are not a little noisy in their mirth. They avail themselves of the opportunity to display their jewels and their finest clothes, and to enter into familiar conversation with those whom they meet there, whether friends or strangers. Sometimes a mother chooses a bride for her son

<sup>1</sup> Thus commonly pronounced for "máshiṭah."

from among the girls or women whom she chances to see in the bath. On many occasions, as, for instance, in the case of the preparations for a marriage, the bath is hired for a select party, consisting of the women of two or more families; and none else are admitted: but it is more common for a lady and a few friends and attendants to hire a "khilweh:" this is the name they give to the apartment of the *hanafeeyeh*. There is more confusion among a mixed company of various ranks; but where all are friends, the younger girls indulge in more mirth and frolic. They spend an hour or more under the hands of the *belláneh*, who rubs and washes them, plaits their hair, applies the depilatory,<sup>1</sup> &c. They then retire to the *beyt-owwal* or *meslakh*, and there, having put on part of their dress, or a large loose shirt, partake of various refreshments, which, if they have brought none with them, they may procure by sending an attendant of the bath to the market. Those who smoke take their own pipes with them. On particular occasions of festivity, they are entertained with the songs of two or more 'Ál'mehs, hired to accompany them to the bath.

## CHAPTER XVII.

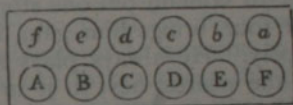
### GAMES

Most of the games of the Egyptians are of kinds which suit their sedate dispositions. They take great pleasure in chess (which they call "saṭreng"), draughts ("ḍámeh"), and trictrac or backgammon ("ṭawulah"). Their chess-men are of very simple forms; as the Muslim is forbidden, by his religion, to make an image of anything that has life. The Muslims of Egypt in general are, however, less scrupulous with regard to the prohibition of games of hazard: though some of them consider even chess and draughts as forbidden, games partly or wholly hazardous are very common among all ranks of this people: and scarcely less so is that of cards, which, being

<sup>1</sup> The depilatory called "noorah," which is often employed in the bath, being preferred to the resin more commonly used, is composed, as I am informed, of quick-lime with a small proportion (about an eighth part) of orpiment. It is made into a paste, with water, before application; and loosens the hair in about two minutes, when it is washed off.—See Russell's 'Aleppo,' vol. i. pp. 134, 378, 379, 2nd edition.

almost always played for money, or for some other stake, is particularly called, by way of distinction, "leḥ el-ḳumár,"<sup>1</sup> "the game of hazard, or of gain." Persons of the lower orders in the towns of Egypt are often seen playing at these and other games at the coffee-shops; but frequently for no greater stake than that of a few cups of coffee.

One of the games most common among the Egyptians is that of the "maṅḳalah."<sup>2</sup> Two persons play at this, with a board (or two boards joined by hinges) in which are twelve hemispherical holes, called "buyoot" (plural of "beyt"), in two equal rows; and with seventy-two small shells, of the kind called cowries; or as many pebbles: these, whether shells or pebbles, are termed the "ḥaṣà" (in the singular, "ḥaṣweh"). To explain the game of the maṅḳalah, I must distinguish the beyts of the board by letters, thus:—



MAṅḳALAH.

The beyts marked A, B, C, D, E, F, belong to one party; and the opposite six beyts to the other. One of the parties, when they are about to play the game in the most simple manner (for there are two modes of playing it), distributes all the ḥaṣà unequally into the beyts; generally putting at least four into each beyt. If they were distributed equally, there would be six in each beyt; but this is seldom done; for, in this case, he who plays first is sure to lose. The act of distributing the ḥaṣà is called "tebweez." When one party is dissatisfied with the other's distribution of the ḥaṣà, he may turn the board round; and then his adversary begins the game; which is not the case otherwise. Supposing the party to whom belong the beyts A, B, C, D, E, F, commences the game, he takes the ḥaṣà from beyt F, and distributes them to the beyts a, b, c, &c., one to each beyt; and if there be enough to put in each of his adversary's six beyts, and more remain in his hand, he proceeds in the same manner to distribute them to his own beyts, in the order A, B, C, &c.; and then,

<sup>1</sup> For "Ḳimár."

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced "maṅḳal'ah."

if he have still one or more remaining, to his adversary's beyts, as before, and so on.\* If the last beyt into which he has put a *haşweh* contain but one (having been empty before he put that in; for it may have been left empty at the first,) he ceases; and his adversary plays: but if it contain two or four, he takes its contents, with those of the beyt opposite; and if the last beyt contain two or four, and one or more of the preceding beyts also contain either of these numbers, no beyt with any other number intervening, he takes the contents of these preceding beyts also, with the contents of those opposite. If the last beyt into which he has put a *haşweh* contain (with this *haşweh*) three, or five, or more, he takes these out, and goes on distributing them in the same manner as before; for instance, if, in this case, the last beyt into which he has put a *haşweh* be D, he puts one from its contents into E, another into F, a third into *a*, and so on; and thus he continues, until making the last beyt to contain but one stops him, or making it to contain two or four brings him gain, and makes it his adversary's turn to play. He always plays from beyt F, or, if that be empty, from the nearest beyt to it in his own row containing one or more *haşwehs*. When one party has more than a single *haşweh* in one or more of his beyts, and the other has none, the former is obliged to put one of his into the first of his adversary's beyts. If only one *haşweh* remain on one side, and none on the other, that one is the property of the person on whose side it is. When the board is completely cleared, each party counts the number of the *haşà* he has taken; and the one who has most reckons the excess of his above his adversary's number as his gain. The gainer in one board begins to play the next board; his adversary having first distributed the *haşà*. When either party has made his successive gains amount to sixty, he has won the game.—In this manner, the game of the *mançalah* is played by young persons; and hence this mode of playing it is called "the game of the ignorant" ("leab el-ghasheem"): others generally play in a different manner, which is termed "the game of the wise, or intelligent" ("leab el-'âkil"), and which must now be described.

The *haşà* are distributed in one or more beyts on one side, and in the corresponding beyt or beyts on the other side; commonly in four beyts on each side, leaving the two extreme beyts of each side vacant: or they are distributed in any other conventional manner; as, for instance, about half into beyt A,

and the remainder in beyt *a*. The person who distributes the *ḥaṣà* does not count how many he places in a beyt; and it is at his option whether he places them only in one beyt on each side, or in all the beyts. Should the other person object to his distribution, he may turn the board round; but in that case he forfeits his right of playing first. The person who plays first may begin from any one of his beyts; judging by his eye which will bring him the best fortune. He proceeds in the same manner as before described; putting one *ḥaṣweh* in each beyt; and taking in the same cases as in the former mode; and then the other plays. After the first gain, he counts the *ḥaṣà* in each of his beyts; and plays from that which will bring him the greatest advantage. One of the parties may stop the other to count the *ḥaṣà* which he takes out of a beyt to distribute, in order to insure his distributing them correctly. The gain of one party after finishing one board is counted, as in the former mode, by the excess of the number he has taken above the number acquired by the other; and the first who makes his successive gains to amount to sixty wins the game.—This game is of use in practising the players in calculation.

It is very commonly played at the coffee-shops; and the players generally agree, though it is unlawful to do so, that the loser shall pay for the coffee drunk by himself and his adversary and the spectators, or for a certain number of cups.

Another game very general among the lower classes in Egypt is called "*ṭáb*." In other countries of the East this is called "*ṭáb wadukk*;" but I never hear this name given to it in Egypt. In this country it is played in the following manner:—Four small pieces of stick, of a flat form, about a span (or eight inches) in length, and two-thirds of an inch in breadth, are first prepared: they are generally formed of a piece of palm-branch; one side of which, being cut flat and smooth, is white; the other, green, or, if not fresh, of a dull yellow colour; the former side is commonly called white, and the other, black. These are called the "*ṭáb*." Next, it is necessary to be provided with a "*seegà*." This is a board, divided into four rows of squares, called "*beyts*" or "*dárs*," each about two inches wide; or it consists of similar rows of holes made in the ground, or in a flat stone: the beyts are usually seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, or fifteen, in each row. To shew the mode of playing the game, I shall here represent a *seegà* of nine beyts in each row; and distinguish the beyts by letters. In each beyt of one exterior row is usually placed

a little piece of stone, or dingy brick, about the size of a walnut; and in each beyt of the other exterior row, a piece of

<i>i</i>	<i>h</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>a</i>
<i>k</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>q</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>s</i>
S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I

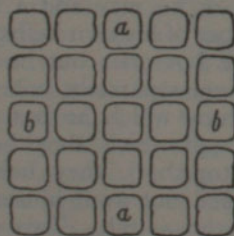
red brick or tile. Or, sometimes, pieces are placed only in a certain number of beyts in those rows; as, for instance, in the first four. The pieces of one row must be distinguished from those in the other. They are called "kiláb" (or dogs); in the singular, "kelb." The game is generally played by two persons. The four little sticks are thrown, all together, against a stick thrust into the ground or held in the hand with one end resting on the ground, or against a wall, or against a stick inclined against a wall. If they fall so that one only has its white side upwards, the player is said to have thrown, or brought, "táb" (plural "teeb"), or a "weled" (or child, plural "wilád"), and counts one: if there be two white, and the other two black, he counts two ("itneyn"): if there be three white, and one black, he counts three ("teláteh"): if all four be white, four ("arba'ah"): if all four black, six ("sittah"). When one throws táb, or four, or six, he throws again; but when he has thrown two, or three, it is then the turn of the other. To one of the players belongs the row of beyts A, B, C, &c.: to the other, that of *a*, *b*, *c*, &c. They first throw alternately until one has thrown táb; and he who has done this then throws again until he has brought two, or three. Supposing him, at the beginning of the game, to have thrown táb and four and two, he removes the kelb from beyt I, and places it in the seventh beyt from I, which is Q. He must always commence with the kelb in beyt I. The other party, in like manner, commences from beyt *i*. Neither party can remove a kelb from its original place but by throwing táb before each such removal. The kelbs before removal from their original places are called "Naşárà" (or Christians, in the singular, "Naşránee"); and after removal, when they are privileged to commence the contest, "Muslimeen" (or

"Muslims"): when a person has made a kelb a Muslim, it is said of him "sellem kelb;" and of the kelb, "aslam." Each time that a player throws *ṭáb*, he generally makes a kelb Muslim, until he has made them all so, and thus prepared them to circulate in the beyts. Each player may have two or more kelbs in circulation at the same time. Let us suppose (to make the description more simple) that the person to whom belongs the row of beyts A, B, C, &c., is circulating a single kelb: he moves it through the two middle rows of beyts in the order of the letters by which I have distinguished them, from K to S, and from *k* to *s*; and may then either repeat the same round or enter his adversary's row, as long as there is any kelb remaining in that row; but in the latter case, he does not continue to circulate the same kelb, except in circumstances which will be mentioned hereafter. Whenever a throw, or any of two or more throws, which the player has made enables him to move his kelb into a beyt occupied by one of his opponent's kelbs, he takes the latter. For instance, if one party has a kelb in the beyt *m*, and the other has one in *o*, and another in *s*, and the former has thrown *ṭáb* (or one), and then four, and then two, he may take the kelb in *o* by the throw of two; then, by the throw of four, take that in *s*; and, by the throw of *ṭáb*, pass into *o*, and take a third kelb if it contain one. A player may, by means of a suitable throw, or two or more throws, move one of his kelbs into a beyt occupied by another of his own; and these two together, in like manner, he may add to a third, or he may add a third to them: thus he may unite any number of his own kelbs, and circulate them together, as if they were but one; but he cannot divide them again, and play with them separately, unless he throw *ṭáb*. If he avail himself of a throw which he has made to bring them back into a row through which they have already passed (either separately or together), they become reduced to a single kelb: but he need not avail himself of such a throw: he may wait until he throws *ṭáb*. Two or more kelbs thus united are called an "'eggeh." The object of so uniting them is to place them as soon as possible in a situation of safety; as will be seen by what immediately follows. If either party pass one of his kelbs into his adversary's row, he may leave it there in safety as long as he does not want to continue to play with it, because the latter cannot bring back a kelb into his own row. The former, however, cannot continue to circulate the kelb which has entered that row until he has no kelb remaining



in his own row; or unless he have only an 'eggeh in his row, and does not throw *ṭáb*, which alone enables him to divide the 'eggeh. In circulating through his adversary's beyts, he proceeds in the order of the letters by which I have marked them. He cannot pass the same kelb again into his adversary's row: after it has passed through that row, he circulates it through the two middle rows only, in the same manner as at first.— This game is often played by four or more persons; and without the *seegà*. When one person throws four, he is called the *Sulṭán*. He holds a *maḵra'ah*,<sup>1</sup> which is a piece of the thick end of a palm-stick, with two or three splits made in the thicker part of it. When a player throws six, he is called the *Wezeer*, and holds the stick against which the *ṭáb* are thrown. Whenever a person throws two, the *Sulṭán* gives him a blow, or two or more blows (as many as the *Wezeer* may order), on the sole of his foot, or the soles of both feet, with the *maḵra'ah*. When a player throws twice six, he is both *Sulṭán* and *Wezeer*.

Many of the *felláḥeen* of Egypt also frequently amuse themselves with a game called that of the "*seegà*," which may be described in a few words. The *seegà* employed in this game is different from that of the *ṭáb*: it consists of a number of holes, generally made in the ground; most commonly, of five rows of five holes in each, or seven rows of seven in each, or nine rows of nine in each: the first kind is called the "*khamsáwee seegà*;" the second, the "*seb'áwee*;" and the third, the "*tis'áwee*." A *khamsáwee seegà* is here represented.



SEEGÀ.

The holes are called "*'oyoon*" (or eyes, in the singular "*'eyn*"). In this *seegà*, they are twenty-five in number. The players have each twelve "*kelbs*," similar to those used in the game of the *ṭáb*.<sup>2</sup> One of them places two of his *kelbs* in the '*eyns*

<sup>1</sup> Thus commonly pronounced, for "*miḵra'ah*."

<sup>2</sup> The larger *seegàs*, in like manner, require a sufficient number of *kelbs* to occupy all the '*eyns* except one.

marked *a*, *a* : the other puts two of his in those marked *b*, *b* : they then alternately place two kelbs in any of the 'eyns that they may choose, except the central 'eyn of the seegà. All the 'eyns but the central one being thus occupied (most of the kelbs placed at random), the game is commenced. The party who begins moves one of his kelbs from a contiguous 'eyn into the central. The other party, if the 'eyn now made vacant be not next to any one of those occupied by his kelbs, desires his adversary to give him, or open to him, a way ; and the latter must do so, by removing, and thus losing, one of his own kelbs. This is also done on subsequent occasions, when required by similar circumstances. The aim of each party, after the first disposal of the kelbs, is to place any one of his kelbs in such a situation that there shall be, between it and another of his, one of his adversary's kelbs. This, by so doing, he takes ; and as long as he can immediately make another capture by such means, he does so, without allowing his adversary to move.—These are the only rules of the game. It will be remarked that, though most of the kelbs are placed at random, foresight is requisite in the disposal of the remainder.—Several seegàs have been cut upon the stones on the summit of the Great Pyramid, by Arabs who have served as guides to travellers.

Gymnastic games, or such diversions as require much bodily exertion, are very uncommon among the Egyptians, who are, however, generally remarkable for bodily strength : the boatmen, for instance, undergo very severe labour in rowing and towing, and the porters carry burdens of almost incredible weight. Sometimes two peasants contend with each other, for mere amusement, or for a trifling wager or reward, with "nebbots," which are thick staves, five or six feet long : the object of each is to strike his adversary on the head. The nebbot is a formidable weapon, and is often seen in the hand of an Egyptian peasant : he usually carries it when on a journey ; particularly when he travels by night ; which, however, is seldom the case. Wrestling-matches are also sometimes witnessed in Egypt : the combatants (who are called "muşàre'-een," in the singular "muşàre'") strip themselves of all their clothing except their drawers, and generally oil their bodies ; but their exercises are not remarkable, and are seldom performed but for remuneration, on the occasions of festivals, processions, &c. On such occasions, too, mock combats between two men, usually clad only in their drawers, and each armed with a sabre and a small shield, are not unfrequently witnessed : neither

attempts to wound his adversary : every blow is received on the shield.

The game of the "gereed," as played by the Memlooks and Turkish soldiers, has often been described ; but the manner in which it is practised by many of the peasants of Upper Egypt is much more worthy of description. It is often played by the latter on the occasion of the marriage of a person of influence, such as the Sheykh of a tribe or village ; or on that of a circumcision ; or when a votive calf or ox or bull, which has been let loose to pasture where it will, by common consent, is about to be sacrificed at the tomb of a saint, and a public feast made with its meat. The combatants usually consist of two parties, of different villages, or of different tribes or branches of a tribe ; each party being about twelve or twenty or more in number ; and each person mounted on a horse or mare. The two parties station themselves about five hundred feet or more apart. A person from one party gallops towards the other party, and challenges them : one of the latter, taking, in his left hand, four, five, six, or more gereeds, each six feet, or an inch or two more or less, in length, but generally equal in length to the height of a tall man, and very heavy (being the lower part of the palm-stick, freshly cut, and full of sap) pursues the challenger at full gallop : he approaches him as near as possible ; often within arm's length ; and throws, at his head or back, one gereed after another, until he has none left. The gereed is blunt at both ends. It is thrown with the small end foremost ; and with uplifted arm ; and sometimes inflicts terrible, and even fatal, wounds.<sup>1</sup> The person against whom the gereeds are thrown endeavours to catch them, or to ward them off with his arm or with a sheathed sword ; or he escapes them by the superior speed of his horse. Having sustained the attack, and arrived at the station of his party, he tries his skill against the person by whom he has been pursued, in the same manner as the latter did against him.—This sport, which reminds us of the tournaments of old, and which was a game of the early Bedaweese, continues for several hours. It is common only among those tribes who have not been many years, or not

<sup>1</sup> During my last residence at Thebes, a fine athletic man, the best gereed-player of the place, whom I had taken into my service as a nightly guard, received a very severe wound at this game ; and I had some difficulty to effect a cure : he was delirious for many hours in consequence of it, and had nearly lost his life. The gereed struck him a little before his ear, and penetrated downwards into his neck.

more than a few centuries, settled on the banks of the Nile ; and who have consequently retained many Bedawee customs and habits. About the close of the period of my former visit to this country, three men and a mare were killed at this game within an hour, in the western plain of Thebes. It is seldom, however, that a man loses his life in this exercise : at least, of late, I have heard of no such occurrence taking place.— In Lower Egypt, a gereed only half the length of those above described, or little more, is used in playing this game.

Other exercises, which are less frequently performed, and only at festivals for the amusement of the spectators, will be described in subsequent pages.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MUSIC

THE Egyptians in general are excessively fond of music ; and yet they regard the study of this fascinating art (like dancing) as unworthy to employ any portion of the time of a man of sense ; and as exercising too powerful an effect upon the passions, and leading a man into gaiety and dissipation and vice. Hence it was condemned by the Prophet : but it is used, notwithstanding, even in religious ceremonies ; especially by the darweeshes. The Egyptians have very few books on music ; and these are not understood by their modern musicians. The natural liking of the Egyptians for music is shewn by their habit of regulating their motions, and relieving the dulness of their occupations, in various labours, by songs or chants. Thus do the boatmen, in rowing, &c. ; the peasants in raising water ; the porters in carrying heavy weights with poles ; men, boys, and girls, in assisting builders, by bringing bricks, stones, and mortar, and removing rubbish : so also, the sawyers, reapers, and many other labourers. Though the music of the Egyptians is of a style very difficult for foreigners to acquire or imitate, the children very easily and early attain it. The practice of chanting the *Ḳur-án*, which is taught in all their schools, contributes to increase their natural fondness for music.

How science was cherished by the Arabs when all the nations of Europe were involved in the grossest ignorance,

and how much the former profited by the works of ancient Greek writers, is well known. It appears that they formed the system of music which has prevailed among them for many centuries partly from Greek, and partly from Persian and Indian, treatises. From the Greek language are derived the most general Arabic term for music, namely, "mooseekà," and the names of some of the Arab musical instruments; but most of the technical terms used by the Arab musicians are borrowed from the Persian and Indian languages. There is a striking degree of similarity between many of the airs which I have heard in Egypt and some of the popular molodies of Spain;<sup>1</sup> and it is not surprising that this is the case: for music was much cultivated among the Arabs of Spain; and the library of the Escorial contains many Arabic treatises on this art.

The most remarkable peculiarity in the Arab system of music is the division of tones into thirds. Hence I have heard Egyptian musicians urge against the European systems of music that they are deficient in the number of sounds. These small and delicate gradations of sound give a peculiar softness to the performances of the Arab musicians, which are generally of a plaintive character: but they are difficult to discriminate with exactness, and are therefore seldom observed in the vocal and instrumental music of those persons who have not made a regular study of the art. Most of the popular airs of the Egyptians, though of a similar character, in most respects, to the music of their professional performers, are very simple; consisting of only a few notes, which serve for every one or two lines of a song, and which are therefore repeated many times. I must confess that I generally take great delight in the more refined kind of music which I occasionally hear in Egypt; and the more I become habituated to the style, the more I am pleased with it; though, at the same time, I must state that I have not met with many Europeans who enjoy it in the same degree as myself. The natives of Egypt are generally enraptured with the performances of their vocal and instrumental musicians: they applaud with frequent exclamations of "Alláh!"<sup>2</sup> and "God approve thee!" "God preserve thy voice!" and similar expressions.

<sup>1</sup> This is most remarkable in the more refined Egyptian music; but it is also observable in the airs of some common ballads and chants.

<sup>2</sup> Often, in such cases, pronounced in an unusually broad manner, and the last syllable drawled out, thus—"Allauh!"

The male professional musicians are called "Áláteeyeh;" in the singular, "Álátee," which properly signifies "a player upon an instrument;" but they are generally both instrumental and vocal performers. They are people of very dissolute habits; and are regarded as scarcely less disreputable characters than the public dancers. They are, however, hired at most grand entertainments, to amuse the company; and on these occasions they are usually supplied with brandy, or other spirituous liquors, which they sometimes drink until they can no longer sing, nor strike a chord. The sum commonly paid to each of them for one night's performance is equal to about two or three shillings; but they often receive considerably more. The guests generally contribute the sum.

There are also female professional singers. These are called "'Awálim;" in the singular, "'Ál'meh," or "'Álimeh;" an appellation, as an Arabic word, literally signifying "a learned female;" but, as applied to these female singers, evidently, I think, derived from the Hebrew or Phœnician word "'almáh," signifying "a girl" and "a virgin," and particularly "a singing girl." "'Al-'alámóth sheer" (the title of Psalm xlv.) and "nebálim 'al-'alámóth (in 1 Chron. xv. 20) should, I doubt not, be rendered, "A song," and "harps" or the like, "adapted to 'almáhs," that is, "singing girls." And as Jerome says that "alma" in the Punic language signified "a virgin," it seems to be probable that, in old times, the most celebrated of the singing-girls in Egypt were Phœnicians. The 'Awálim are often hired on the occasion of a fête in the harem of a person of wealth. There is generally a small, elevated apartment, called a "tukeyseh," or "mughannà," adjoining the principal saloon of the harem, from which it is separated only by a screen of wooden lattice-work; or there is some other convenient place in which the female singers may be concealed from the sight of the master of the house, should he be present with his women. But when there is a party of male guests, they generally sit in the court, or in a lower apartment, to hear the songs of the 'Awálim, who, in this case, usually sit at a window of the harem, concealed by the lattice-work. Some of them are also instrumental performers. I have heard the most celebrated 'Awálim in Cairo, and have been more charmed with their songs than with the best performances of the Áláteeyeh, and more so, I think I may truly add, than with any other music that I have ever enjoyed. They are often very highly paid. I have known instances of sums equal to more

than fifty guineas being collected for a single 'Al'meh from the guests at an entertainment in the house of a merchant, where none of the contributors were persons of much wealth. So powerful is the effect of the singing of a very accomplished 'Al'meh, that her audience, in the height of their excitement, often lavish upon her sums which they can ill afford to lose. There are, among the 'Awálim in Cairo, a few who are not altogether unworthy of the appellation of "learned females;" having some literary accomplishments. There are also many of an inferior class, who sometimes dance in the hareem: hence, travellers have often misapplied the name of "almé," meaning "'al'meh," to the common dancing-girls, of whom an account will be given in another chapter of this work; or they may have done so because these girls themselves occasionally assume this appellation, and generally do so when (as has been often the case) the exercise of their art is prohibited by the government.

The Egyptians have a great variety of musical instruments. Those which are generally used at private concerts are the "kemengeh," "kánoon," "'ood," and "náy."

The "kemengeh"<sup>1</sup> is a kind of viol. Its name, which is Persian, and more properly written "kemáneh," signifies "a bow-instrument." This instrument, and all the others of which I insert engravings, I have drawn with the camera-lucida. The total length of the kemengeh which is here represented is thirty-eight inches. The sounding-body<sup>2</sup> is a cocoa-nut, of which about a fourth has been cut off. It is pierced with many small holes. Over the front of it is strained a piece of the skin of a fish of the genus "silurus," called "bayád;" and upon this rests the bridge.<sup>3</sup> The neck<sup>4</sup> is of ebony inlaid with ivory; and of a cylindrical form. At the bottom of it is a piece of ivory; and the head,<sup>5</sup> in which the pegs are inserted, is also of ivory. The pegs<sup>6</sup> are of beech; and their heads, of ivory. The foot<sup>7</sup> is of iron: it passes through the sounding-body, and is inserted into the neck, to the depth of four or five inches. Each of the two chords consists of about sixty horse-hairs: at

<sup>1</sup> A friend (a native of Egypt) has observed to me, since the first edition of this work was printed, that "rabáb" would be a more proper term for this instrument, being the general Arabic name for a viol; but I never heard it called in Egypt by any other name than "kemengeh." It is also thus called in Syria.

<sup>2</sup> Called "hokkah."

<sup>4</sup> "Sá'ed," or "arm."

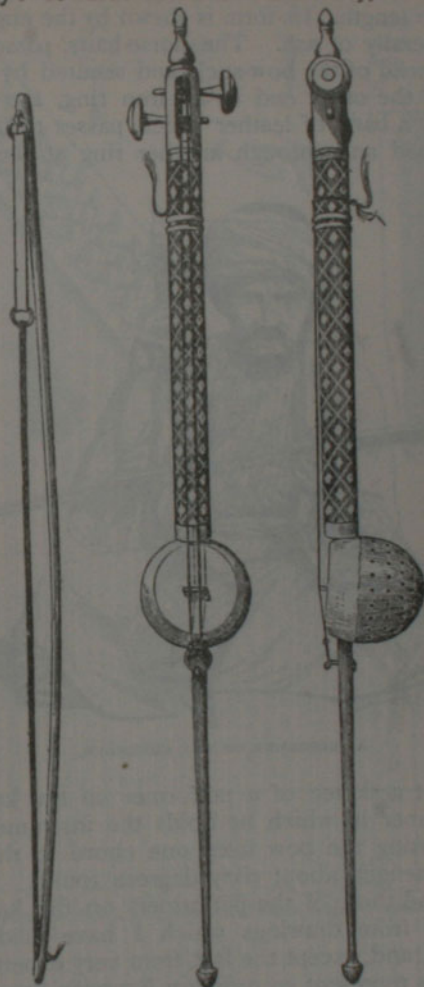
<sup>6</sup> "Meláwee;" singular, "melwà."

<sup>3</sup> "Ghazál."

<sup>5</sup> "Khazneh."

<sup>7</sup> "Seekh."

the lower end, they are attached to an iron ring, just below the sounding-body: towards the other extremity, each is length-



KEMENGER.

ened with a piece of lamb's gut,<sup>1</sup> by which it is attached to its peg. Over the chords, a little below their junction with the

<sup>1</sup> "Weter."



gut-strings, a double band of leather<sup>1</sup> is tied, passing round the neck of the instrument. The bow<sup>2</sup> is thirty-four inches and a half in length. Its form is shewn by the engraving. The stick is generally of ash. The horse-hairs, passed through a hole at the head of the bow-stick and secured by a knot, and attached at the other end to an iron ring, are tightened or slackened by a band of leather which passes through the ring just mentioned and through another ring at the foot of the

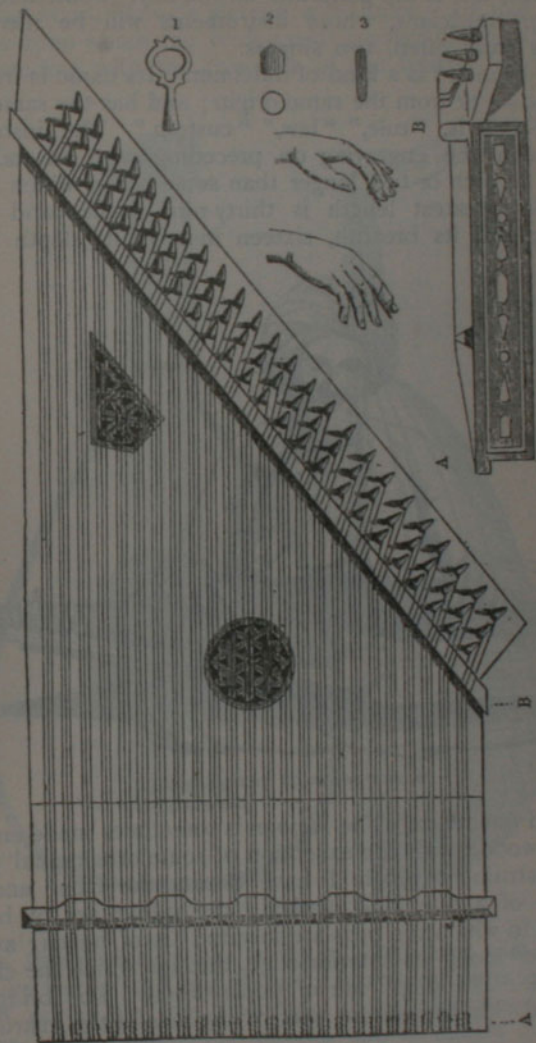


A PERFORMER ON THE KEMENGEH.

bow. I insert a sketch of a performer on the kemengeh, to shew the manner in which he holds the instrument and the bow. In passing the bow from one chord to the other, he turns the kemengeh about sixty degrees round. The sketch introduced, and those of the performers on the *ḵánoon*, 'ood, and *náy*, are from drawings which I have made with the camera-lucida, and, except the last, from very expert musicians. Together, they represent an ordinary Egyptian band, such as is generally seen at a private entertainment. The performer on the kemengeh usually sits on the right hand of him who performs on the *ḵánoon*, or opposite (that is, facing,) the latter,

<sup>1</sup> "Ribát."

<sup>2</sup> "Ḳós."



KANOON.  
 No. 1 is the key ; 2, the ring, or thimble ; 3, the plectrum.

on the left hand of whom sits the performer on the 'ood ; and next to this last is the performer on the náy. Sometimes there are other musicians, whose instruments will be mentioned hereafter ; and often, two singers.

The "kánoon" is a kind of dulcimer. Its name is from the Greek *κανών*, or from the same origin ; and has the same signification ; that is, "rule," "law," "custom." The instrument from which the engraving on preceding page was taken is, perhaps, an inch or two longer than some others which I have seen. Its greatest length is thirty-nine inches and three-quarters ; and its breadth, sixteen inches : its depth is two



A PERFORMER ON THE KÁNŌON.

inches and one-tenth. The kánoon is sometimes made entirely of walnut-wood,<sup>1</sup> with the exception of some ornamental parts. In the instrument which I have drawn, the face<sup>2</sup> and the back<sup>3</sup> are of a fine kind of deal : the sides<sup>4</sup> are of beech. The piece in which the pegs are inserted<sup>5</sup> is of beech ; and so is the ridge<sup>6</sup> along its interior edge, through which the chords are passed. The pegs<sup>7</sup> are of poplar-wood. The bridge<sup>8</sup> is of fine deal. In the central part of the face of the instrument

<sup>1</sup> "Góz."

<sup>4</sup> "Soor," or "wall."

<sup>7</sup> "Meláwee."

<sup>2</sup> "Wishsh," for "weg-h."

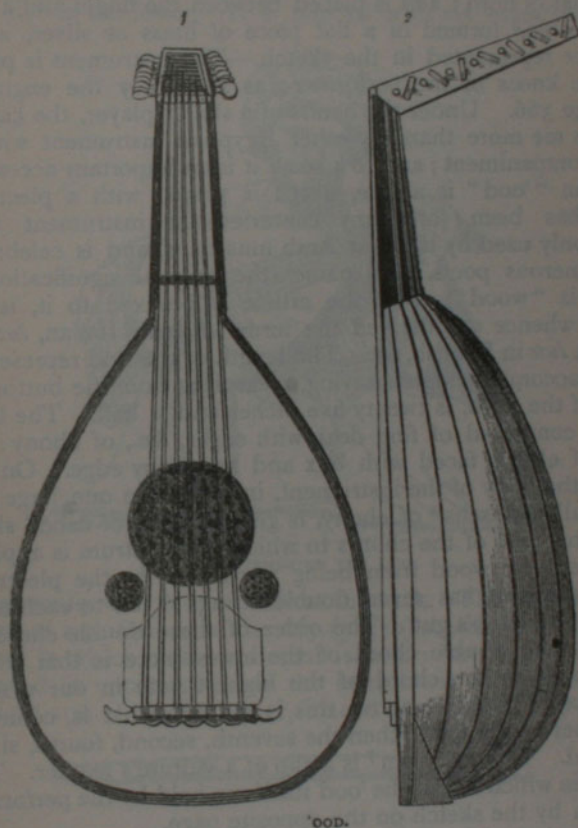
<sup>5</sup> "Mistarah."

<sup>8</sup> "Faras," or "mare."

<sup>3</sup> "Dahr."

<sup>6</sup> "Enf," or "nose."

is a circular piece of wood<sup>1</sup> of a reddish colour, pierced with holes; and towards the acute angle of the face is another piece of similar wood, likewise pierced with holes. In that part of the face upon which the bridge rests are five oblong apertures, corresponding with the five feet of the bridge. A piece of



'ood.

fishes' skin,<sup>2</sup> nine inches wide, is glued over this part; and the five feet of the bridge rest upon those parts of the skin which cover the five apertures above mentioned; slightly depressing the skin. The chords<sup>3</sup> are of lamb's gut. There

<sup>1</sup> "Shemseh," or "a sun."

<sup>2</sup> "Raḳmeh."

<sup>3</sup> "Owtár;" in the singular, "weter."

are three chords to each note; and, altogether, twenty-four treble-chords. The shortest side<sup>1</sup> of the instrument is veneered with walnut-wood, inlaid with mother-of-pearl. The instrument is played with two plectra<sup>2</sup>; one plectrum attached to the forefinger of each hand. Each plectrum is a small, thin piece of buffalo's horn; and is placed between the finger and a ring, or thimble,<sup>3</sup> formed of a flat piece of brass or silver, in the manner represented in the sketch.—The instrument is placed on the knees of the performer; as shewn by the engraving on page 366. Under the hands of a skilful player, the *kánoon* pleases me more than any other Egyptian instrument without an accompaniment; and to a band it is an important accession.

"The "'ood" is a lute, which is played with a plectrum. This has been for many centuries the instrument most commonly used by the best Arab musicians, and is celebrated by numerous poets. Its name (the original signification of which is "wood"), with the article *el* prefixed to it, is the source whence are derived the terms *liuto* in Italian, *luth* in French, *lute* in English, &c. The length of the 'ood represented by the accompanying engraving, measuring from the button, or angle of the neck, is twenty-five inches and a half. The body of it is composed of fine deal, with edges, &c., of ebony: the neck, of ebony, faced with box and an ebony edge. On the face of the body of the instrument, in which are one large and two small shemsehs<sup>4</sup> of ebony, is glued a piece of fishes' skin,<sup>5</sup> under that part of the chords to which the plectrum is applied, to prevent the wood from being worn away by the plectrum. The instrument has seven double strings;<sup>6</sup> two to each note. They are of lamb's gut. The order of these double chords is singular: the double chord of the lowest note is that which corresponds to the chord of the highest note in our violins, &c.: next in the scale above this is the fifth (that is, counting the former as the first): then the seventh, second, fourth, sixth, and third. The plectrum<sup>7</sup> is a slip of a vulture's feather. The manner in which it and the 'ood itself are held by the performer is shewn by the sketch on the opposite page.

The "*náy*," which is the fourth and last of the instruments which I have mentioned as most commonly used at private concerts, is a kind of flute. There are several kinds of *náy*, differing from each other in dimensions, but in little else. The

<sup>1</sup> "Kibleh."

<sup>2</sup> "Kishtiwan."

<sup>3</sup> "Rakmeh."

<sup>2</sup> Each plectrum is called "reesheh."

<sup>4</sup> See a note to the description of the *kánoon*.

<sup>6</sup> "Owtár."

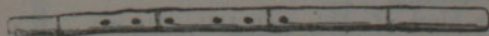
<sup>7</sup> "Reesheh."

most common is that represented below. It has been called the darweesh's flute; because often used at the "zikrs" of darweeshes, to accompany the songs of the "munshids." It is a simple reed, about eighteen inches in length, seven-eighths of an inch in diameter at the upper extremity, and three-quarters of an inch at the lower. It is pierced with six holes in front,



A PERFORMER ON THE 'OOD.

and generally with another hole at the back. The sketch which I insert of a performer on the *náy* (p. 370) shews the most usual manner in which this instrument is held: but sometimes the left hand is uppermost, and the instrument inclined towards the right arm of the performer, instead of the left. The sounds



NÁY.

are produced by blowing, through a very small aperture of the lips, against the edge of the orifice of the tube, and directing the wind chiefly within the tube. By blowing with more or less force, sounds are produced an octave higher or lower. In the hands of a good performer, the *náy* yields fine, mellow tones; but it requires much practice to sound it well. A *náy* is sometimes made of a portion of a gun-barrel.

Another instrument often used at private concerts is a small tambourine, called "rikk," similar to one of which an engraving will be found in this chapter, page 373, but rather smaller.

A kind of mandoline, called "tamboor," is also used at concerts in Egypt; but mostly by Greeks and other foreigners. These musicians likewise use a dulcimer, called "şanteer,"

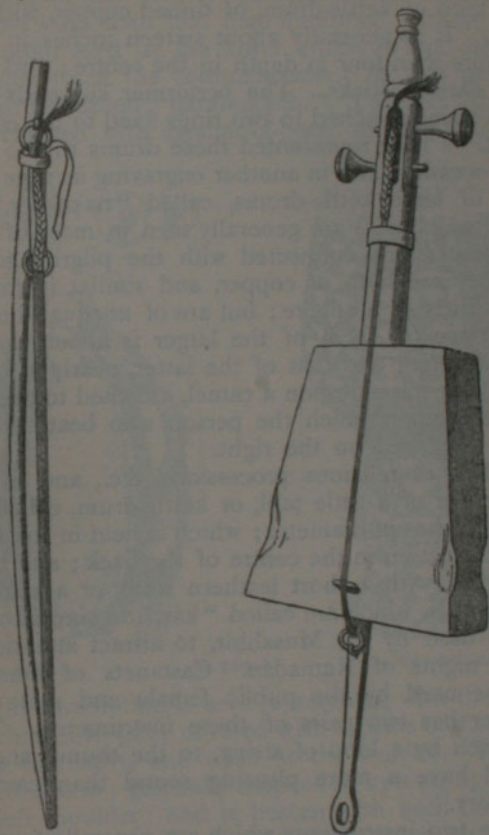


A PERFORMER ON THE NÁY.

which resembles the kánoon, except that it has two sides oblique, instead of one (the two opposite sides equally inclining together), has double chords of wire, instead of treble chords of lamb's gut, and is beaten with two sticks instead of the little plectra.

A curious kind of viol, called "rabáb," is much used by poor singers, as an accompaniment to the voice. There are two kinds of viol which bear this name; the "rabáb el-mughanee" (or singer's viol), and the "rabáb esh-shá'er" (or poet's viol); which differ from each other only in this, that the former has two chords, and the latter but one. The latter is that of which I give an engraving; but it will be observed that it is convertible into the former kind, having two pegs. It is thirty-two inches in length. The body of it is a frame of wood, of which the front is covered with parchment, and the

back uncovered. The foot is of iron: the chord, of horse-hairs, like those of the kemengeh. The bow, which is twenty-eight inches long, is similar to that of the kemengeh. This instrument is always used by the public reciters of the romance of Aboo-Zeyd, in chanting the poetry. The reciter of this



RABÁB ESH-SHÁ'ER.

romance is called a "shá'er" (or poet); and hence the instrument is called "the poet's viol," and "the Aboo-Zeydee viol." The shá'er himself uses this instrument; and another performer on the same kind of rabáb generally accompanies him.

The instruments used in wedding-processions, and the processions of darweeshes, &c., are chiefly a hautboy, called



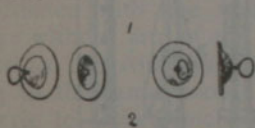
"zemr," and several kinds of drums, of which the most common kinds are the "ṭabl beledee" (or country drum, that is, Egyptian drum), and the "ṭabl Shámee" (or Syrian drum). The former is of a similar kind to our common military drum; but not so deep. It is hung obliquely. The latter is a kind of kettle-drum, of tinned copper, with a parchment face. It is generally about sixteen inches in diameter, and not more than four in depth in the centre; and is beaten with two slender sticks. The performer suspends it to his neck, by a string attached to two rings fixed to the edge of the instrument. I have represented these drums in the sketch of a bridal-procession, and in another engraving in page 59.

A pair of large kettle-drums, called "naḳákeer," (in the singular, "naḳárah,") are generally seen in most of the great religious processions connected with the pilgrimage, &c., in Cairo. They are both of copper, and similar in form; each about two-thirds of a sphere; but are of unequal dimensions: the flat surface (or face) of the larger is about two feet, or more, in diameter; and that of the latter, nearly a foot and a half. They are placed upon a camel, attached to the fore part of the saddle, upon which the person who beats them rides. The larger is placed on the right.

Darweeshes, in religious processions, &c., and in begging, often make use of a little ṭabl, or kettle-drum, called "báz;" six or seven inches in diameter; which is held in the left hand, by a little projection in the centre of the back; and beaten by the right hand, with a short leathern strap, or a stick. They also use cymbals, which are called "kás," on similar occasions. The báz is used by the Musahḥir, to attract attention to his cry in the nights of Ramaḍán. Castanets of brass, called "ságát," are used by the public female and male dancers. Each dancer has two pairs of these instruments. They are attached, each by a loop of string, to the thumb and second finger; and have a more pleasing sound than castanets of wood or ivory.

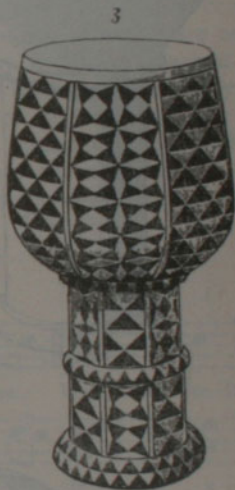
There are two instruments which are generally found in the hareem of a person of moderate wealth, and which the women often use for their diversion. One of these is a tambourine, called "ṭár," of which I insert an engraving. It is eleven inches in diameter. The hoop is overlaid with mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell, and white bone, or ivory, both without and within; and has ten double circular plates of brass attached to it; each two pairs having a wire passing through their

centres. The *tar* is held by the left or right hand, and beaten with the fingers of that hand, and by the other hand. The fingers of the hand which holds the instrument, striking only near the hoop, produce higher sounds than the other hand, which strikes in the centre.—A tambourine of a larger and more simple kind than that here described, without the metal plates, is often used by the lower orders.—The other instrument alluded to in the commencement of this paragraph is a kind of drum, called "*darábukkeh*." The best kind is made of wood, covered with mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell, &c.



1. SÁGÁT.

2. TÁR.

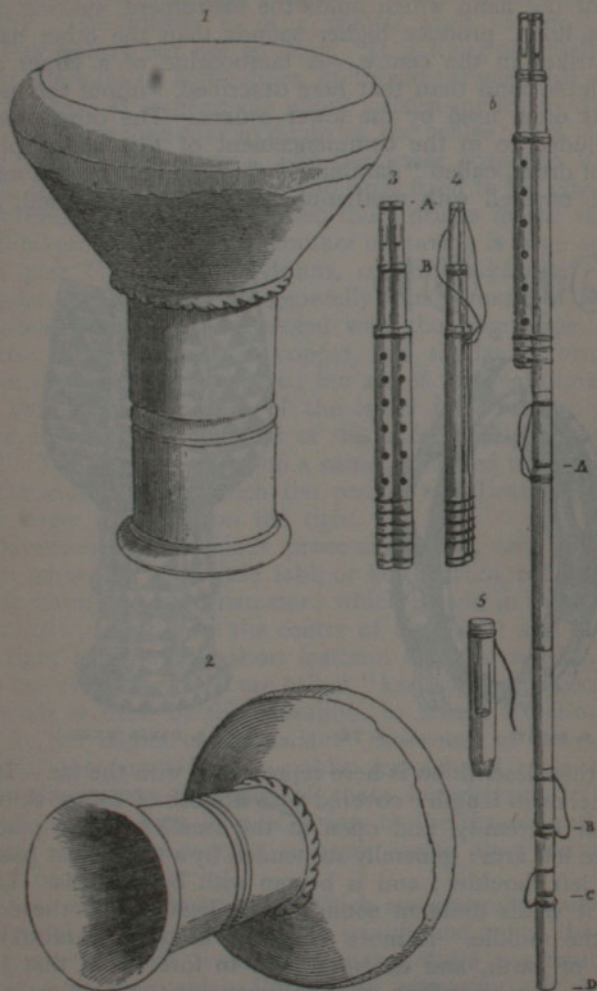


3. DARÁBUKKEH.

One of this description is here represented with the *tar*. It is fifteen inches in length; covered with a piece of fishes' skin at the larger extremity, and open at the smaller. It is placed under the left arm; generally suspended by a string that passes over the left shoulder; and is beaten with both hands. Like the *tar*, it yields different sounds when beaten near the edge and in the middle. A more common kind of *darábukkeh* is made of earth, and differs a little in form from that just described. An engraving of it is given on the next page.

The boatmen of the Nile very often use an earthen *darábukkeh*; but of a larger size than that used in harems; generally from a foot and a half to two feet in length. This is also used by some low story-tellers and others. The boatmen

employ, as an accompaniment to their earthen drum, a double reed pipe, called "zummárah."<sup>1</sup> There is also another kind



1 AND 2. EARTHEN DARÁBUKKEH. 3 AND 4. ZUMMÁRAH.  
5. MOUTHPIECE OF THE LATTER. 6. ARGHOOL.  
The Zummárah is 14 inches long; the Arghool 3 feet 2½ inches.

<sup>1</sup> The mouthpiece (A B) of the zummárah is moveable.

of double reed pipe, called "arghool;" of which one of the reeds is much longer than the other, and serves as a drone, or continuous bass.<sup>1</sup> This, likewise, is used by boatmen; and sometimes it is employed, instead of the náy, at zikrs. Both of these reed pipes produce harsh sounds; and those of the latter much resemble the sounds of the bag-pipe. A rude kind of bag-pipe ("zummárah bi-soan") is sometimes, but rarely, seen in Egypt: its bag is a small goat's skin.

I shall now close this chapter with a few specimens of Egyptian music; chiefly popular songs. These I note in accordance with the manner in which they are commonly sung; without any of the embellishments which are added to them by the Áláteeyeh. The airs of these are not always sung to the same words; but the words are generally similar in style to those which I insert, or at least as silly; though often abounding with indecent metaphors, or with plain ribaldry.—It should be added, that distinct enunciation, and a quavering voice, are characteristics of the Egyptian mode of singing.

## SONGS

## No. 1

Doos yá lel - lee. Doos yá le - l - lee. Doos yá lel - lee. Doos yá  
le - - l - lee. 'Eshkē mah - boo - bee fe - te - n - nee.

"Doos<sup>2</sup> yá lallee. Doos yá lallee. (This line is sung three times.)  
'Eshkē<sup>3</sup> mahboobee fetennee."

Tread!<sup>4</sup> O my joy!<sup>5</sup> Tread! O my joy! (three times.)  
Ardent desire of my beloved hath involved me in trouble.

(The preceding lines are repeated after each of the following stanzas, sometimes as a chorus.)

<sup>1</sup> The arghool has three moveable pieces to lengthen the longer tube (A B, B C, and C D); and is sometimes used with only one or two of these; and sometimes with none of them. Its mouthpiece is moveable, like that of the zummárah.

<sup>2</sup> Here, in accordance with a rule observed in most modern Arab songs, the masculine gender is applied to the beloved object, who is, nevertheless, a female, as will be seen in several subsequent verses. In translation, I therefore substitute the feminine gender in every case where our language

[Notes continued on next page.]

"Má<sup>1</sup> kullu men námét 'oyoonuh  
 Yaḥsib el-'áshik̄ yenám.<sup>2</sup>  
 Wa-lláh anà mughram ṣabábeh.  
 Lem 'ala-l-'áshik̄ melám."

Let not every one whose eyes sleep  
 Imagine that the lover sleepeth.  
 By Allah! I am inflamed with intense love.  
 The lover is not obnoxious to blame.

"Yá Sheykh el-'Arab: Yá Seyyid:  
 Tegmaṣanee 'a-l-khilli<sup>3</sup> leyleh.  
 Wa-n<sup>4</sup> gáneee ḥabeebē ḳalbee  
 La-aṣmal lu-l-<sup>5</sup> Kashmeer ḳulleyleh."

O Sheykh of the Arabs! O Seyyid!<sup>6</sup>  
 Unite me to the true love one night!  
 And if the beloved of my heart come to me  
 I will make the Kashmeer shawl her canopy.

"Kámil el-owṣáf fetennee  
 Wa-l-'oyoon es-sood ramoonee.  
 Min háwáhum ṣirt aghannee<sup>7</sup>  
 Wa-l-háwà zowwad gunoonee."

The perfect in attributes hath involved me in trouble,  
 And the black eyes have o'erthrown me.  
 From love of them I began to sing,  
 And the air<sup>8</sup> increased my madness.

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distinguishes gender. Some words occur, bearing double meanings, which I leave unexplained. I write the Arabic words as they are generally pronounced in Cairo, except in the case of one letter, which I represent by "ḳ," to express the sound which persons of education give to it instead of the more usual hiatus.

<sup>3</sup> The Arabs find it impossible to utter three consonants together without a pause between the second and third: hence the introduction of the short vowel which terminates this word: *sh* represents a single letter.

<sup>4</sup> Or pace, or strut.

<sup>5</sup> "Yá lelee," which is thus translated, is a common ejaculation indicative of joy, said to be synonymous with "yá farḥatee." It is difficult to render this and other cant terms.

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<sup>1</sup> This line and the first of the next stanza require an additional note, which is the same as the last note of these lines, to be added at the commencement.

<sup>2</sup> This and some other lines require that the note which should be the last if they were of more correct measure be transferred to the commencement of the next line.

<sup>3</sup> For "ala-l-khilli."

<sup>4</sup> For "wa-in."

<sup>5</sup> For "la-aṣmal lahu-l;" or rather, "la-'amiltu lahu-l."

<sup>6</sup> The famous saint Es-Seyyid Aḥmad El-Bedawee, who is buried at Tantà, in the Delta.

<sup>7</sup> For "ughaneee."

<sup>8</sup> That is, the air of the song.

"Gema'om<sup>1</sup> gem' al-'awázil  
 'An ḥabeebee yemna'oonce.  
 Wa-lláh anà má afoot háwáhum  
 Bi-s-suyoof low ḳaṭṭa'oonce."

They leagued together the crew of reproachers  
 To debar me from my beloved.  
 By Allah! I will not relinquish the love of them,<sup>2</sup>  
 Though they should cut me in pieces with swords.

"Ḳum bi-nè yá khillè neskar  
 Tahta dill el-yásameeneh:  
 Neḳṭuf el-khókh min 'alà ummuh  
 Wa-l-'awázil gháfileenè."

Up with us! O true love! Let us intoxicate ourselves<sup>3</sup>  
 Under the shade of the jasmine:  
 We will pluck the peach from its mother [tree]  
 While the reproachers are unconscious.

"Yá benát goowa-l-medeeneh  
 'Andakum ashyà temeeneh:  
 Telbisu-sh-sháteḥ bi-loolee  
 Wa-l-ḳiládeh 'a-n-nehdi<sup>4</sup> zeeneh."

O ye damsels in the city!<sup>5</sup>  
 Ye have things of value:  
 Ye wear the sháteḥ<sup>6</sup> with pearls,  
 And the ḳiládeh,<sup>7</sup> an ornament over the bosom.

"Yá benát Iskendereeyeh  
 Meshyukum 'a-l-farshi<sup>8</sup> gheeyeh:  
 Telbisu-l-Kashmeer bi-telee  
 Wa-sh-shefáif sukkareeyeh."

O ye damsels of Alexandria!  
 Your walk over the furniture<sup>9</sup> is alluring:  
 Ye wear the Kashmeer shawl, with embroidered work,<sup>10</sup>  
 And your lips are sweet as sugar.

<sup>1</sup> For "gema-oo."

<sup>2</sup> Namely, the black eyes.

<sup>3</sup> The intoxication here meant is that of love, as is generally the case when this expression is used in Arab songs.

<sup>4</sup> For "'ala-n-nehdi."

<sup>5</sup> Cairo.

<sup>6</sup> An ornament described in the Appendix, resembling a necklace of pearls, &c., attached on each side of the head-dress.

<sup>7</sup> A kind of long necklace, reaching to the girdle.

<sup>8</sup> For "'ala-l-farshi."

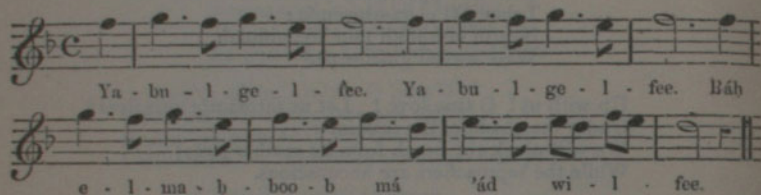
<sup>9</sup> The furniture consists of carpets, &c., spread upon the floor.

<sup>10</sup> "Telee" is a corruption of the Turkish word "tel," and is applied in Egypt to flattened gold or silver wire, used in embroidery.

“Yá miláh kháfoo min Allah  
 Wa-rhamu-l-'áshik li-llah.  
 Hobbukum mektoob min Allah :  
 Kaddaru <sup>1</sup>-l-Mowlá 'aleiya.”

O ye beauties ! fear God,  
 And have mercy on the lover for the sake of God.  
 The love of you is ordained by God :  
 The Lord hath decreed it against me.

## No. 2.



“Ya-bu-l-gelfee. Ya-bu-el-gelfee.  
 Ráḥ el-maḥboob: má 'ád wilfee.”<sup>2</sup>

O thou in the long-sleeved yelek ! O thou in the long-sleeved yelek !  
 The beloved is gone : my companion has not returned.

“Ráḥ el-mirsál wa-lem gáshē :<sup>3</sup>  
 Wa-'eyn el-hobb bi-teráshē.<sup>4</sup>  
 Ya-bu-l-gálif. Ya-bu-l-gelfee.  
 Yá reyt' nè ma-nshebeknashē.  
 Ya-bu-l-gelfee, &c.”

The messenger went, and has not returned :  
 And the eye of love is g'ancing.  
 O thou with the side-lock !<sup>5</sup> O thou in the long-sleeved yelek !  
 Would that we had not been ensnared !  
 O thou in the long-sleeved yelek ! &c.

“Wa-ley yá 'eyn shebekteenē  
 Wa-bi-l-aiḥáz garaḥteenē.  
 Ya-bu-l-gálif. Ya-bu-l-gelfee.  
 Bi-lláhi rikḥ wa-shfeenē.  
 Ya-bu-l-gelfee, &c.”

And why, O eye ! hast thou ensnared us ?  
 And with glances wounded us ?  
 O thou with the side-lock ! O thou in the long-sleeved yelek !  
 By Allah ! have compassion, and heal us.  
 O thou in the long-sleeved yelek ! &c.

<sup>1</sup> For “kaddaruh ;” or rather, “kaddarahu.” <sup>2</sup> Vulg. for “ilfee.”

<sup>3</sup> “Lem gáshē” is for “lem yegi.”

<sup>4</sup> For “turáshē.”

<sup>5</sup> The lock of hair which hangs over the temple, commonly called “maḥsoos.”

"Askamtenee yá habeebee :  
 Wa-má kaşdee illà tibbak.  
 'Asák yá bedrē terhamnee :  
 Fa-inna ƙalbee yeħebbak.  
 Ya-bu-l-wardee. Ya-bu-l-wardee.  
 Ĥabeebē ƙalbee khaleek 'andee."

Thou hast made me ill, O my beloved !  
 And my desire is for nothing but thy medicine.  
 Perhaps, O full moon ! thou wilt have mercy upon me :  
 For verily my heart loveth thee.  
 O thou in the rose-coloured dress ! O thou in the rose-coloured dress !  
 Beloved of my heart ! remain with me.

"De-l-ħobbē gānee yet'máyal :<sup>1</sup>  
 Wa-sukrē ĥálee gufoonuh.  
 Meddeyt eedee<sup>2</sup> akhud el-kás :  
 Sekirt anà min 'oyoonuh.  
 Ya-bu-l-wardee, &c."

The beloved came to me with a vacillating gait ;  
 And her eyelids were the cause of my intoxication.  
 I extended my hand to take the cup ;  
 And was intoxicated by her eyes.  
 O thou in the rose-coloured dress ! &c.

## No. 3.

Má marr wa - sa - ƙá - 'nee ĥa - bee - bee suk - kar. Nuşf  
 el - la - yá - lee 'a-l - mu - dá - meh ne - s - kar.

"Má marr wa-sakānee habeebee sukkar.  
 Nuşf el-lāyālee 'a-l-mudámeh<sup>3</sup> neskar.  
 Nedren 'aleiya wa-ñ<sup>4</sup> atā maħboobee  
 La-aamal<sup>5</sup> 'amáyil<sup>6</sup> má 'amilhásh 'Antar."

My love passed not, but gave me sherbet of sugar to drink.  
 For half the nights we will intoxicate ourselves with wine.  
 I vow that, if my beloved come,  
 I will do deeds that 'Antar did not.

"Yá bintē melesik dáb wa-bent<sup>7</sup> eedeykee<sup>8</sup>  
 Wa-kháf<sup>9</sup> 'aleykee min sáwád 'eyneykee.

<sup>1</sup> For "yetamáyal."

<sup>2</sup> For "ala-l-mudámeh."

<sup>3</sup> For "la-aamal."

<sup>4</sup> For "wa-in."

<sup>5</sup> For "amáil."

<sup>6</sup> "Bent" is a vulgar contraction of "bánet."

<sup>7</sup> Dual of "eed," vulg. for "yed;" meaning "arm" as well as

"hand."

<sup>8</sup> For "wa-akháf."



Kaşdee anà askar wa-boos<sup>1</sup> khaddeykee  
 Wa-amal<sup>2</sup> 'amáyil má 'amilhásh 'Antar."

O damsel ! thy silk shirt is worn out, and thine arms have become visible,  
 And I fear for thee, on account of the blackness of thine eyes.  
 I desire to intoxicate myself, and kiss thy cheeks,  
 And do deeds that<sup>3</sup> Antar did not.

" Fáiteh 'aleiya máliya-l-argeeleh :  
 Wa-meiyet<sup>4</sup> el-má-wardé fi-l-argeeleh.  
 Atà-bi-l-buneyeh 'ámiláhà heeleh.  
 Metà tekul-lee ta'ál yá gedà neskar."

She is passing by me, and filling the argeeleh ;<sup>4</sup>  
 And there is rose-water in the argeeleh.  
 It seems to me the little lass is framing to herself some artifice.  
 When will she say to me, "O youth ! come, and let us intoxicate our-  
 selves?"

" Tool el-lâyálee lem yenkaṭa<sup>5</sup> ' nooḥee<sup>6</sup>  
 'Alà ghazál mufrad wa-khad<sup>7</sup> rooḥee.  
 Nedren 'aleiya wa-n atà maḥboobee  
 La-amal 'amáyil má 'amilhásh 'Antar."

Every night long my moaning ceaseth not  
 For a solitary gazelle that hath taken away my soul.  
 I vow that, if my beloved come,  
 I will do deeds that 'Antar did not.

" Yá dema 'eynee 'a-l-khudeyd<sup>8</sup> men ḥallak :  
 Kaal-lee-bi-zeedak<sup>9</sup> shók 'alà bo'ádi<sup>10</sup> khillak.  
 Irḥam muteiyam yá gemeel mashghul-bak.  
 Taamà 'oyoon ellee<sup>11</sup> má yeḥebbak ya-smar."<sup>12</sup>

O tear of my eye ! who drew thee forth over the cheek ?  
 It saith, "Thy desire increaseth on account of thy true-love's absence."  
 Have mercy upon one enslaved, O beautiful ! and intent upon thee :  
 Blinded be the eyes of him who loves thee not, O dark-complexioned !

" Asmar wa-ḥáwi-l-wardeteyni-l-beedi.  
 Ḥobbee takhallak fee lâyáli-l-'eedi.  
 Nedren 'aleiya wa-n atánee seedee  
 La-amal 'amáyil má 'amilhásh 'Antar."

<sup>1</sup> For "wa-aboos."  
<sup>2</sup> For "wa-aamal."  
<sup>3</sup> A vulgar diminutive of "má," water.  
<sup>4</sup> More commonly called "nárgeeleh:" the Persian pipe.  
<sup>5</sup> For "yenkaṭe."  
<sup>6</sup> For "noḥee."  
<sup>7</sup> For "wa-akhad."  
<sup>8</sup> For "'ala-l-khudeyd."  
<sup>9</sup> For "bi-yezedak."  
<sup>10</sup> For "be'ádi."  
<sup>11</sup> For "ellezee."  
<sup>12</sup> For "yá asmar."

Dark-complexioned, and with two white roses!<sup>1</sup>  
 My love hath perfumed herself on the nights of the festival.  
 I vow that, if my mistress comes to me,  
 I will do deeds that 'Antar did not.

## No. 4.

'Á - shiḡ ra - à mub - te - lee - - ḡa - - l - lu - - . . .  
 . . . h en - ta rá - - - - - ye - ḡ feyn.

“'Áshik ra-à mubtelee : ḡal-luh enta ráyeh<sup>2</sup> feyn.  
 Waḡaf ḡarà ḡiṣṣatuh : bekyum<sup>3</sup> sāwa-l-itneyn.  
 Ráḡom le-ḡádi-l-hāwa-l-itneyn sāwā yeshkum.  
 Bekyu-t-teláteh wa-ḡáloo ḡobbenā ráḡ feyn.  
 El-leyl. El-leyl. Yá ḡelw el-ayádee : ḡáwi-l-khókh en-nádee.  
 Entum min eyn wa-ḡnā min eyn lemmā shebektooné.”

A lover saw another afflicted [in like manner] : he said to him, “Whither art thou going?”

He stopped and told his story : they both wept together.

They went to the ḡádee of love, both together to complain.

The three wept, and said, “Whither is our love gone?”

The night ! The night ! O thou with sweet hands ! holding<sup>4</sup> the dewy peach !

Whence were ye, and whence were we, when ye ensnared us ?

“'Áshik yeḡul li-l-ḡamám háṡ lee genáḡak yóm.  
 ḡál el-ḡamám amrak báṡil : ḡultu ḡheyr el-yóm :  
 ḡattā aṡeer fi-l-ḡó wa-nṡur weg-h el-maḡboob :  
 Ákhud widád 'ám wa-ḡa' yá ḡamám fee yóm.  
 El-leyl. El-leyl, &c.”

A lover says to the dove, “Lend me your wings for a day.”

The dove replied, “Thy affair is vain :” I said, “Some other day :

That I may soar through the sky, and see the face of the beloved :

I shall obtain love enough for a year, and will return, O dove, in a day.”

The night ! The night ! &c.

<sup>1</sup> The dark-complexioned girl has two *white* roses on her cheeks, instead of red.

<sup>2</sup> For “rá-ḡh.”

<sup>3</sup> For “bekow.”

<sup>4</sup> Or, thou who hast.

## THE CALL TO PRAYER

The call to prayer, repeated from the mád'nehs (or menarets) of the mosques, I have already mentioned.<sup>1</sup> I have often heard this call, in Cairo, chanted in the following manner; and in a style more or less similar, it is chanted by most of the muéddins of this city.

Al - lá - hu ak - bar. Al - lá - - hu ak - bar.

Al - lá - hu ak - bar. Al - lá - - - - -

- - - - - hu ak - bar. Ash - hadu an lá i -

lá - ha il-la - l - lálh. Ash - hadu an lá i -

lá - ha il - la - l - lá - - - - -

- - h. Ash - hadu an - na Mo - ham - ma - dar ra - soolu - l -

lálh. Ash - hadu an - na Mo - ham - ma - dar ra - soolu - l -

- lá - - - - - h. Hei - ya 'a - la - ş - şa - lálh.

- Hei - ya 'a - la - ş - şa - lálh - - - - -

<sup>1</sup> In the chapter on Religion and Laws.

h. Hei - ya 'a - la - l - fe - lál, Hei - ya 'a - la - l - fe -  
 lá - - - - - b.  
 Al - lál - hu ak - bar. Al -  
 lál - hu ak - bar. Lá i - lál - ha i - l - la - l - lál.

## THE CHANTING OF THE ҚUR-ÁN

The following is inserted with the view of conveying some notion of the mode in which the Қur-án is commonly chanted in Egypt. The portion here selected is that which is most frequently repeated, namely, the "Fát'ḥah," or first chapter.

*Moderato.*

Bi - smi - l - lál - hi - r - raḥ - má - ni - r - ra - ḥcem. El - ḥamdu li - l - lál - hi  
 rab - bi - l - 'á - la - mee - na - r - raḥ - má - ni - r - ra - ḥce - mi  
 má - li - ki yow - mi - d - deen. Ee - yá - ka naḥ - bu - doo wa -  
 ee - yá - ka nesta - 'een. Iḥdi - na - ḥ - ṣi - rá - ṭa - l - mus - ta - ḥce - ma ṣi -  
 rá - ṭa - l - le zee - na an - 'am - ta 'a - lei - him ghei - ri - l - magḥḍoo - bi 'a -  
 lei - him wa - la - ḍ - dá - - - - lleen. Á - meen.

## CHAPTER XIX

## PUBLIC DANCERS

EGYPT has long been celebrated for its public dancing-girls; the most famous of whom are of a distinct tribe, called "Ghawázee."<sup>1</sup> A female of this tribe is called "Gházeeyeh;" and a man, "Gházee;" but the plural Ghawázee is generally understood as applying to the females. The misapplication of the appellation "Ál'mehs" to the common dancing-girls of this country has already been noticed. The Ghawázee perform, unveiled, in the public streets, even to amuse the rabble. Their dancing has little of elegance; its chief peculiarity being a very rapid vibrating motion of the hips, from side to side. They commence with a degree of decorum; but soon, by more animated looks, by a more rapid collision of their castanets of brass, and by increased energy in every motion, they exhibit a spectacle exactly agreeing with the descriptions which Martial<sup>2</sup> and Juvenal<sup>3</sup> have given of the performances of the female dancers of Gades. The dress in which they generally thus exhibit in public is similar to that which is worn by women of the middle classes in Egypt in private; that is, in the hareem;

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written, public female dancing and prostitution have been prohibited by the government, in the beginning of June, in the year 1834. Women detected infringing this new law are to be punished with fifty stripes for the first offence, and for repeated offences are to be also condemned to hard labour for one or more years: men are obnoxious to the discipline of the bastinado when parties in such offences. But there is a simple plan for evading punishment in cases of this kind, which, it is said, will be adopted by many persons. A man may marry a venal female, legally, and divorce her the next day. He has only to say two or three words, and pay a small sum of money, which he calls her dowry. He says, "Will you marry me?" She answers, "Yes." "For how much?" he asks. She names the sum; and he gives it: she is then his lawful wife. The next day, he tells her that she is divorced from him. He need be under little apprehension of her demanding the expenses of her maintenance during the period of her 'eddeh, before the expiration of which she cannot legally marry another man; for the marriage which has just been contracted and dissolved is only designed as a means of avoiding punishment in case of her being detected with the man; and otherwise is kept secret; and the sum which she can demand for her maintenance during the above-mentioned period is very paltry in comparison with that which she may obtain by taking a new husband every two or three days.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. v. Epigr. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Sat. xi. v. 162.

consisting of a yelek, or an 'anteree, and the shintiyán, &c., of handsome materials. They also wear various ornaments: their eyes are bordered with the *koħl* (or black collyrium); and the tips of their fingers, the palms of their hands, and their toes and other parts of their feet, are usually stained with the red dye of the *ħennà*, according to the general custom of the middle and higher classes of Egyptian women. In general,



DANCING-GIRLS (GHAWÁZEE, OR GHÁZEEVHS).

they are accompanied by musicians (mostly of the same tribe), whose instruments are the *kemengeh* or the *rabáb* with the *ťár*; or the *darábukkeh* with the *zummárah* or the *zembr*: the *ťár* is usually in the hands of an old woman.

The Ghawázee often perform in the court of a house, or in the street, before the door, on certain occasions of festivity in the *ħareem*; as, for instance, on the occasion of a marriage, or

the birth of a child. They are never admitted into a respectable hareem, but are not unfrequently hired to entertain a party of men in the house of some rake. In this case, as might be expected, their performances are yet more lascivious than those which I have already mentioned. Some of them, when they exhibit before a private party of men, wear nothing but the *shintiyán* (or trousers) and a *tób* (or very full, long, wide-sleeved shirt or gown) of semi-transparent, coloured gauze, open nearly half-way down the front. To extinguish the least spark of modesty which they may yet sometimes affect to retain, they are plentifully supplied with brandy or some other intoxicating liquor. The scenes which ensue cannot be described.

I need scarcely add that these women are the most abandoned of the courtesans of Egypt. Many of them are extremely handsome; and most of them are richly dressed. Upon the whole, I think they are the finest women in Egypt. Many of them have slightly aquiline noses; but in most respects they resemble the rest of the females of this country. Women, as well as men, take delight in witnessing their performances; but many persons among the higher classes, and the more religious, disapprove of them.

The Ghawázee being distinguished, in general, by a cast of countenance differing, though slightly, from the rest of the Egyptians, we can hardly doubt that they are, as themselves assert, a distinct race. Their origin, however, is involved in much uncertainty. They call themselves "*Barámikeh*,"<sup>1</sup> or "*Barmekees*;" and boast that they are descended from the famous family of that name who were the objects of the favour, and afterwards of the capricious tyranny, of Hároon Er-Rasheed, and of whom we read in several of the tales of '*The Thousand and One Nights*;' but, as a friend of mine lately observed to me, they probably have no more right to call themselves "*Barámikeh*" than because they resemble that family in liberality, though it is liberality of a different kind. In many of the tombs of the ancient Egyptians we find representations of females dancing at private entertainments, to the sounds of various instruments, in a manner similar to the modern Ghawázee, but even more licentious; one or more of these performers being generally depicted in a state of perfect nudity, though in the presence of men and women of high stations. This mode of dancing we find, from the monuments here alluded to, most of which bear the names of kings, which

<sup>1</sup> Commonly pronounced "*Barám'keh*."

prove their age, to have been common in Egypt in very remote times; even before the Exodus of the Israelites. It is probable, therefore, that it has continued without interruption; and perhaps the modern Ghawázee are descended from the class of female dancers who amused the Egyptians in the times of the early Pharaohs. From the similarity of the Spanish fandango to the dances of the Ghawázee, we might infer that it was introduced into Spain by the Arab conquerors of that country, were we not informed that the Gaditanæ, or females of Gades (now called Cadiz), were famous for such performances in the times of the early Roman Emperors. However, though it hence appears that the licentious mode of dancing here described has so long been practised in Spain, it is not improbable that it was originally introduced into Gades from the East, perhaps by the Phœnicians.<sup>1</sup>

The Ghawázee mostly keep themselves distinct from other classes, abstaining from marriages with any but persons of their own tribe; but sometimes a Gházeeeh makes a vow of repentance, and marries a respectable Arab; who is not generally considered as disgraced by such a connection. All of them are brought up for the venal profession; but not all as dancers; and most of them marry; though they never do this until they have commenced their career of venality. The husband is subject to the wife: he performs for her the offices of a servant and procurer; and generally, if she be a dancer, he is also her musician: but a few of the men earn their subsistence as blacksmiths or tinkers. Most of the Gházeeehs welcome the lowest peasant, if he can pay even a very trifling sum. Though some of them are possessed of considerable wealth, costly ornaments, &c., many of their customs are similar to those of the people whom we call "gipsies," and who are supposed, by some, to be of Egyptian origin. It is remarkable that some of the gipsies in Egypt pretend to be descended from a branch of the same family to whom the Ghawázee refer their origin; but their claim is still less to be regarded than that of the latter, because they do not unanimously agree on this point. I shall have occasion to speak of them more particularly in the next chapter. The ordinary language of the Ghawázee is the same as that of the rest of the Egyptians; but they sometimes make use of a

<sup>1</sup> From the effect which it produced, it is probable that the dance performed by the daughter of Herodias was of the kind here described. See St. Matthew xiv. 6, 7, or St. Mark vi. 22, 23.



number of words peculiar to themselves, in order to render their speech unintelligible to strangers. They are, professedly, of the Muslim faith; and often some of them accompany the Egyptian caravan of pilgrims to Mekkeh. There are many of them in almost every large town in Egypt, inhabiting a distinct portion of the quarter allotted to public women in general. Their ordinary habitations are low huts, or temporary sheds, or tents; for they often move from one town to another: but some of them settle themselves in large houses; and many possess black female slaves (by whose prostitution they increase their property), and camels, asses, cows, &c., in which they trade. They attend the camps, and all the great religious and other festivals, of which they are, to many persons, the chief attractions. Numerous tents of Gházeeyehs are seen on these occasions. Some of these women add to their other allurements the art of singing, and equal the ordinary 'Awálim. Those of the lower class dress in the same manner as other low prostitutes. Some of them wear a gauze tób, over another shirt, with the shintiyán, and a crape or muslin *tarhah*; and in general they deck themselves with a profusion of ornaments, as necklaces, bracelets, anklets, a row of gold coins over the forehead, and sometimes a nose-ring. All of them adorn themselves with the *koñl* and *hennà*. There are some other dancing-girls and courtesans who call themselves Ghawázee, but who do not really belong to that tribe.<sup>1</sup>

Many of the people of Cairo, affecting, or persuading them-

<sup>1</sup> The courtesans of other classes have at most times abounded in every town of Egypt; but in and about the metropolis, these and the others before mentioned have generally been particularly numerous; some quarters being inhabited almost exclusively by them. These women, when their profession was allowed by the government, frequently conducted themselves with the most audacious effrontery. Their dress was such as I have described as being worn by the Ghawázee, or differed from that of respectable women in being a little more gay, and less disguising. Some women of the venal class in Cairo not only wore the *burko'* (or face-veil), but dressed, in every respect, like modest women; from whom they could not be distinguished, except by those to whom they chose to discover themselves. Such women were found in almost every quarter of the metropolis. Many of them were divorced women, or widows; and many were the wives of men whom business obliged to be often abroad. All the known prostitutes in Egypt paid a kind of income-tax ("firdeh"). The tax paid by those of the metropolis lately amounted to eight hundred purses (equivalent to four thousand pounds sterling), which is not less than one-tenth of the *firdeh* of all the inhabitants. This will convey some idea of their number in comparison with that of the persons who practised honest means of obtaining their livelihood.

selves, to consider that there is nothing improper in the dancing of the Ghawázee but the fact of its being performed by females, who ought not thus to expose themselves, employ men to dance in the same manner; but the number of these male performers, who are mostly young men, and who are called "Khāwals,"<sup>1</sup> is very small. They are Muslims, and natives of Egypt. As they personate women, their dances are exactly of the same description as those of the Ghawázee; and are, in like manner, accompanied by the sounds of castanets: but, as if to prevent their being thought to be really females, their dress is suited to their unnatural profession; being partly male, and partly female: it chiefly consists of a tight vest, a girdle, and a kind of petticoat. Their general appearance, however, is more feminine than masculine: they suffer the hair of the head to grow long, and generally braid it, in the manner of the women; the hair on the face, when it begins to grow, they pluck out; and they imitate the women also in applying *kohl* and *hennà* to their eyes and hands. In the streets, when not engaged in dancing, they often even veil their faces; not from shame, but merely to affect the manners of women. They are often employed, in preference to the Ghawázee, to dance before a house, or in its court, on the occasion of a marriage-fête, or the birth of a child, or a circumcision; and frequently perform at public festivals.

There is, in Cairo, another class of male dancers, young men and boys, whose performances, dress, and general appearance are almost exactly similar to those of the Khāwals; but who are distinguished by a different appellation, which is "Gink;" a term that is Turkish, and has a vulgar signification which aptly expresses their character. They are generally Jews, Armenians, Greeks, and Turks.

## CHAPTER XX

### SERPENT-CHARMERS, AND PERFORMERS OF LEGERDEMAIN TRICKS, ETC.

MANY modern writers upon Egypt have given surprising accounts of a class of men in this country, supposed, like the

<sup>1</sup> The term "Ghāīsh" (plural, "Gheeyāsh,") is also applied to a person of this class.

ancient "Psylli" of Cyrenaïca, to possess a secret art, to which allusion is made in the Bible,<sup>1</sup> enabling them to secure themselves from the poison of serpents. I have met with many persons among the more intelligent of the Egyptians who condemn these modern Psylli as impostors, but none who has been able to offer a satisfactory explanation of the most common and most interesting of their performances, which I am about to describe.

Many Rifá'ee and Saadee darweeshes obtain their livelihood, as I have mentioned on a former occasion, by going about to charm away serpents from houses. A few other persons also profess the same art, but are not so famous. The former travel over every part of Egypt, and find abundant employment; but their gains are barely sufficient to procure them a scanty subsistence. The charmer professes to discover, without ocular perception (but perhaps he does so by a peculiar smell), whether there be any serpents in a house; and if there be, to attract them to him; as the fowler, by the fascination of his voice, allures the bird into his net. As the serpent seeks the darkest place in which to hide himself, the charmer has, in most cases, to exercise his skill in an obscure chamber, where he might easily take a serpent from his bosom, bring it to the people without the door, and affirm that he had found it in the apartment; for no one would venture to enter with him after having been assured of the presence of one of these reptiles within: but he is often required to perform in the full light of day, surrounded by spectators; and incredulous persons have searched him beforehand, and even stripped him naked; yet his success has been complete. He assumes an air of mystery, strikes the walls with a short palm-stick, whistles, makes a clucking noise with his tongue, and spits upon the ground; and generally says, "I adjure you by God, if ye be above, or if ye be below, that ye come forth: I adjure you by the Most Great Name, if ye be obedient, come forth; and if ye be disobedient, die! die! die!"—The serpent is generally dislodged by his stick, from a fissure in the wall, or drops from the ceiling of the room. I have often heard it asserted that the serpent-charmer, before he enters a house in which he is to try his skill, always employs a servant of that house to introduce one or more serpents; but I have known instances in which this could not be the case; and am inclined to believe that the darweeshes above mentioned are generally

<sup>1</sup> See Psalm lviii. 4, 5; Eccles. x. 11; and Jerem. viii. 17.

acquainted with some real physical means of discovering the presence of serpents without seeing them, and of attracting them from their lurking-places. It is, however, a fact well ascertained, that the most expert of them do not venture to carry serpents of a venomous nature about their persons until they have extracted the poisonous teeth. Many of them carry scorpions, also, within the cap, and next the shaven head; but doubtless first deprive them of the power to injure; perhaps by merely blunting the sting. Their famous feats of eating live and venomous serpents, which are regarded as religious acts, I have before had occasion to mention, and purpose to describe particularly in another chapter.<sup>1</sup>

Performers of sleight-of-hand tricks, who are called "Hōwáh" (in the singular, "Háwee"<sup>2</sup>), are numerous in Cairo. They generally perform in public places; collecting a ring of spectators around them, from some of whom they receive small voluntary contributions during and after their performances. They are most frequently seen on the occasions of public festivals; but often also at other times. By indecent jests and actions they attract as much applause as they do by other means. The "Háwee" performs a great variety of tricks; the most usual of which I shall here mention. He generally has two boys to assist him. From a large leathern bag he takes out four or five snakes, of a largish size. One of these he places on the ground, and causes to erect its head and part of its body: another he puts round the head of one of the boys, like a turban; and two more he winds over the boy's neck. He takes these off, opens the boy's mouth, and apparently passes the bolt of a kind of padlock through his cheek, and locks it. Then, in appearance, he forces an iron spike into the boy's throat; the spike being really pushed up into a wooden handle. He also performs another trick of the same kind as this: placing the boy on the ground, he puts the edge of a knife upon his nose, and knocks the blade until half its width seems to have entered. Several indecent tricks which he performs with the boy I must abstain from describing: some of them are abominably disgusting. The tricks which he alone performs are more amusing. He draws a great quantity of various-coloured silk from his mouth, and winds it on his arm; puts cotton in his mouth, and blows out

<sup>1</sup> In the account of the Moolid en-Nebee, in the first of the chapters on periodical public festivals, &c.

<sup>2</sup> So called from his feats with serpents.

fire; takes out of his mouth a great number of round pieces of tin, like dollars; and, in appearance, blows an earthen pipe-bowl from his nose. In most of his tricks he occasionally blows through a large shell (called the Hâwee's zummârah), producing sounds like those of a horn. Most of his sleight-of-hand performances are nearly similar to those of exhibitors of the same class in our own and other countries. Taking a silver finger-ring from one of the by-standers, he puts it in a little box, blows his shell, and says, "'Efreet, change it!"—he then opens the box, and shews, in it, a different ring: shuts the box again; opens it, and shews the first ring: shuts it a third time; opens it, and shews a melted lump of silver, which he declares to be the ring melted, and offers to the owner: the latter insists upon having his ring in its original state: the Hâwee then asks for five or ten faḍḍahs to recast it; and, having obtained this, opens the box again (after having closed it, and blown his shell), and takes out of it the perfect ring. He next takes a larger covered box, puts the skull-cap of one of his boys in it, blows his shell, opens the box, and out comes a rabbit: the cap seems to be gone. He puts the rabbit in again, covers the box, uncovers it, and out run two little chickens: these he puts in again, blows his shell, uncovers the box, and shews it full of faṭerehs (or pancakes) and kunâfeh (which resembles vermicelli): he tells his boys to eat its contents; but they refuse to do it without honey: he then takes a small jug, turns it upside-down to shew that it is empty, blows his shell, and hands round the jug full of honey. The boys, having eaten, ask for water, to wash their hands. The Hâwee takes the same jug, and hands it filled with water, in the same manner. He takes the box again, and asks for the cap; blows his shell, uncovers the box, and pours out from it, into the boy's lap (the lower part of his shirt held up), four or five small snakes. The boy, in apparent fright, throws them down, and demands his cap. The Hâwee puts the snakes back into the box, blows his shell, uncovers the box, and takes out the cap.—Another of his common tricks is to put a number of slips of white paper into a tinned copper vessel (the ṣisht of a seller of sherbet); and to take them out dyed of various colours. He pours water into the same vessel, puts in a piece of linen, and then gives to the spectators, to drink, the contents of the vessel, changed to sherbet of sugar. Sometimes he apparently cuts in two a muslin shawl, or burns it in the middle, and then restores it

whole. Often, he strips himself of all his clothes, except his drawers, and tells two persons to bind him, hands and feet, and put him in a sack. This done, he asks for a piaster; and some one tells him that he shall have it if he will put out his hand and take it. He puts out his hand free, draws it back, and is then taken out of the sack bound as at first. He is put in again, and comes out unbound, handing to the spectators a small tray, upon which are four or five little plates filled with various eatables, and, if the performance be at night, several small lighted candles placed round. The spectators eat the food.

There is another class of jugglers in Cairo called "Ḳeeyem" (in the singular, "Ḳeiyim"). In most of his performances, the Ḳeiyim has an assistant. In one, for instance, the latter places upon the ground twenty-nine small pieces of stone. He sits upon the ground, and these are arranged before him. The Ḳeiyim having gone a few yards distant from him, the assistant desires one of the spectators to place a piece of money under any one of the bits of stone: this being done, he calls back the Ḳeiyim, informs him that a piece of money has been hidden, and asks him to point out where it is; which the conjuror immediately does. The secret of this trick is very simple: the twenty-nine pieces of stone represent the letters of the Arabic alphabet; and the person who desires the Ḳeiyim to shew where the money is concealed commences his address to the latter with the letter represented by the stone which covers the coin. In the same manner, or by means of signs made by the assistant, the Ḳeiyim is enabled to tell the name of any person present, or the words of a song that has been repeated in his absence: the name or song having been whispered to his assistant.

Fortune-telling is often practised in Egypt, mostly by a tribe of Gipsies. There are several small tribes of Gipsies in this country, and they are here often called collectively "Ghagar" or "Ghajar" (in the singular, "Ghagaree" or "Ghajaree"), which is the appellation of one of their tribes, who profess themselves to be partly descendants of the Barámikeh, like the Ghawázee; but of a different branch. Many of their women are fortune-tellers. These women are often seen in the streets of Cairo, dressed in a similar manner to the generality of the females of the lower classes, with the *tób* and *ṭarḥah*, but always with unveiled faces; usually carrying a gazelle's skin, containing the materials for their divinations;

and crying, "I perform divination! What is present I manifest! What is absent I manifest!" &c. They mostly divine by means of a number of shells, with a few pieces of coloured glass, money, &c., intermixed with them. These they throw down; and from the manner in which they chance to lie, they derive their prognostications: a larger shell than the rest represents the person whose fortune they are to discover; and the other shells, &c., represent different events, evils and blessings, which, by their proximity to, or distance from, the former, they judge to be fated to befall the person in question early or late or never. Some of these Gipsy-women also cry, "Neduk̄k wa-n'táhir!" ("We puncture and circumcise!").<sup>1</sup> Many of the Gipsies in Egypt are blacksmiths, braziers, and tinkers, or itinerant sellers of the wares which are made by others of this class, and particularly of trumpery trinkets of brass, &c.

Some Gipsies also follow the occupation of a "Bahluwán." This appellation is properly given to a performer of gymnastic exercises, a famous swordsman, or a champion; and such descriptions of persons formerly exhibited their feats of strength and dexterity, under this name, in Cairo; but the performances of the modern Bahluwán are almost confined to rope-dancing; and all the persons who practise this art are of the tribe called "Ghagar" or "Ghajar." Sometimes the rope is tied to the *mád'neh* of a mosque, at a considerable height from the ground, and extends to the length of several hundred feet, being supported at many points by poles fixed in the ground. The dancer always uses a long balancing-pole. Sometimes he dances or walks on the rope with clogs on his feet, or with a piece of soap tied under each foot, or with a child suspended to each of his ankles by a rope, or with a boy tied to each end of the balancing-pole; and he sits upon a round tray placed on the rope. I have only seen three of these bahluwáns; and their performances were not of the more difficult kinds above described, and less clever than those of the commonest rope-

<sup>1</sup> They tattoo, or make those blue marks upon the skin which I have described in the first chapter of this work; and perform the operation alluded to in a note inserted in page 60. The late Captain Newbold, in a curious account of the Gipsies of Egypt and other Eastern countries, in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. xiv. 285-312, says that the fortune-tellers of Egypt according to their own statements, are not, as I was informed, of the tribe of the Ghagar, but of a superior tribe whose name he writes "Helebi," and from whom the Ghagar are a distinct tribe, though the former sometimes marry Ghagar women.

dancers in England. Women, girls, and boys, often follow this occupation. The men and boys also perform other feats than those of rope-dancing; such as tumbling, leaping through a hoop, &c.

The "Kureydátee" (whose appellation is derived from "kird," an ape, or a monkey,) amuses the lower orders in Cairo by sundry performances of an ape or a monkey, an ass, a dog, and a kid. He and the ape (which is generally of the cynocephalus kind) fight each other with sticks. He dresses the ape fantastically, usually as a bride, or a veiled woman; puts it on the ass; and parades it round within the ring of spectators; himself going before and beating a tambourine. The ape is also made to dance, and perform various antics. The ass is told to choose the handsomest girl in the ring, and does so; putting his nose towards her face, and greatly amusing her and all the spectators. The dog is ordered to imitate the motions of a thief, and accordingly crawls along on its belly. The best performance is that of the kid: it is made to stand upon a little piece of wood, nearly in the shape of a dice-box, about a span long, and an inch and a half wide at the top and bottom, so that all its four feet are placed close together: this piece of wood, with the kid thus standing upon it, is then lifted up, and a similar piece placed under it; and, in the same manner, a third piece, a fourth, and a fifth, are added.

The Egyptians are often amused by players of low and ridiculous farces, who are called "Moḥabbazeen." These frequently perform at the festivals prior to weddings and circumcisions, at the houses of the great; and sometimes attract rings of auditors and spectators in the public places in Cairo. Their performances are scarcely worthy of description: it is chiefly by vulgar jests, and indecent actions, that they amuse, and obtain applause. The actors are only men and boys; the part of a woman being always performed by a man or a boy in female attire. As a specimen of their plays, I shall give a short account of one which was acted before the Báshà, a short time ago, at a festival celebrated in honour of the circumcision of one of his sons; on which occasion, as usual, several sons of grandees were also circumcised. The *dramatis personæ* were a Názir (or governor of a district), a Sheykh Beled (or chief of a village), a servant of the latter, a Copt clerk, a Felláh indebted to the government, his wife, and five other persons, of whom two made their appearance first in



the character of drummers, one as a hautboy-player, and the two others as dancers. After a little drumming and piping and dancing by these five, the Názir and the rest of the performers enter the ring. The Názir asks, "How much does 'Awad<sup>1</sup> the son of Regeb owe?" The musicians and dancers, who now act as simple felláheen, answer, "Desire the Christian to look in the register." The Christian clerk has a large dawáyeh (or ink-horn) in his girdle, and is dressed as a Copt, with a black turban. The Sheykh el-Beled asks him, "How much is written against 'Awad the son of Regeb?" The clerk answers, "A thousand piasters." "How much," says the Sheykh, "has he paid?" He is answered, "Five piasters." "Man," says he, addressing the felláh, "why don't you bring the money?" The felláh answers, "I have not any." "You have not any?" exclaims the Sheykh: "Throw him down." An inflated piece of an intestine, resembling a large kurbág, is brought; and with this the felláh is beaten. He roars out to the Názir, "By the honour of thy horse's tail, O Bey! By the honour of thy wife's trowsers, O Bey! By the honour of thy wife's head-band, O Bey!" After twenty such absurd appeals, his beating is finished, and he is taken away, and imprisoned. Presently his wife comes to him, and asks him, "How art thou?" He answers, "Do me a kindness, my wife: take a little kishk<sup>2</sup> and some eggs and some sha'ereeyeh,<sup>3</sup> and go with them to the house of the Christian clerk, and appeal to his generosity to get me set at liberty." She takes these, in three baskets, to the Christian's house, and asks the people there, "Where is the M'allim Hännà, the clerk?" They answer, "There he sits." She says to him, "O M'allim Hännà, do me the favour to receive these, and obtain the liberation of my husband." "Who is thy husband?" he asks. She answers, "The felláh who owes a thousand piasters." "Bring," says he, "twenty or thirty piasters to bribe the Sheykh el-Beled." She goes away, and soon returns, with the money in her hand, and gives it to the Sheykh el-Beled. "What is this?" says the Sheykh. She answers, "Take it as a bribe, and liberate my husband." He says, "Very well: go to the Názir." She retires for a while, blackens the edges of her eyelids with kohl, applies fresh red dye of the hennà to her hands and feet, and repairs to the

<sup>1</sup> Thus vulgarly pronounced, for "'Ewad."

<sup>2</sup> A description of this will be found in a subsequent chapter. See the Index.

<sup>3</sup> A kind of paste, resembling vermicelli.

Názir. "Good evening, my master," she says to him. "What dost thou want?" he asks. She answers, "I am the wife of 'Awad, who owes a thousand piasters." "But what dost thou want?" he asks again. She says, "My husband is imprisoned; and I appeal to thy generosity to liberate him:" and as she urges this request, she smiles, and shews him that she does not ask this favour without being willing to grant him a recompense. He obtains this, takes the husband's part, and liberates him.—This farce was played before the Bâshà with the view of opening his eyes to the conduct of those persons to whom was committed the office of collecting the taxes.

The puppet-show of "Kàrà Gyooz" has been introduced into Egypt by Turks, in whose language the puppets are made to speak.<sup>1</sup> Their performances, which are, in general, extremely indecent, occasionally amuse the Turks residing in Cairo; but, of course, are not very attractive to those who do not understand the Turkish language. They are conducted in the manner of the "Chinese shadows," and therefore only exhibited at night.

## CHAPTER XXI

### PUBLIC RECITATIONS OF ROMANCES

THE Egyptians are not destitute of better diversions than those described in the preceding chapter: reciters of romances frequent the principal *kahwehs* (or coffee-shops) of Cairo and other towns, particularly on the evenings of religious festivals, and afford attractive and rational entertainments. The reciter generally seats himself upon a small stool on the *maṣṭabah*, or raised seat, which is built against the front of the coffee-shop:<sup>2</sup> some of his auditors occupy the rest of that seat, others arrange themselves upon the *maṣṭabahs* of the houses on the opposite side of the narrow street, and the rest sit upon stools or benches made of palm-sticks; most of them with the pipe in hand; some sipping their coffee; and all highly amused, not only with the story, but also with the lively and dramatic manner of the

<sup>1</sup> This exhibition is called in Arabic "*khayâl eḍ-ḍill*," or, more correctly, "*—eḍh-ḍhill*."

<sup>2</sup> See the engraving which accompanies this chapter.

narrator. The reciter receives a trifling sum of money from the keeper of the coffee-shop, for attracting customers: his hearers are not obliged to contribute anything for his remuneration: many of them give nothing; and few give more than five or ten *faddahs*.<sup>1</sup>

The most numerous class of reciters is that of the persons called "*Sho'arà*" (in the singular "*Shá'er*," which properly signifies a *poet*). They are also called "*Aboo-Zeydeeyeh*," or "*Aboo-Zeydees*," from the subject of their recitations, which is a romance entitled "*the Life of Aboo-Zeyd*" ("*Seeret Aboo-Zeyd*"<sup>2</sup>). The number of these *Sho'arà* in Cairo is about fifty; and they recite nothing but the adventures related in the romance of *Aboo-Zeyd*.

This romance is said to have been founded upon events which happened in the middle of the third century of the Flight; and is believed to have been written not long after that period; but it was certainly composed at a much later time, unless it have been greatly altered in transcription. It is usually found in ten or more small quarto volumes. It is half prose, and half poetry; half narrative, and half dramatic. As a literary composition, it has little merit, at least in its present state; but as illustrative of the manners and customs of the *Bedawees*, it is not without value and interest. The heroes and heroines of the romance, who are mostly natives of central Arabia and *El-Yemen*, but some of them of *El-Gharb* (or Northern Africa, which is called "*the West*" with reference to Arabia), generally pour forth their most animated sentiments, their addresses and soliloquies, in verse. The verse is not measured; though it is the opinion of some of the learned in Cairo that it was originally conformed to the prescribed measures of poetry, and that it has been altered by copyists: still, when read, as it always is, almost entirely in the popular (not the literary) manner, it is pleasing in sound, as it also often is in matter. Almost every piece of poetry begins and ends with an invocation of blessings on the Prophet.

The *Shá'er* always commits his subject to memory, and recites without book. The poetry he chants; and after every verse, he plays a few notes on a viol which has but a single chord, and which is called "*the poet's viol*," or "*the Aboo-Zeydee*

<sup>1</sup> The reciter is generally heard to greater advantage in public than when he is hired to entertain a private party; as, in the former case his profits are usually proportioned to the talent which he displays.

<sup>2</sup> Vulgarly so called, for "*Seeret Abee-Zeyd*."

viol," from its only being used in these recitations. It has been described in a former chapter. The reciter generally has an



A SHÁ'ER, WITH HIS ACCOMPANYING VIOLIST, AND PART OF HIS AUDIENCE.

attendant with another instrument of this kind, to accompany

him. Sometimes a single note serves as a prelude and interlude. To convey some idea of the style of a Shá'er's music, I insert a few notes of the commencement of a chant :—

Ma - ká - lá - tu Khaḍrà 'anda má ḡad te -  
fek - ke - ret li - má ḡad garà má beyn neg - a Hi-lál.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the reciters of Aboo-Zeyd are distinguished by the appellations of "Hiláleeeyeh" (or "Hilálees"), "Zaghábeh," or "Zughbeeyeh" (or "Zughbees"), and "Zináteeeyeh" (or "Zinátees"), from their chiefly confining themselves to the narration of the exploits of heroes of the Hilálee, Zughbee, or Zinátee, tribes, celebrated in this romance.

As a specimen of the tale of Aboo-Zeyd, I shall here offer an abstract of the principal contents of the first volume, which I have carefully read for this purpose.

Aboo-Zeyd, or, as he was first more generally called, Barakát, was an Arab of the tribe called Benee-Hilál, or El-Hiláleeeyeh. Before his birth, his father, the Emeer Rizḡ (who was the son of Náíl, a paternal uncle of Sarḥán, the king of the Benee-Hilál), had married ten wives, from whom, to his great grief, he had obtained but two children, both of them daughters, named Sheehah and 'Ateemeh, until one of his wives, the Emeereh Gellás, increased his distress by bearing him a son without arms or legs. Shortly before the birth of this son, the Emeer Rizḡ (having divorced, at different times, such of his wives as pleased him least, as he could not have more than four at one time, and having at last retained only three,) married an eleventh wife, the Emeereh Khaḍrà, daughter of Ḳarḍà, the Shereef of Mekkeh. He was soon rejoiced to find that Khaḍrà shewed signs of becoming a mother; and, in the hope that the expected child would be a son, invited the Emeer Ghánim, chief of the tribe of Ez-Zaghábeh, or Ez-Zughbeeyeh, with a

<sup>1</sup> These words commence a piece of poetry of which a translation will be found in this chapter.

large company of his family and tribe, to come from their district and honour with their presence the festival which he hoped to have occasion to celebrate. These friends complied with his invitation, became his guests, and waited for the birth of the child.

Meanwhile, it happened that the Emeereh Khadrà, walking with the Emeereh Shemmeh, a wife of King Sarhán, and a number of other females, saw a black bird attack and kill a numerous flock of birds of various kinds and hues, and, astonished at the sight, earnestly prayed God to give her a son like this bird, even though he should be black. Her prayer was answered: she gave birth to a black boy. The Emeer Rizk, though he could not believe this to be his own son, was reluctant to put away the mother, from the excessive love he bore her. He had only heard the women's description of the child: he would not see it himself, nor allow any other man to see it, until the seventh day after its birth. For six days his guests were feasted; and on the seventh, or "yóm es-suboó," a more sumptuous banquet was prepared; after which, according to custom, the child was brought before the guests. A female slave carried it upon a silver tray, and covered over with a handkerchief. When the guests, as is usual in such cases, had given their nuqoot (or contributions) of gold and silver coins, one of them lifted up the handkerchief, and saw that the child was as the women had represented it. The Emeer Rizk, who had stood outside the tent while this ceremony was performed, in great distress of mind, was now sharply upbraided by most of his friends for wishing to hide his supposed disgrace, and to retain an unchaste woman as his wife: he was very reluctantly compelled to put her away, that his tribe might not be held in dishonour on her account; and accordingly despatched her, with her child, under the conduct of a sheykh named Muneea, to return to her father's house at Mekkeh. She departed thither, accompanied also by a number of slaves, her husband's property, who determined to remain with her; being allowed to do so by the Emeer Rizk.

On the journey, the party pitched their tents in a valley; and here the Emeereh Khadrà begged her conductor to allow her to remain; for she feared to go back, in such circumstances, to her father's house. But the Emeer Fadl Ibn-Beysem, chief of the tribe of Ez-Zahlán, with a company of horsemen, chanced to fall in with her party during her conversation with the sheykh Muneea, and, having heard her story, determined to take her

under his protection: returning to his encampment, he sent his wife, the Emeereh Laag El-Baheeyeh, to conduct her and the child thither, together with the slaves. The Emeer Faḍl adopted her child as his own; brought him up with his own two sons; and treated him with the fondness of a father. The young Barakát soon gave promise of his becoming a hero: he killed his schoolmaster, by severe beating, for attempting to chastise one of his adoptive brothers; and became the terror of all his schoolfellows. His adoptive father procured another fiḳee for a schoolmaster; but Barakát's presence frightened his schoolfellows from attending, and the fiḳee therefore instructed him at home. At the age of eleven years, he had acquired proficiency in all the sciences, human and divine, then studied in Arabia; including astrology, magic, alchymy, and a variety of other branches of knowledge.

Barakát now went, by the advice of the fiḳee, to ask a present of a horse from his adoptive father; who answered his "Good morning" by saying, "Good morning, my son, and dearer than my son." Surprised at this expression, the youth went to his mother, and asked her if the Emeer Faḍl were not really his father. She told him that this chief was his uncle; and that his father was dead: that he had been killed by a Hilálee Arab, called Rizḳ, the son of Náíl. Becoming warmed and inspired by the remembrance of her wrongs, she then more fully related her case to her son in a series of verses. Of this piece of poetry I shall venture to insert a translation, made verse for verse, and with the same neglect of measure that is found in the original, which I also imitate in carrying on the same rhyme throughout the whole piece, in accordance with the common practice of Arab poets:—

" Thus did Khaḍrà, reflecting on what had past  
'Mid the tents of Hilál, her tale relate.

' O Emeer Barakát, hear what I tell thee,  
And think not my story is idle prate.  
Thy father was Beysem, Beysem's son,  
Thine uncle Faḍl's brother: youth of valour innate!<sup>1</sup>  
And thy father was wealthy above his fellows;  
None other could boast such a rich estate.

<sup>1</sup> Literally, "Thou who hast a valiant maternal uncle!" I add this note merely for the sake of mentioning that the Arabs generally consider innate virtues as inherited through the mother rather than the father, and believe that a man commonly resembles, in his good and evil qualities, his maternal uncle.

As a pilgrim to Mekkeh he journey'd, and there,  
 In my father's house, a guest he sate :  
 He sought me in marriage, attain'd his wish,  
 And made me his lov'd and wedded mate :  
 For thy father had never been bless'd with a son ;  
 And had often bewail'd his unhappy fate.  
 One day to a spring, with some friends I went,  
 When the chiefs had met at a banquet of state,  
 And, amusing ourselves with the sight of the water,  
 We saw numberless birds there congregate :  
 Some were white, and round as the moon at the full ;  
 Some, with plumage of red ; some small ; some great ;  
 Some were black, my son ; and some were tall :  
 They compris'd all kinds that God doth create.  
 Though our party of women came unawares,  
 The birds did not fear us, nor separate ;  
 But soon, from the vault of the sky descending,  
 A black-plum'd bird, of enormous weight,  
 Pounc'd on the others, and killed them all.  
 To God I cried—O Compassionate !  
 Thou Living ! Eternal ! I pray, for the sake  
 Of the Excellent Prophet, thy delegate,  
 Grant me a son like this noble bird,  
 E'en should he be black, Thou Considerate !—  
 Thou wast form'd in my womb, and wast born, my son ;  
 And all thy relations, with joy elate,  
 And thy father among them, paid honour to me :  
 But soon did our happiness terminate :  
 The chiefs of Hilál attack'd our tribe ;  
 And Rizk, among them, precipitate,  
 Fell on thy father, my son, and slew him ;  
 Then seiz'd on his wealth, his whole estate.  
 Thy uncle receiv'd me, his relative,  
 And thee as his son to educate.  
 God assist thee to take our blood-revenge,  
 And the tents of Hilál to desolate.  
 But keep closely secret what I have told thee :  
 Be mindful to no one this tale to relate :  
 Thine uncle might grieve ; so 'tis fit that, with patience,  
 In hope of attaining thy wish, thou shouldst wait.<sup>1</sup>  
 Thus did Khaḍrà address her son Barakát ;  
 Thus her case with artful deception state.  
 Now beg we forgiveness of all our sins,  
 Of God the Exalted, the Sole, the Great ;  
 And join me, my hearers, in blessing the Prophet,<sup>1</sup>  
 The guide, whose praise we should celebrate."

Barakát, excited by this tale, became engrossed with the desire of slaying his own father, whom he was made to believe to be his father's murderer.

<sup>1</sup> When the reciter utters these words, we hear, from the lips of most of the Muslims who are listening to him, the prayer of "Alláhumma ṣallee 'aleyh !"—"O God, bless him !"



His adoptive father gave him his best horse, and instructed him in all the arts of war, in the chase, and in every manly exercise. He early distinguished himself as a horseman, and excited the envy of many of the Arabs of the tribe into which he had been admitted, by his dexterity in the exercise of the "birgás" (a game exactly or nearly similar to what is now called that of the "gereed"), in which the persons engaged, mounted on horses, combated or pursued each other, throwing a palm-stick.<sup>1</sup> He twice defeated plundering parties of the tribe of Teydemeh; and, on the first occasion, killed 'Atwán the son of Dághir, their chief. These Teydemeh Arabs applied, for succour, to Eş-Şaleedee, king of the city of Teydemeh. He recommended them to Gessár the son of Gásir, a chief of the Benee-Hemyer, who sent to demand, of the tribe of Ez-Zahlán, fifteen years' arrears of tribute which the latter had been accustomed to pay to his tribe; and desired them to despatch to him, with this tribute, the slave Barakát (for he believed him to be a slave), a prisoner in bonds, to be put to death. Barakát wrote a reply, in the name of the Emeer Faḍl, promising compliance. Having a slave who much resembled him, and who was nearly of the same age, he bound him on the back of a camel, and, with him and the Emeer Faḍl and his tribe, went to meet Gessár and his party, and the Teydemeh Arabs. Faḍl presented the slave, as Barakát, to Gessár; who, pleased at having his orders apparently obeyed, feasted the tribe of Ez-Zahlán: but Barakát remained on horseback, and refused to eat of the food of his enemies, as, if he did, the laws of hospitality would prevent his executing a plot which he had framed. Gessár observed him; and, asking the Emeer Faḍl who he was, received the answer that he was a mad slave, named Mes'ood. Having drawn Gessár from his party, Barakát discovered himself to him, challenged, fought, and killed him, and took his tent: he pardoned the rest of the hostile party; but imposed upon them the tribute which the Zahlán Arabs had formerly paid them. Henceforth he had the name of Mes'ood added to that which he had before borne. Again and again he defeated the hostile attempts of the Benee-Hemyer to recover their independence, and acquired the highest renown, not only in the eyes of the Emeer Faḍl and the whole tribe of Ez-Zahlán, of whom he was made the chief, but also among all the neighbouring tribes.

<sup>1</sup> It is thus described in the romance: but a headless spear was formerly sometimes used instead of the "gereed," or palm-stick.

We must now return to the Emeer Rizk, and his tribe.— Soon after the departure of his wife Khadrà he retired from his tribe, in disgust at the treatment which he received on account of his supposed disgrace, and in grief for his loss. With a single slave, he took up his abode in a tent of black goats' hair, one of those in which the tenders of his camels used to live, by the spring where his wife had seen the combat of the birds. Not long after this event, the Benee-Hilál were afflicted by a dreadful drought, which lasted so long that they were reduced to the utmost distress. In these circumstances, the greater number of them were induced, with their king Sarhán, to go to the country of the tribe of Ez-Zahlán, for sustenance; but the Ga'áfiréh, and some minor tribes of the Benee-Hilál, joined, and remained with, the Emeer Rizk, who had formerly been their commander. Sarhán and his party were attacked and defeated by Barakát on their arrival in the territory of the Zahlán Arabs; but on their abject submission were suffered by him to remain there. They however cherished an inveterate hatred to the tribe of Ez-Zahlán, who had before paid them tribute; and Sarhán was persuaded to send a messenger to the Emeer Rizk, begging him to come and endeavour to deliver them from their humiliating state. Rizk obeyed the summons. On his way to the territory of the Zahlán Arabs, he was almost convinced, by the messenger who had come to conduct him, that Barakát was his son; but was at a loss to know why he was called by this name, as he himself had named him Aboo-Zeyd. Arriving at the place of his destination, he challenged Barakát. The father went forth to combat the son: the former not certain that his opponent was his son; and the latter having no idea that he was about to lift his hand against his father; but thinking that his adversary was his father's murderer. The Emeer Rizk found occasion to put off the engagement from day to day: at last, being no longer able to do this, he suffered it to commence: his son prevailed: he unhorsed him, and would have put him to death had he not been charged to refrain from doing this by his mother. The secret of Barakát's parentage was now divulged to him by the Emeereh Khadrà; and the chiefs of the Benee-Hilál were compelled to acknowledge him as the legitimate and worthy son of the Emeer Rizk, and to implore his pardon for the injuries which he and his mother had sustained from them. This boon, the Emeer Aboo-Zeyd Barakát generously granted; and he thus added to the joy which the Emeer Rizk derived from the recovery of his favourite wife, and his son.

The subsequent adventures related in the romance of Aboo-Zeyd are numerous and complicated. The most popular portion of the work is the account of a "riyádeh," or expedition in search of pasture; in which Aboo-Zeyd, with three of his nephews, in the disguise of Shá'ers, himself acting as their servant, are described as journeying through northern Africa, and signalizing themselves by many surprising exploits with the Arab tribe of Ez-Zináteeyeh.

## CHAPTER XXII

PUBLIC RECITATIONS OF ROMANCES—*continued*

NEXT in point of number to the Shó'arà, among the public reciters of romances, are those who are particularly and solely distinguished by the appellation of "Moḥadditeen," or Story-tellers (in the singular, "Moḥaddit"). There are said to be about thirty of them in Cairo. The exclusive subject of their narrations is a work called "the Life of Ez-Záhir" ("Seeret Ez-Záhir," or "Es-Seereh ez-Záhireeyeh"<sup>1</sup>). They recite without book.

The Seeret Ez-Záhir is a romance founded on the history of the famous Sultán Ez-Záhir Beybars, and many of his contemporaries. This prince acceded to the throne of Egypt in the last month of the year of the Flight 658, and died in the first month of the year 676; and consequently reigned a little more than seventeen years, according to the lunar reckoning, commencing A.D. 1260, and ending in 1277. Complete copies of the Seeret Ez-Záhir have become so scarce that I have only heard of one existing in Egypt, which I have purchased: it consists of six quarto volumes; but is nominally divided into ten; and is made up of volumes of several different copies. The author and his age are unknown. The work is written in the most vulgar style of modern Egyptian Arabic; but as it was intended for the vulgar, it is likely that copyists may have altered and modernized the language, which was evidently never classical in style, nor in age. The oldest volumes of my copy of it were written a few years more or less than a century ago. To introduce my reader to some slight acquaintance

<sup>1</sup> Hence the Moḥadditeen are sometimes called "Záhireeyeh."

with this work, I shall insert a translation of a few pages at the commencement of the second volume; but, by way of introduction, I must say something of the contents of the first volume.

A person named 'Alee Ibn-El-Warraḳah, being commissioned to procure memlooks from foreign countries, by El-Melik eṣ-Şáleḥ (a famous Sultán of Egypt, and a celebrated welee), is related to have purchased seventy-five memlooks in Syria; and to have added to them, immediately after, the principal hero of this romance, a youth named Maḥmood (afterwards called Beybars), a captive son of Sháh Jaḳmaḳ (or Gaḳmaḳ) King of Khuwárezm. 'Alee was soon after obliged to give Maḥmood to one of his creditors at Damascus, in lieu of a debt; and this person presented him to his wife, to wait upon her son, a deformed idiot; but he remained not long in this situation: the sister of his new master, paying a visit to his wife, her sister-in-law, found her about to beat the young memlook, for having neglected the idiot, and suffered him to fall from a bench: struck with the youth's countenance, as strongly resembling a son whom she had lost, and pitying his condition, she purchased him of her brother, adopted him, gave him the name of Beybars, which was that of her deceased son, and made him master of her whole property, which was very great. This lady was called the sitt Fáṭ'meh Bint-El-Aḳwásee (daughter of the bow-maker). Beybars shewed himself worthy of her generosity; exhibiting many proofs of a noble disposition, and signalizing himself by numerous extraordinary achievements, which attracted general admiration, but rendered him obnoxious to the jealousy and enmity of the Báshà (or rather Governor) of Syria, 'Eesà En-Náşiree, who contrived many plots to insnare him, and to put him to death. After a time, Negm-ed-Deen, a Wezeer of Eṣ-Şáleḥ, and husband of a sister of the sitt Fáṭ'meh, came on an embassy to Damascus, and to visit his sister-in-law. On his return to Egypt, Beybars accompanied him thither; and there he was promoted to offices of high dignity by Eṣ-Şáleḥ, and became a particular favourite of the chief Wezeer, Sháheen El-Afram. The events which immediately followed the death of Eṣ-Şáleḥ are thus related.

"After the death of El-Melik eṣ-Şáleḥ Eiyooob, the Wezeer Eybek called together an assembly in his house, and brought thither the Emeer Ḳala-oon and his partisans: and the Wezeer Eybek said to the Emeer Ḳala-oon, 'To-morrow we will go up

to the deewán with our troops, and either I will be Sultán or thou shalt be.' The Emeer Kala-oon answered, 'So let it be : ' and they agreed to do this. In like manner, the Wezeer Sháheen El-Afram also assembled the Emeer Eydemir El-Bahluwán and his troops, and all the friends and adherents of the Emeer Beybars, and said to them, 'To-morrow, arm yourselves, and go up to the deewán; for it is our desire to make the Emeer Beybars Sultán; since El-Melik eş-Şáleḥ Eiyooḥ wrote for him a patent appointing him to the sovereignty : ' and they answered, 'On the head and the eye.' So they passed the night, and rose in the morning, and went up to the deewán; and there went thither also the Wezeer Eybek Et-Turkumánee, with his troops, and the Emeer Kala-oon El-Elfee, with his troops, and the Emeer 'Aláy-ed-Deen (or 'Aláy-ed-Deen) El-Beyseree, with his troops, all of them armed. The Emeer Beybars likewise went up to the deewán, with his troops; and the deewán was crowded with soldiers. Then said the Wezeer Sháheen, 'Rise, O Beybars; sit upon the throne, and become Sultán, for thou hast a patent appointing thee to the sovereignty.' The Emeer Beybars answered, 'I have no desire for the sovereignty: here is present the Wezeer Eybek, and here is Kala-oon: make one of them Sultán.' But the Wezeer Sháheen said, 'It cannot be: no one shall reign but thou.' Beybars replied, 'By thy head, I will not reign.' 'As he pleases,' said the Wezeer Eybek. 'Is the sovereignty to be conferred by force? As he pleases.' The Wezeer Sháheen said, 'And is the throne to remain unoccupied, with no one to act as Sultán?' The Wezeer Eybek answered, 'Here are *we* present; and here is the Emeer Kala-oon: whosoever will reign, let him reign.' The Emeer 'Ézz-ed-Deen El-Ḥillee said, 'O Wezeer Sháheen, the son of El-Melik eş-Şáleḥ is living.' The Emeer Beybars asked, 'Eş-Şáleḥ has left a son?' The Kurds<sup>1</sup> answered, 'Yes; and his name is 'Eesà: he is at El-Karak.' 'And why,' said the Wezeer Sháheen, 'were ye silent respecting him?' They replied, 'We were silent for no other reason than this, that he drinks wine.' 'Does he drink wine?' said the Wezeer Sháheen. The Kurds answered, 'Yes.' The Emeer Beybars said, 'May our Lord bring him to repentance!' 'Then,' said the soldiers, 'we must go to the city of El-Karak, and bring him thence, and make him Sultán.' The Wezeer Sháheen said to them, 'Take the Emeer Beybars with you : '

<sup>1</sup> Eş-Şáleḥ was of the house of Eiyooḥ, a family of Kurds.

but Eybek and Kāla-oon answered, 'We will go before him, and wait for him there until he come.' The Emeer Beybars said, 'So let it be.'

"Upon this, the Wezeer Eybek and Kāla-oon and 'Aláy-ed-Deen El-Beyserree, and their troops, went down from the deewán, and arranged their affairs, and on the following day caused their tents to be brought out, with their provisions, and pitched outside the 'Ádileeyeh.<sup>1</sup> Now the Wezeer Sháheen knew that the troops wished to create a dissension between the King (El-Melik) 'Eesà and Beybars. So the Wezeer Sháheen went down from the deewán, and took the Emeer Beybars with him, and went to his house, and said to him, 'What hast thou perceived in the departing of the troops before thee?' He answered, 'Those persons detest me; for they are bearers of hatred; but I extol the perfection of Him who is all-knowing with respect to secret things.' The Wezeer said to him, 'My son, it is their desire to go before thee that they may create a dissension between thee and El-Melik 'Eesà.' The Emeer Beybars said, 'There is no power nor strength but in God, the High, the Great!' The Wezeer said to him, 'O Beybars, it is my wish to send 'Osmán Ibn-El-Heblà<sup>2</sup> and Moḥammad Ibn-Kámil the Dromedarist before the troops; and whatever may happen, they will inform us of it.' Beybars answered, 'So let it be.' Accordingly, he sent them; and said to them, 'Go before the troops to the castle of El-Karak, and whatever may happen between them and El-Melik 'Eesà inform us of it.' They answered, 'It is our duty,' and they departed. Then said the Wezeer Sháheen, 'O Beybars, as to thee, do thou journey to Esh-Shám,<sup>3</sup> and stay in the house of thy (adoptive) mother, the sitt Fát'meh Bint-El-Akwásee; and do not go out of the house until I shall have sent to thee 'Osmán.' He answered, 'It is right.' So the Emeer Beybars rose, and went to his house, and passed the night, and got up in the morning, and set out on his journey to Esh-Shám, and took up his abode in the house of his mother, the sitt Fát'meh

<sup>1</sup> "The 'Ádileeyeh" is the name of a mosque founded by El-Melik el-'Ádil Toomán Bey, in the year of the Flight 906 (A.D. 1501), outside the wall of Cairo, near the great gate called Báb en-Naṣr. The same name is also given to the neighbourhood of that mosque.

<sup>2</sup> 'Osmán (vulgarly called 'Otmán and 'Etmán) Ibn-El-Heblà was a rogue whom Beybars took into his service as groom, and compelled to vow repentance at the shrine of the seyyideh Nefeeseh (great-granddaughter of the Imám Ḥasan), and, soon after, made his muḥaddam, or chief of his servants.

<sup>3</sup> Here meaning Damascus.

Bint-El-Akwásee. We shall have to speak of him again presently.

“As to 'Osmán Ibn-El-Heblà and Moḥammad Ibn-Kámil the Dromedarist, they journeyed until they entered the castle of El-Karak, and inquired for the residence of El-Melik 'Eesà, the son of El-Melik eṣ-Şáleḥ Eiyooḅ. Some persons conducted them to the house, and they entered; and the attendants there asked them what was their business. They informed them that they were from Maṣr, and that they wished to have an interview with El-Melik 'Eesà, the son of El-Melik eṣ-Şáleḥ Eiyooḅ. The attendants went and told the kikhyà; who came and spoke to them; and they acquainted him with their errand: so he went and told El-Melik 'Eesà, saying, ‘Two men are come to thee from Maṣr, and wish to have an interview with thee: the one is named 'Osmán; and the other, Moḥammad Ibn-Kámil the Dromedarist.’ The King said, ‘Go, call 'Osmán.’ The kikhyà returned, and took him, and brought him to El-Melik 'Eesà; and 'Osmán looked towards the King and saw him sitting tippling; and before him was a candelabrum, and a handsome memlook was serving him with wine; and he was sitting by a fountain surrounded by trees. 'Osmán said, ‘Mayst thou be in the keeping of God, O King 'Eesà!’ The King answered, ‘Ho! welcome, O 'Osmán! Come, sit down and drink.’ 'Osmán exclaimed, ‘I beg forgiveness of God! I am a repentant.<sup>1</sup> The King said, ‘Obey me, and oppose me not.’ Then 'Osmán sat down; and the King said to him, ‘Why, the door of repentance is open.’ And 'Osmán drank until he became intoxicated.

“Now Eybek and Kala-oon and 'Aláy-ed-Deen and their troops journeyed until they beheld the city of El-Karak, and pitched their tents, and entered the city, and inquired for the house of El-Melik 'Eesà. The people conducted them to the house, and they entered; and the attendants asked them what was their object: they answered, that they were the troops of Maṣr, and wished to have an interview with El-Melik 'Eesà. The attendants went and told the kikhyà, who came, and received them, and conducted them to the hall of audience, where they sat down, while he went and informed El-Melik 'Eesà, saying to him, ‘Come and speak to the troops of Maṣr who have come to thee.’ The King rose, and went to the troops, and accosted them; and they rose, and kissed his hand,

<sup>1</sup> This reply is very often returned by a Muslim when he is invited to drink any intoxicating beverage; or merely, “I have repented” (“Tubt”).

and sat down again. El-Melik 'Eesà then said to them, 'For what purpose have ye come?' They answered, 'We have come to make thee Sultán in Maṣr.' He said, 'My father, El-Melik eṣ-Şáleḥ, is he not Sultán?' They replied, 'The mercy of God, whose name be exalted, be on him! Thy father has died, a victim of injustice: may our Lord avenge him on him who killed him!' He asked, 'Who killed him?' They answered, 'One whose name is Beybars killed him.' 'And where is Beybars?' said he. They replied, 'He is not yet come: we came before him.' 'Even so,' said he. They then sat with him, aspersing Beybars in his absence: and they passed the night there; and, rising on the following morning, said to El-Melik 'Eesà, 'It is our wish to go out, and remain in the camp; for Sháheen, the Wezeer of thy father, is coming, with the Emeer Beybars; and if they see us with thee, they will accuse us of bringing to thee the information respecting Beybars.' He answered, 'Good.' So they went forth to the camp, and remained there.

"The Wezeer Sháheen approached with his troops, and encamped, and saw the other troops in their camp; but he would not ask them any questions, and so entered the city, and went to El-Melik 'Eesà, who said to him, 'Art thou Beybars, who poisoned my father?' He answered, 'I am the Wezeer Sháheen, the Wezeer of thy father.' The King said, 'And where is Beybars, who poisoned my father?' The Wezeer replied, 'Thy father departed by a natural death to await the mercy of his Lord: and who told thee that Beybars poisoned thy father?' The King answered, 'The troops told me.' 'Beybars,' said the Wezeer, 'is in Esh-Shám: go thither, and charge him, in the deewán, with having poisoned thy father, and bring proof against him.' So the Wezeer perceived that the troops had been plotting.

"The Wezeer Sháheen then went, with his troops, outside the camp; and Moḥammad Ibn-Kámil the Dromedarist came to him, and kissed his hand. The Wezeer asked him respecting 'Osmán. He answered, 'I have no tidings of him.' Meanwhile, El-Melik 'Eesà went to 'Osmán, and said to him, 'The Wezeer is come with his troops, and they are outside the camp.' So 'Osmán rose, and, reeling as he went, approached the tents; and the Wezeer Sháheen saw him, and perceived that he was drunk, and called to him. 'Osmán came. The Wezeer smelt him, seized him, and inflicted upon him the "ḥadd;"<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Eighty stripes, the punishment ordained for drunkenness.



said to him, 'Didst thou not vow to relinquish the drinking of wine?' 'Osmán answered, 'El-Melik 'Eesà, whom ye are going to make Sultán, invited me.' The Wezeer said, 'I purpose writing a letter for you to take and give to the Emeer Beybars.' 'Osmán replied, 'Good.' So the Wezeer wrote the letter, and 'Osmán took it and departed, and entered Esh-Shám, and went to the house of the sitt Fát'meh, and gave it to his master, who read it, and found it to contain as follows.—' After salutations—from his excellency the Grand Wezeer, the Wezeer Sháheen El-Afram, to his honour the Emeer Beybars. Know that the troops have aspersed thee, and created dissensions between thee and El-Melik 'Eesà, and accused thee of having poisoned his father, El-Melik eş-Şáleh Eiyooob. Now, on the arrival of this paper, take care of thyself, and go not out of the house, unless I shall have sent to thee. And the conclusion of the letter is, that 'Osmán got drunk in the castle of El-Karak.'—Beybars was vexed with 'Osmán; and said to him, 'Come hither and receive a present:' and he stretched forth his hand, and laid hold of him. 'Osmán said, 'What ails thee?' Beybars exclaimed, 'Did I not make thee vow to relinquish the drinking of wine?' 'Has he told thee?' asked 'Osmán. 'I will give thee a treat,' said Beybars: and he took him, and threw him down, and inflicted upon him the "ḥadd." 'How is it,' said 'Osmán, 'that the King whom ye are going to make Sultán I found drinking wine?' Beybars answered, 'If one has transgressed must thou transgress?' 'And is this,' asked 'Osmán, 'the ḥadd ordained by God?' Beybars answered, 'Yes.' 'Then,' said 'Osmán, 'the ḥadd which Aboo-Farmeh<sup>1</sup> inflicted upon me is a loan, and a debt which must be repaid him.' Beybars then said, 'The troops have created a dissension between me and El-Melik 'Eesà, and have accused me of poisoning his father, El-Melik eş-Şáleh.' 'I beg the forgiveness of God,' said 'Osmán. 'Those fellows detest thee; but no harm will come to us from them.' Beybars said, 'O 'Osmán, call together the sáises,<sup>2</sup> and arm them, and let them remain in the lane of the cotton-weavers,<sup>3</sup> and not suffer any troops to enter.' 'Osmán answered, 'On the head and the eye.' And he assembled the sáises, and armed them, and made them stand in two rows: then he took a seat, and sat in

<sup>1</sup> 'Osmán, for the sake of a rude joke, changes the name of the Wezeer Sháheen (El-Afram) into an appellation too coarse to be here translated.

<sup>2</sup> Grooms, also employed as running footmen.

<sup>3</sup> A lane from which the house was entered.

the court of the house. The Emeer Beybars also armed all his troops, and placed them in the court of the house.

“As to El-Melik 'Eesà, he mounted his horse, and departed with the troops, and journeyed until he entered Esh-Shám; when he went in procession to the deewán, and sat upon the throne, and inquired of the King<sup>1</sup> of Syria respecting Beybars. The King of Syria answered, ‘He is in the lane of the cotton-weavers, in the house of his mother.’ El-Melik 'Eesà said, ‘O Sháheen, who will go and bring him?’ The Wezeer answered, ‘Send to him the Emeer 'Aláy-ed-Deen El-Beyseree.’ So he sent him. The Emeer descended, and went to the lane of the cotton-weavers. 'Osmán saw him, and cried out to him, ‘Dost thou remember, thou son of a vile woman, the chicken which thou atest?’<sup>2</sup> He then struck him with a mace; and the Emeer fell from his horse, and 'Osmán gave him a bastinading. He returned, and informed the King; and the King 'Eesà said again, ‘O Sháheen, who will go, and bring Beybars?’ The Wezeer answered, ‘Send to him the Wezeer Eybek.’ The King said, ‘Rise, O Wezeer Eybek, and go, call Beybars:’ but Eybek said, ‘No one can bring him, except the Wezeer.’ Then said El-Melik 'Eesà, ‘Rise, O Wezeer Sháheen, and bring Beybars.’ The Wezeer answered, ‘On the head and the eye: but, before I bring him, tell me, wilt thou deal with him according to law, or by arbitrary power?’ The King said, ‘By law.’ Then said the Wezeer Sháheen, ‘So let it be: and I spake not thus from any other motive than because I fear for thyself and the troops, lest blood be shed; for Beybars is very stubborn, and has many troops: and I fear for the army; for he is himself equal to the whole host: therefore bring accusation against him, and prove by law that he poisoned thy father.’ The King said, ‘So let it be.’

“Then the Wezeer Sháheen descended from the deewán, and went to the lane of the cotton-weavers. 'Osmán saw him; and said, ‘Thou hast fallen into the snare, O Aboo-Farmeh! the time of payment is come; and the debt must be returned to the creditor. Dost thou know how to give me a bastinading?’ The Wezeer said, ‘My dream which I saw has proved true.’ ‘What was thy dream?’ asked 'Osmán. ‘I dreamed,’ said the Wezeer, ‘last night, that I was travelling, and some Arabs

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes called in the romance of Ez-Záhir “Báshà” of Syria.

<sup>2</sup> This is an allusion to 'Aláy-ed-Deen's having eaten a dish that had been prepared for Beybars, when the latter had just entered the service of the Sulţán Es-Şáleh.

attacked me, and surrounded me, and I was straitened by them; and I saw thy master, the Emeer Beybars, upon a mount; and I called out to him, Come to me, O Emeer Beybars! and he knew me.' The Wezeer Sháheen calling out thus, the Emeer Beybars heard him, and came down running, with his sword in hand; and found 'Osmán and the sáises surrounding the Wezeer. He exclaimed, 'Osmán!' and 'Osmán said, 'He give me a bastinading in the city of El-Karak; and I want to return it.' The Emeer Beybars sharply reprimanded him. 'And so,' said 'Osmán to the Wezeer, 'thou hast found a way of escape.' The Wezeer Sháheen then said, 'O Emeer Beybars, El-Melik 'Eesà hath sent me to thee: he intends to prefer an accusation against thee in the deewán of Esh-Shám, charging thee with having poisoned his father. Now, do thou arm all thy soldiers, and come to the deewán, and fear not: but say that which shall clear thee.' Beybars answered, 'So let it be.' He then armed all his soldiers, and went up to the deewán, and kissed the hand of El-Melik 'Eesà; who said to him, 'Art thou the Emeer Beybars, who poisoned my father?' Beybars answered, 'Prove against me that I poisoned thy father, and bring the charge before the judge, and adduce evidence: the Kádee is here.' The King said, 'I have evidence against thee.' Beybars said, 'Let us see.' 'Here,' said the King, 'are the Wezeer Eybek and Káala-oon and 'Aláy-ed-Deen.' The Emeer Beybars asked them, 'Do ye bear witness against me that I poisoned El-Melik eş-Şáleh?' They answered, 'Never: we neither saw it, nor do we know anything of the matter.' The Kádee said, 'Hast thou any witnesses beside those?' The King replied, 'None: no one informed me but they.' The Kádee said, 'O King, those men are hypocrites, and detest the Emeer Beybars.' El-Melik 'Eesà thereupon became reconciled with the Emeer Beybars, and said to his attendants, 'Bring a kaftán.' They brought one. He said to them, 'Invest with it the Emeer Beybars;' and added, 'I appoint thee, O Beybars, commander-in-chief of the army.' But Beybars said, 'I have no desire for the dignity, and will put on no kaftáns.' The King asked, 'Why, O my lord?' Beybars answered, 'Because I have been told that thou drinkest wine.' The King said, 'I repent.' 'So let it be,' said Beybars: and the King vowed repentance to Beybars: and the Emeer Beybars said, 'I make a condition with thee, O King, that if thou drink wine, I inflict upon thee the "hadd:"' and the King replied, 'It is right.' Upon this the King invested the Emeer Beybars with a kaftán;

and a feast was made, and guns were fired, and festivities were celebrated; and they remained in Esh-Shám three days.

"El-Melik 'Eesà then gave orders for departure, and performed the first day's journey. On the second day they came to a valley, celebrated as a halting-place of the Prophet, the director in the way to heaven: in it were trees, and brooks, and birds which sang the praises of the King, the Mighty, the Pardoner. El-Melik 'Eesà said, 'Pitch the tents here: we will here pass the night.' So they pitched the tents. And the day departed with its brightness, and the night came with its darkness: but the Everlasting remaineth unchanged: the stars shone; and God, the Living, the Self-subsisting, looked upon the creation. It was the period of the full moon; and the King felt a longing to drink wine by the side of the brook and greensward: so he called to Abu-l-Kheyr, who came to him, and kissed his hand. The King said to him, 'O Abu-l-Kheyr, I have a longing to drink wine.' The servant answered, 'Hast thou not vowed repentance to the Emeer Beybars?' The King said, 'The door of repentance is open; so do thou obey me:' and he gave him ten pieces of gold. The servant then went to a convent, and brought him thence a large bottle; and the King said to him, 'If thou see the Emeer Beybars coming, call out *hay!* and as long as thou dost not see him, call *clover!*' The servant answered, 'Right.' And he filled a cup, and handed it to the King. Now 'Osmán was by the tents; and he came before the pavilion of El-Melik 'Eesà; and saw him sitting drinking wine: so he went, and told his master, the Emeer Beybars. Beybars came. Abu-l-Kheyr saw him coming from a tent, and called out to the King, '*Hay! hay!*' The King immediately threw the cup into the brook, Abu-l-Kheyr removed the bottle, and the King set himself to praying; and when he had pronounced the salutation [which terminates the prayers], he turned his eyes, and saw the Emeer Beybars, and said to him, 'Wherefore art thou come at this hour? Go, sleep: it is late.' Beybars answered, 'I have come to ask thee whether we shall continue our journey now, or to-morrow morning.' The King said, 'To-morrow morning.' And the Emeer Beybars returned, vexed with 'Osmán; and said to him, 'O 'Osmán, didst thou not tell me that the King was sitting drinking wine? Now I have been, and found him praying. Dost thou utter a falsehood against the Sultán?' 'Osmán answered, 'Like as he has smoothed it over, do thou also: no matter.' Beybars was silent.

“They passed the night there; and on the following morning El-Melik 'Eesà gave orders for departure. They journeyed towards Maşr; and when they had arrived at the 'Ádileeyeh, and pitched their tents, the Emeer Beybars said, 'O our lord the Sultán, we have now arrived at Maşr.' The King answered, 'I desire, O Beybars, to visit the tomb of the Imám [Esh-Sháfe'ee].' Beybars said, 'The thing is right, O our lord the Sultán: to-morrow I will conduct thee to visit the Imám.' They remained that night at the 'Ádileeyeh; and on the following morning the Sultán rode in procession to visit the Imám, and returned in procession, and visited the tomb of his father, El-Melik eş-Şáleḥ Eiyooḥ; and then went in state to the Citadel: and the 'Ulamà went up thither, and inaugurated him as sovereign, and conducted him into the armoury; and he drew out from thence a sword, upon which was inscribed 'El-Melik el-Mo'azzam:’<sup>1</sup> wherefore they named him 'Eesà el-Mo'azzam.' They coined the money with his name, and prayed for him on the pulpits of the mosques; and he invested with *kaştáns* the soldiers and the Emeer Beybars, the commander-in-chief. The Sultán then wrote a patent, conferring the sovereignty, after himself, upon the Emeer Beybars, to be King and Sultán. So the Emeer Beybars had two patents conferring upon him the sovereignty; the patent of El-Melik eş-Şáleḥ Eiyooḥ, and the patent of El-Melik 'Eesà el-Mo'azzam. Eybek and Kala-oon and 'Aláy-ed-Deen and their partisans, who hated Beybars, were grieved at this; but his friends rejoiced. The troops descended from the *deewán*, and went to their houses; and in like manner the Emeer Beybars descended in procession, and went to his house by the *Ḳanáṭir es-Sibáa*.<sup>2</sup>

“Now the queen Shegeret-ed Durr sent to El-Melik 'Eesà el-Mo'azzam. He went to her palace. She kissed his hand; and he said to her, 'Who art thou?' She answered, 'The wife of thy father, El-Melik eş-Şáleḥ.' 'And what is thy name?' said he. She replied, 'The Queen Fáṭimeh Shegeret-ed-Durr.' He exclaimed, 'Oh! welcome! pray for me then.' She said, 'God bring thee to repentance!' She then gave him a charge respecting the Emeer Beybars; saying, 'Thy father loved him above all the chiefs, and entered into a covenant with him before God; and I, also, made a covenant with him before

<sup>1</sup> The Magnified King.

<sup>2</sup> Two bridges over the Canal of Cairo, in the south-west part of the town.

God.' He answered, 'O Queen, by thy life, I have written for him a patent conferring upon him the sovereignty after me.' She said, 'And thy father, also, wrote for him a patent, conferring upon him the sovereignty.' The King then said to her, 'Those chiefs created a dissension between me and him, and asserted that he poisoned my father.' She said, 'I beg God's forgiveness! They hate him.' After this the Queen remained chatting with him a short time; and he went to his saloon, and passed the night, and rose.

"On the following day he held a court; and the hall was filled with troops. And he winked to Abu-l-Kheyr, and said, 'Give me to drink.' Now he had said to him the day before, 'To-morrow, when I hold my court, and say to thee, Give me to drink, bring me a water-bottle full of wine.' So when El-Melik 'Eesà sat upon the throne, and the court, filled with troops, resembled a garden, the troops resembling the branches of plants, he felt a longing to drink wine, and said to Abu-l-Kheyr, 'Give me to drink;' and winked to him. And he brought to him the water-bottle; and he drank, and returned it. Then he sat a little longer, and said again, 'Give me to drink, O Abu-l-Kheyr.' And the servant brought the bottle; and he drank, and gave it back. He sat a little longer; and again he said, 'Give me to drink.' Kala-oon said, 'O 'Aláy-ed-Deen, it seems that the Sultán has breakfasted upon kawárè."<sup>1</sup> Upon this, the Wezeer Sháheen asked him, 'What hast thou eaten?' The King answered, 'My stomach is heated and flatulent.' The Wezeer, however, perceived the smell of wine; and was vexed. The court then broke up; and the troops descended. The Wezeer Sháheen also descended, and took with him the Emeer Beybars to his house, and said to him, 'May God take retribution from thee, O Beybars.' Beybars said, 'Why?' The Wezeer answered, 'Because thou didst not accept the sovereignty.' 'But for what reason sayest thou this?' asked Beybars. The Wezeer said, 'The Sultán to-day drank wine, while sitting upon the throne, three times. When the Vicar of God, in administering the law, intoxicates himself, his decisions are null, and he has not any right to give them.' Beybars replied, 'I made a condition with him, that if he drank wine, I should inflict upon him the "hadd;" and I wrote a document to that effect in Esh-Shám.' 'To-morrow,' said the Wezeer, 'when he holds his court, observe him; and take the water-bottle, and see what is in it. I perceived his

<sup>1</sup> A dish of lamb's feet, cooked with garlic and vinegar, &c.

smell.' Beybars answered, 'It is right.' And he rose, and went to his house sorrowful. And he passed the night, and rose, and went to the court, and found it filled with troops; and he kissed the hand of the Sultán, and sat in his place. Presently the Sultán said, 'Give me to drink, O Abu-l-Kheyr.' And the servant brought the water-bottle, and the Sultán drank. Beybars took hold of the water-bottle, and said, 'Give me to drink.' The servant answered, 'This is medicinal water.' 'No harm,' said Beybars: 'I have a desire for it.' 'It is rose-water,' said the servant. Beybars said, 'Good.' And he took the bottle, and said, 'Bring a basin.' A basin was brought; and he poured into it the contents of the bottle before the troops; and they saw that it was wine. Then said the Emeer Beybars to the Sultán, 'Is it allowed thee by God to be his Vicar, and to intoxicate thyself? Did I not make thee vow to relinquish the drinking of wine, and say to thee, If thou drink it I will inflict upon thee the "ḥadd;" and did I not write a document to that effect in Esh-Shám?' The Sultán answered, 'It is a habit decreed against me, O Beybars.' Beybars exclaimed, 'God is witness, O ye troops!' And he took the Sultán, and beat him; and he was unconscious, by reason of the wine that he had drunk; and he loosed him, and departed from him, and went to his house."

The second volume proceeds to relate the troubles which befell Beybars in consequence of his incurring the displeasure of El-Melik 'Eesà by the conduct just described; his restoration to the favour of that prince; and his adventures during the reigns of the subsequent Sultáns, Khaleel El-Ashraf, Eş-Şáleḥ the youth, Eybek (his great and inveterate enemy), and El-Muzaffar; and then, his own accession to the sovereignty. The succeeding volumes contain narratives of his wars in Syria and other countries; detailing various romantic achievements, and the exploits of the "Fedáweeyeh," or "Fedáwees," of his time. The term Fedáwee, which is now vulgarly understood to signify any warrior of extraordinary courage and ability, literally and properly means a person who gives, or is ready to give, his life as a ransom for his companions, or for their cause; and is here applied to a class of warriors who owned no allegiance to any sovereign unless to a chief of their own choice; the same class who are called, in our histories of the Crusades, "Assassins:" which appellation the very learned orientalist De Sacy has, I think, rightly pronounced to be a corruption of "Ḥashshásheen," a name derived from their making frequent

use of the intoxicating hemp, called "ḥasheesh." The romance of Ez-Záhir affords confirmation of the etymology given by De Sacy; but suggests a different explanation of it: the Fedáweeyeh being almost always described in this work as making use of "beng" (a term applied to hemp, and also to henbane, which, in the present day, is often mixed with ḥasheesh,) to make a formidable enemy or rival their prisoner, by disguising themselves, inviting him to eat, putting the drug into his food or drink, and thus causing him speedily to fall into a deep sleep, so that they were able to bind him at their leisure, and convey him whither they would.<sup>1</sup> The chief of these warriors is "Sheehah," called "Sultán el-Kiláa wa-l-Ḥoṣoon" (or "Sultán of the Castles and Fortresses") who is described as almost constantly engaged, and generally with success, in endeavouring to reduce all the Fedáwees to allegiance to himself and to Beybars. From his adroitness in disguises and plots, his Proteus-like character, his name has become a common appellation of persons of a similar description. Another of the more remarkable characters in this romance is "Guwán" (or John), a European Christian, who, having deeply studied Muslim law, succeeds in obtaining, and retains for a few years, the office of Káḍee of the Egyptian metropolis; and is perpetually plotting against Beybars, Sheehah, and other Muslim chiefs.

Much of the entertainment derived from recitations of this work depends upon the talents of the Moḥaddit; who often greatly improves the stories by his action, and by witty introductions of his own invention.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### PUBLIC RECITATIONS OF ROMANCES—*continued*

THERE is, in Cairo, a third class of reciters of romances, who are called "'Anátireh," or "'Antereeyeh" (in the singular "'Anteree");<sup>2</sup> but they are much less numerous than either of the other two classes before mentioned; their number at

<sup>1</sup> Since the remark above was written, I have found that El-Idreesee applies the term "Ḥasheeshweeyeh," which is exactly synonymous with "Ḥashshásheen," to the "Assassins:" this, therefore, decides the question.

<sup>2</sup> Pronounced 'Anter'ee.



present, if I be rightly informed, not amounting to more than six. They bear the above-mentioned appellation from the chief subject of their recitations, which is the romance of "Antar" ("Seeret Antar"). As a considerable portion of this interesting work has become known to English readers by Mr. Terrick Hamilton's translation, I need give no account of it. The reciters of it read it from the book: they chant the poetry; but the prose they read, in the popular manner; and they have not the accompaniment of the rabáb. As the poetry in this work is very imperfectly understood by the vulgar, those who listen to it are mostly persons of some education.

The 'Anátireh also recite from other works than that from which they derive their appellation. All of them, I am told, occasionally relate stories from a romance called "Seeret el-Mugáhideen" ("The History of the Warriours"), or, more commonly, "Seeret Delhemeh,"<sup>1</sup> or "Zu-l-Himmeh,"<sup>2</sup> from a heroine who is the chief character in the work. A few years since, they frequently recited from the romance of "Seyf Zu-l-Yezen" (vulgarly called "Seyf El-Yezen," and "Seyf El-Yezel"), a work abounding with tales of wonder; and from "The Thousand and One Nights" ("Elf Leyleh wa-Leyleh"), more commonly known, in our country, by the title of "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments." The great scarcity of copies of these two works is, I believe, the reason why recitations of them are no longer heard: even fragments of them are with difficulty procured; and when a complete copy of "The Thousand and One Nights" is found, the price demanded for it is too great for a reciter to have it in his power to pay. I doubt whether the romances of Aboo-Zeyd, Ez-Záhir, 'Antar, and Delhemeh, are chosen as the subjects of recitation because preferred to "The Thousand and One Nights;" but it is certain that the modern Muslims of Egypt have sufficient remains of Bedawee feeling to take great delight in hearing tales of war.

That my reader may have some notion of all the works from which the professional reciters of romances in Cairo draw materials for the amusement of their audiences in the present day, I shall give a sketch of some of the adventures

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Delhem'eh.

<sup>2</sup> This, being a masculine appellation, is evidently a corruption of the former. The name is written "Delhemeh" in the older portions of some volumes in my possession, made up of fragments of this work. One of these portions appears to be at least three centuries old. In some of the more modern fragments, the name is written "Zu-l-Himmeh."

related in the romance of Delhemeh. This work is even more scarce than any of those before mentioned. The copies, I am told, were always in fifty-five volumes. After long search, all that I have succeeded in procuring of it is a portion consisting of the first three volumes (containing, together, 302 pages), and another portion, consisting of the forty-sixth and forty-seventh volumes. The former would present a good specimen of the work, were not the greater part written in a hand scarcely legible; in consequence of which, and of the many other subjects that now demand my attention, I have only read the first volume. The chief subjects of this work, according to the preface, are the warlike exploits of Arabs of the Desert in the time of the Khaleefehs of the houses of Umeiyeh and El-'Abbás. It is composed from the narratives of various writers: nine names of the authors are mentioned; but none of them are at present known: their history and their age are alike uncertain; but the style of their narratives shews them to be not modern. The account which the 'Anátireh and Moḥadditeen generally give of this romance is as follows.—When El-Aṣma'ee (or, as he is vulgarly called, El-Aṣmo'ee,) composed, or compiled, the history of 'Antar,<sup>1</sup> that work (they say) became extremely popular, and created so great an enthusiasm on the subjects of the adventures of Arab warriors, that a diligent search was made for all tales of the same kind; and from these was compiled the Seeret el-Mugáhideen, or Delhemeh, by some author now unknown, who, as he could not equal the author of 'Antar in eloquence, determined to surpass him in the length of his narratives; and 'Antar being generally in forty-five volumes, he made his book fifty-five. The romance of Delhemeh abounds in poetry, which is not without beauties, nor without faults; but the latter are, perhaps, mostly attributable to copyists.—Of a part of what I have read, which introduces us to one of the principal characters in the work, I shall now give an abridged translation.

At the commencement of the work, we are told, that, in the times of the Khaleefehs of the house of Umeiyeh, none of the Arab tribes surpassed in power, courage, hospitality, and other virtues for which the Arabs of the Desert are so famous, the Benee-Kiláb, whose territory was in the Ḥegáz: but the viceroy of the Khaleefeh over the collective tribes of the desert was the chief of the Benee-Suleym, who prided themselves

<sup>1</sup> The 'Ulamà in general despise the romance of 'Antar, and ridicule the assertion that El-Aṣma'ee was its author.

on this distinction, and on their wealth. El-Háris, the chief of the Bence-Kiláb, a horseman unrivalled in his day, in one of the predatory excursions which he was wont frequently to make against other tribes, took captive a beautiful girl, named Er-Rabáb (or the Viol), whom he married. She became pregnant; and, during her pregnancy, dreamed that a fire issued from her, and burnt all her clothing. Being much troubled by this dream, she related it to her husband; and he, alike surprised and distressed, immediately searched for, and soon found, a person to interpret it. An old sheykh informed him that his wife would bear a son of great renown, who would have a son more renowned than himself; and that the mother of the former would be in danger of losing her life at the time of his birth. This prophecy he repeated to the wife of El-Háris: and, at her request, he wrote an amulet to be tied upon the infant's right arm, as soon as he should be born; upon which amulet he recorded the family and pedigree of the child:—"This child is the son of El-Háris the son of Khálid the son of 'Ámir the son of Şaşa'ah the son of Kiláb; and this is his pedigree among all the Arabs of the Hegáz; and he is verily of the Bence-Kiláb." Soon after this, El-Háris fell sick; and, after a short illness, died. Most of the Arabs of neighbouring tribes, who had been subjected and kept in awe by him, rejoiced at his death, and determined to obtain retribution by plundering his property. This coming to the ears of his widow, El-Rabáb, she determined to return to her family; and persuaded a black slave who had belonged to her late husband to accompany her. By night, and without having mentioned their intention to any one else, they departed; and at midnight they approached a settlement of Arabs whose chief was the Emeer Dárim. Here the slave, tempted by the Devil, led her from the road, and impudently told her that her beauty had excited in his breast a passion which she must consent to gratify. She indignantly refused; but the fright that she received from his base conduct occasioned a premature labour; and in this miserable state she gave birth to a son. She washed the infant with the water of a brook that ran by the spot; wrapped it in a piece of linen which she tore off from her dress; tied the amulet to its arm; and placed it to her breast. Scarcely had she done this, when the slave, infuriated by disappointment, drew his sword, and struck off her head. Having thus revenged himself, he fled.

Now it happened, as Providence had decreed, that the wife

of the Emeer Dárim had just been delivered of a son, which had died; and the Emeer, to dissipate his grief on this account, went out to hunt, with several of his people, on the morning after Er-Rabáb had been murdered. He came to the spot where her corpse lay, and saw it: the infant was still sucking the breast of its dead mother; and God had sent a flight of locusts, of the kind called "gundub," to shade it from the sun with their wings. Full of astonishment at the sight, he said to his Wezeer, "See this murdered damsel, and this infant on her lap, and those flying insects shading it, and the dead mother still affording it milk! Now, by the faith of the Arabs, if thou do not ascertain the history of this damsel, and the cause of her murder, I behead thee like her." The Wezeer answered, "O King, none knoweth what is secret but God, whose name be exalted! Was I with her? or do I know her? But promise me protection, and I will inform thee what I suppose to have been the case." The King said, "I give thee protection." Then said the Wezeer, "Know, O King,—but God is all-knowing,—that this is the daughter of some King; and she has grown up, and a servant has had intercourse with her; and by him she has conceived this child; and her family have become acquainted with the fact, and killed her. This is my opinion; and there is an end of it." The King exclaimed, "Thou dog of the Arabs! what is this that thou sayest to the prejudice of this damsel? By Allah! if I had not promised thee protection I had slain thee with the edge of the sword! If she had committed this crime, she would not be affording the child her milk after she was dead: nor would God have sent these flying insects to shade the infant." He then sent for a woman to wash the corpse; and after it had been washed, and bound in grave-clothes, he buried it respectably.

From the circumstance of the gundub shading him with their wings, the foundling received the name of "El-Gundubáh."<sup>1</sup> The Emeer Dárim conveyed it to his wife, and persuaded her to bring it up as her own; which she did until the child had attained the age of seven years, when he was sent to school, and there he remained until he had learned the Kur-án. By the time he had attained to manhood, he had become a horseman unrivalled: he was like a bitter colocynth, a viper, and a calamity.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Gundub'ah.

<sup>2</sup> These are not terms of reproach among the Arabs; but of praise.

Now his adoptive father, the Emeer Dárim, went forth one day, according to his custom, on a predatory expedition, accompanied by a hundred horsemen. Falling in with no booty, he proceeded as far as the territory of a woman called Esh-Shamtà (or the Grizzle), whom the heroes of her time held in fear, on account of her prowess and strength; and who was possessed of great wealth. He determined to attack her. She mounted her horse in haste, on hearing of his approach, and went forth to meet him and his party. For a whole hour she contended with them; killed the greater number; and put the rest to flight, except the Emeer Dárim, whom she took prisoner, and led in bonds, disgraced and despised, to her fortress. Those of his attendants who had fled returned to their tribes, and plunged them in affliction by the story they related. The Emeer Dárim had ten sons. These all set out together, with a number of attendants, to rescue their father; but they all became the prisoners of Esh-Shamtà; and most of their attendants were killed by her. El-Gundubah now resolved to try his arms against this heroine. He went alone, unknown to any of the tribe, except his foster-mother, and arrived at the place of his destination. Esh-Shamtà was on the top of her fortress. She saw him approach, a solitary horseman; and perceived that his riding was that of a hero. In haste she descended, and mounted her horse, and went out to meet him. She shouted against him; and the desert resounded with her shout; but El-Gundubah was unmoved by it. They defied each other, and met; and for a whole hour the contest lasted: at length, El-Gundubah's lance pierced the bosom of Esh-Shamtà; its glittering point protruded through her back, and she fell from her horse, slain, and weltering in her blood. Her slaves, who were forty in number, seeing their mistress dead, made a united attack upon her victor; but he unhorsed them all; and then, reproaching them for having served a woman, when they were all men of prowess, admonished them to submit to him; upon which they all acknowledged him as their master. He divided among them the treasures of Esh-Shamtà; and released his adoptive father and brothers, with whom he returned to the tribe.

This exploit spread the fame of El-Gundubah among all the tribes of the desert; but it excited envy in the breast of the Emeer Dárim, who soon after desired him to seek for himself some other place of abode. El-Gundubah remonstrated; but

to no effect; and prepared for his departure. When he was about to go, the Emeer Dárim desired to be allowed to open the amulet that was upon El-Gundubah's arm, and to read what was written upon the paper. Having obtained permission, and done this, he uttered a loud shout; and several of his people coming in to inquire the cause of this cry, he said to them, "This youth is the son of your enemy El-Háris, the Kilábee: take him, and slay him:" but El-Gundubah insisted that they should contend with him one by one. The Emeer Dárim was the first to challenge him; and addressed him in these verses:<sup>1</sup>

"This day I forewarn thee of death and disgrace,  
 From my weapon, thou offspring of parents base!  
 Didst thou think, thou vile foundling, to raise thyself,  
 O'er the heads of our tribe, to the foremost place?  
 Thy hope is now baffled: thy wish is deceiv'd:  
 For to-day we have known thee of hostile race.  
 Thy bloodthirsty father oppressed our tribe:  
 Both our men and our wealth were his frequent preys:  
 But to-day shall be taken a full revenge:  
 All our heroes shall see me their wrongs efface.  
 Be assur'd that thy death is now near at hand;  
 That my terrible lance shall pierce thee apace:  
 For 'twas I introduc'd thee among our tribe;  
 And the foe that I brought I will now displace."

El-Gundubah replied, "O my uncle, thou hast treated me with kindness: do not repent of it; but let me depart from you in peace: cancel not the good that thou hast done." But Dárim answered, "Use no protraction: for thy death is determined on." Then El-Gundubah thus addressed him—

"Be admonish'd, O Dárim! thy steps retrace;  
 And haste not thus rashly thy fate to embrace.  
 Hast thou ever seen aught of evil in me?  
 I have always nam'd thee with honour and praise.  
 By my hand and lance was Esh-Shamtà destroy'd,  
 When thou wast her captive, in bonds and disgrace:

<sup>1</sup> When the narrator introduces poetry, he generally desires his readers and hearers to bless the Prophet. Frequently he merely says, "Bless ye the Apostle:" and often, "Bless ye him for [the visit to] whose tomb burdens are bound: *i.e.* "Bless ye him whose tomb is an object of pilgrimage:" for, though the pilgrimage ordained by the Kur-án is that to the temple of Mekkeh and Mount 'Arafát, yet the Prophet's tomb is also an object of pious pilgrimage.—I translate the poetry from this tale verse for verse, imitating the system pursued with regard to rhyme in the originals.

I freed thee from bondage : and is it for this  
 We are now met as enemies, face to face?  
 God be judge between us : for He will be just,  
 And will shew who is noble, and who is base."

As soon as he had said these words, the Emeer Dárim charged upon him. They fought for a whole hour; and at last, El-Gundubah pierced the breast of Dárim with his spear; and the point protruded, glittering, from the spine of his back. When Dárim's sons saw that their father was slain, they all attacked El-Gundubah, who received them as the thirsty land receives a drizzling rain: two of them he killed: the rest fled, and acquainted their mother with the events they had just witnessed. With her head uncovered, and her bosom bare, she came weeping to El-Gundubah, and thus exclaimed—

"O Gundubah! thy lance hath wrought havoc sore:  
 Man and youth have perish'd; and lie in their gore;  
 And among them, the eldest of all my sons.  
 They are justly punish'd; but now I implore  
 That thou pardon the rest: in pity for me  
 Restrain thy resentment, and slaughter no more.  
 By my care of thy childhood! and by these breasts  
 Which have nourish'd thee, noble youth, heretofore!  
 Have mercy upon us, and leave us in peace:  
 In spite of thy wrongs, this contention give o'er.  
 I love thee as though thou wert truly my son;  
 And thy loss I shall sorrow for, evermore."

El-Gundubah listened to her address; and when she had finished, he thus replied—

"O Mother! by Him whom we all adore!  
 And the just Muṣṭafâ Tá-Há!<sup>1</sup> I deplore  
 The actions which I have been made to commit;  
 Deeds against my will; and not thought of before:  
 But God, to whose aid I ascribe my success,  
 Had of old decreed these events to occur.  
 For thy sake their pardon I grant; and I would  
 If their lances had made my lifeblood to pour.  
 To withdraw myself hence, and sever the ties  
 Of affection and love, is a trial sore.  
 While I live I shall constantly wish thee peace,  
 And joy uninterrupted for evermore."

<sup>1</sup> Tá-Há (which is the title of the 20th chapter of the Qur-án, and is composed of two letters of the Arabic alphabet,) is considered, and often used, as a name of the Arabian Prophet (of whom Muṣṭafâ and Ahmad, as well as Moḥammad, are also names): so likewise is Yá-Seen, which is the title of the 36th chapter of the Qur-án.

Having said thus, El-Gundubah took leave of his foster-mother, and departed alone, and went to the fortress of Esh-Shamṭā. The slaves saw him approach, and met him; and, in reply to their inquiries, he informed them of all that had just befallen him. He then asked if any of them were willing to go with him in search of a better territory, where they might intercept the caravans, and subsist by plunder; and they all declaring their readiness to accompany him, he chose from among them as many as he desired, and left the rest in the fortress. He travelled with his slaves until they came to a desolate and dreary tract, without verdure or water; and the slaves, fearing that they should die of thirst, conspired against his life: but El-Gundubah, perceiving their discontent, and guessing their intention, pressed on to a tract abounding with water and pasture; and here they halted to rest. El-Gundubah watched until all of them had fallen asleep; and then despatched them, every one, with his sword. Having done this, he pursued his journey during the night; and in the morning he arrived at a valley with verdant sides, and abundance of pasture, with lofty trees, and rapid streams, and birds whose notes proclaimed the praises of the Lord of Power and Eternity. In the midst of this valley he saw a Bedawee tent, and a lance stuck by it in the ground, and a horse picketed. The Emeer Gundubah fixed his eyes upon this tent; and as he looked at it, there came forth from it a person of elegant appearance, completely armed, who bounded upon the horse, and galloped towards him, without uttering a word, to engage him in combat. "My brother!" exclaimed El-Gundubah, "begin with salutation before the stroke of the sword; for that is a principle in the nature of the noble." But no answer was returned. They fought until their spears were broken, and till their swords were jagged: at length El-Gundubah seized hold of the vest beneath his antagonist's coat of mail, and heaved its wearer from the saddle to the ground. He uplifted his sword; but a voice, so sweet, it would have cured the sick, exclaimed, "Have mercy on thy captive, O hero of the age!" "Art thou a man?" said El-Gundubah, "or a woman?" "I am a virgin damsel," she replied; and, drawing away her "litám,"<sup>1</sup> displayed a face like the moon at the full. When El-Gundubah

<sup>1</sup> The "litám" (or "lithám") is a piece of drapery with which a Bedawee often covers the lower part of his face. It frequently prevents his being recognised by another Arab, who might make him a victim of blood-revenge.



beheld the beauty of her face, and the elegance of her form, he was bewildered, and overpowered with love. He exclaimed, "O mistress of beauties, and star of the morn, and life of souls! acquaint me with thy secret, and inform me of the truth of thy history." She replied, "O hero of our time! O hero of the age and period! shall I relate to thee my story in narrative prose, or in measured verse?" He said, "O beauty of thine age, and peerless-one of thy time! I will hear nothing from thee but measured verse." She then thus related to him all that had happened to her.

"O thou noble hero, and generous knight!  
 Thou leader of warriors! and foremost in fight!  
 Hear, now, and attend to the story I tell.  
 I'm the virgin daughter, thou hero of might!  
 Of El-Melik<sup>1</sup> Káboos; and a maid whose fame  
 Has been raised, by her arms, to an envied height;  
 Acknowledg'd a heroine, bold and expert,  
 Skill'd alike with the lance and the sword to smite.  
 Many suitors sought me in marriage, but none  
 Could ever induce me his love to requite;  
 And I swore by my Lord, the Compassionate,  
 And the noble Muṣṭafá, that moon-like light,  
 That to no man on earth I would e'er consent  
 In the bonds of marriage myself to unite,  
 Unless to a hero for prowess renown'd,  
 To one who should prove himself hardy in fight;  
 Who in combat should meet me, and overcome,  
 And never betray the least weakness or fright.  
 My suitors assembled: I fought each in turn;  
 And I vanquish'd them all in our people's sight:  
 Not a horseman among them attain'd his wish;  
 For I parried the thrust of each daring knight.  
 I was justly 'The Slayer of Heroes' nam'd;  
 For no match could be found for my weapon bright.  
 But I fear'd my father might force me, at last,  
 To accept, as my husband, some parasite;  
 And therefore I fled; and, in this lonely place,  
 With my troop of horsemen, I chose to alight.  
 Here we watch for the passing caravans;  
 And with plunder we quiet our appetite.  
 Thou hast made me thy captive, and pardon'd me:  
 Grant me one favour more: my wish do not slight:  
 Receive me in marriage: embrace me at once;  
 For I willingly now acknowledge thy right."

"Kattálet-esh-Shug'án," or the Slayer of Heroes (for so was this damsel named, as above related by herself), then said to

<sup>1</sup> It was the custom to entitle the chief of a powerful tribe "El-Melik," or "the King."

El-Gundubah, "Come with me and my party to my abode." He went with her; and her people received them with joy, and feasted the Emeer Gundubah three days. On the fourth day, Kattálet-esh-Shug'án assembled the people of her tribe, with El-Gundubah, at her own dwelling; and regaled them with a repast, to which high and low were admitted. After they had eaten, they began to converse; and asked El-Gundubah to acquaint them with his history. He accordingly related to them what had befallen him with the Emeer Dárim; how he had liberated him and his sons from captivity, and how ungratefully he had been treated. There were ten persons sitting with him; and nine of these recounted their deeds in arms. The tenth, who was a slave, was then desired to tell his story; and he related his having served the Emeer Hárís, and murdered his widow. El-Gundubah heard with impatience this tale of his mother's murderer; and, as soon as it was finished, drew his sword, and struck off the slave's head, exclaiming, "I have taken my blood-revenge upon this traitor slave!" The persons present all drew their swords, and raised a tremendous shout. Kattálet-esh-Shug'án was not then with them; but she heard the shout, and instantly came to inquire the cause; which they related to her; demanding, at the same time, that El-Gundubah should be given up to them to be put to death. She drew them aside, and told them that he had eaten of her food, and that she would not give him up, even if he had robbed her of her honour; but that she would advise him to take his departure on the morrow, and that, when he should have left her abode, they might do as they pleased. She then went to him, and told him of his danger. He asked what he should do. She answered, "Let us marry forthwith, and depart from these people." And this he gladly consented to do.

They married each other immediately, taking God alone for their witness; and departed at night, and proceeded on their way until the morning, giving thanks to their Lord. For four days they continued their journey, and on the fifth day arrived at a valley abounding with trees and fruits and birds and running streams. They entered it at midnight. Seeing something white among the trees, they approached it; and found it to be a horse, white as camphor. They waited till morning, and then beheld a settlement of Arabs: there were horses, and she and he camels, and tents pitched, and lances stuck in the ground, and pavilions erected; and among them was a great company; and there were maids beating tambourines: they were

surrounded with abundance. Through this valley, El-Gundubah and his bride took their way : his love for her increased : they conversed together ; and her conversation delighted him. She now, for the first time, ventured to ask him why he had killed the slave, when he was her guest ; and he related to her the history of this wretch's crime. After this, they talked of the beauties of the valley which they had entered ; and while they were thus amusing themselves, a great dust appeared, and beneath it were seen troops of horsemen galloping along. El-Gundubah immediately concluded that they were of his wife's tribe, and were come in pursuit of him ; but he was mistaken : for they divided into four parties, and all attacking, in different quarters at the same time, the tribe settled in the valley, soon made the latter raise piteous cries and lamentations, and rend the air with the shouts of "O 'Ámir ! O Kiláb !" When El-Gundubah heard the cries of "O 'Ámir ! O Kiláb !" he exclaimed to his wife, "These people are the sons of my uncle ! my flesh and my blood !" And he instantly determined to hasten to their assistance. His bride resolved to accompany him ; and they both together rushed upon the enemy, slaying every horseman in their way, and piercing the breasts of those on foot, with such fury and such success that the defeated tribe rallied again, repulsed their assailants, and recovered all the booty that had been taken ; after which they returned to El-Gundubah, and asked him who he was. He answered, "This is not a time to ask questions ; but a time to rest from fight and slaughter." So they took him with them, and retired to rest ; and after they had rested and eaten, he related to them his history. Delighted with his words, they all exclaimed, "The truth hath appeared ; and doubt is dissipated : justice is rendered to the deserving ; and the sword is returned to its scabbard !" They immediately acknowledged him their rightful chief : but, after the death of El-Háris, they had chosen for their chief an Emeer named Gábir, who hated El-Háris, and termed him a robber ; and this Emeer now disputed their choice, and challenged El-Gundubah to decide the matter by combat. The challenge was accepted, and the two rivals met and fought ; but, though Gábir was a thorough warrior, El-Gundubah slew him. This achievement obtained him the possession of Gábir's mare, an animal coveted throughout the desert : the rest of the property of the vanquished chief he left to be parted among the tribe. There were, however, many partisans of Gábir ; and these, when they saw him slain,

gathered themselves together against El-Gundubah: but he, with the assistance of his own party, defeated them, and put them to flight. Returning from their pursuit, he sat among his people and kinsfolk; and the Sheykhs of his tribe brought him horses and arms and everything necessary: he received gifts from every quarter: his wife, also, was presented with ornaments; and from that day the Emeer Gundubah was acknowledged by all his tribe as the chief of the Bence-Kiláb.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### PERIODICAL PUBLIC FESTIVALS, ETC.

MANY of the most remarkable customs of the modern Egyptians are witnessed at their periodical public festivals celebrated in Cairo; the more important of which I shall here describe. Most of these festivals and other anniversaries take place at particular periods of the lunar, Mohammadan year.

The first ten days of "Moħarram" (the first month of the Mohammadan year) are considered as eminently blessed, and are celebrated with rejoicing; but the tenth day is especially honoured. They are vulgarly called the "'ashr;" the derivation of which term will be explained hereafter. The custom of selling, during this period of ten days, what is called "mey'ah mubárah," to be used, during the ensuing year, as a charm against the evil eye, whenever occasion may require, I have already mentioned in the second of the two chapters devoted to the superstitions of the modern Egyptians. I have also mentioned that it is considered, by the Egyptians, unlucky to make a marriage-contract in Moħarram.

It is a common custom of the Muslims of Egypt to give what they can afford in alms during the month of Moħarram; especially in the first ten days, and more especially on the tenth day;<sup>1</sup> and many pretend, though few of them really do so, to give, at this season, the "zekah," or alms required by

<sup>1</sup> This custom seems to have been copied from the Jews, who are accustomed to abound in alms-giving and other good works during the ten days commencing with their New Year's Day and ending with the Day of Atonement, more than in all the rest of the year.—See Dr. M'Caul's 'Old Paths,' pp. 125, 129.

their law, of which I have spoken in a former chapter; they give what, and to whom, they will. During the ten days above mentioned, and particularly on the tenth, many of the women of Cairo, and even those in respectable circumstances, if they have a young child, carry it through the streets, generally on the shoulder, or employ another female to carry it, for the purpose of soliciting alms from any well-dressed person whom they may chance to meet: sometimes the mother or bearer of the child, and sometimes the child itself, asks for the alms; saying, "My master, the alms of the 'ashr."<sup>1</sup> The word "'ashr" is vulgarly understood as meaning the "ten days;" but I think it signifies the "ten nights;" though I am informed that it is a corruption of "'oshr," a term improperly used for "rubā el-oshr" (the quarter of the tenth, or the fortieth part), which is the proportion that the Muslim is required, by law, to give in alms of the money which he possesses, and of some other articles of property. The sum generally given to a child in the case above described is a piece of five *saḍḍahs*;<sup>2</sup> and this, and as many others as can be procured in the same manner, are sometimes spent in sweetmeats, &c., but more usually sewed to the child's cap, and worn thus until the next *Moḥarram*; when, if the child be not too old, the same custom is repeated for its sake; the pieces of money thus obtained being considered as charms.

The women of Egypt, and particularly of Cairo, entertain some curious superstitions respecting the first ten days of *Moḥarram*. They believe that "ginn" (or *genii*) visit some people by night during this period; and say that, on this occasion, a *ginnee* appears sometimes in the form of a *saḳḳà* (or water-carrier), and sometimes in that of a mule. In the former case, the mysterious visiter is called "*saḳḳà el-'ashr*" (or "the water-carrier of the 'ashr"): in the latter, "*baghlet el-'ashr*" ("the mule of the 'ashr"). When the *ginnee*, they say, comes in the form of a *saḳḳà*, he knocks at the chamber-door of a person sleeping, who asks, "Who is there?" The *ginnee* answers, "I, the *saḳḳà*: where shall I empty [the skin]?" The person within, as *saḳḳàs* do not come at night, knows who his visiter is, and says, "Empty into the water-jar;" and, going out afterwards, finds the jar full of gold.—The *ginnee* in the form of a mule is described in a more remarkable manner. He bears a pair of saddle-bags filled with gold; a dead man's

<sup>1</sup> "Yá seedee, zekah el-'ashr."

<sup>2</sup> Equivalent to about a farthing and one-fifth.

head is placed upon his back; and round his neck is hung a string of little round bells, which he shakes at the door of the chamber of the person whom he comes to enrich. This person comes out, takes off the dead man's head, empties the saddle-bags of their valuable contents, then fills them with straw or bran or anything else; replaces them and the head, and says to the mule, "Go, O blessed!"—Such are the modes in which the good genii pay their zekah. During the first ten days of Moḥarram, many an ignorant woman ejaculates this petition: "O my Lord, send me the water-carrier of the 'ashr!" or, "Send me the mule of the 'ashr!" The men, in general, laugh at these superstitions.

Some of the people of Cairo say that a party of genii, in the forms and garbs of ordinary mortals, used to hold a midnight "sooḵ" (or market) during the first ten days of Moḥarram, in a street called Eṣ-Ṣaleebah, in the southern part of the metropolis, before an ancient sarcophagus, which was called "el-Hóḍ el-Marṣood" (or "the Enchanted Trough"). This sarcophagus was in a recess under a flight of steps leading up to the door of a mosque, adjacent to the old palace called *Kal'at el-Kebsh*: it was removed by the French during their occupation of Egypt, and is now in the British Museum. Since its removal, the sooḵ of the genii, it is said, has been discontinued. Very few persons, I am told, were aware of this custom of the genii. Whoever happened to pass through the street where they were assembled, and bought anything of them, whether dates or other fruit, cakes, bread, &c., immediately after found his purchase converted into gold.

The tenth day of Moḥarram is called "Yóm 'Áshoorà." It is held sacred on many accounts; because it is believed to be the day on which the first meeting of Adam and Eve took place after they were cast out of Paradise; and that on which Noah went out from the ark: also, because several other great events are said to have happened on this day; and because the ancient Arabs, before the time of the Prophet, observed it by fasting. But what, in the opinion of most modern Muslims, and especially the Persians, confers the greatest sanctity on the day of 'Áshoorà, is the fact of its being that on which El-Ḥoseyn, the Prophet's grandson, was slain, a martyr, at the battle of the plain of Karbalà. Many Muslims fast on this day, and some also on the day preceding.

As I am now writing on the day of 'Áshoorà, I shall mention the customs peculiar to it which I have witnessed on the

present occasion.—I had to provide myself with a number of five-faddah-pieces before I went out this day, for the alms of the 'ashr, already mentioned. In the streets of the town I saw many young children, from about three to six or seven years of age, chiefly girls, walking about alone, or two or three together, or carried by women, and begging these alms.—In the course of the morning, a small group of blind faḡeers, one of whom bore a half-furled red flag, with the names of El-Ḥoseyn and other worthies worked upon it in white, stopped in the street before my door, and chanted a petition for an alms. One of them began, "O thou who hast alms to bestow on the blessed day of 'Ashoorà!" The others then continued, in chorus, "A couple of grains of wheat! A couple of grains of rice! O Ḥasan! O Ḥoseyn!" The same words were repeated by them several times. As soon as they had received a small piece of money, they passed on; and then performed the same chant before other houses; but only where appearances led them to expect a reward. Numerous groups of faḡeers go about the town, in different quarters, during this day, soliciting alms in the same manner.

On my paying a visit to a friend, a little before noon, a dish, which it is the custom of the people of Cairo to prepare on the day of 'Ashoorà, was set before me. It is called "ḥoboob," and is prepared with wheat, steeped in water for two or three days, then freed from the husks, boiled, and sweetened over the fire with honey or treacle; or it is composed of rice instead of wheat: generally, nuts, almonds, raisins, &c., are added to it. In most houses this dish is prepared, or sweetmeats of various kinds are procured or made, in accordance with one of the traditions of the Prophet; which is—"Whoso giveth plenty to his household on the day of 'Ashoorà, God will bestow plenty upon him throughout the remainder of the year."

After the call to noon-prayers, I went to the mosque of the Ḥasaneyn, which, being the reputed burial-place of the head of the martyr El-Ḥoseyn, is the scene of the most remarkable of the ceremonies that, in Cairo, distinguish the day of 'Ashoorà. The avenues to this mosque, near the Kaḡḡee's court, were thronged with passengers; and in them I saw several groups of dancing-girls (Gházeeeyehs); some, dancing; and others, sitting in a ring in the public thoroughfare, eating their dinner, and (with the exclamation of "bi-smi-llah!") inviting each well-dressed man who passed by to eat with them. One of

them struggled hard with me to prevent my passing without giving them a present. The sight of these unveiled girls, some of them very handsome, and with their dress alluringly disposed to display to advantage their fine forms, was but ill calculated to prepare men who passed by them for witnessing religious ceremonies: but so it is, that, on the occasions of all the great religious festivals in Cairo, and at many other towns in Egypt, these female warrers against modesty (not always seductive, I must confess,) are sure to be seen. On my way to the mosque, I had occasion to rid myself of some of the small coins which I had provided, to give them to children. My next occasion for disbursing was on arriving before the mosque, when several water-carriers, of the class who supply passengers in the streets, surrounded me: I gave two of them twenty faddahs, for which each of them was to distribute the contents of the earthen vessel which he bore on his back to poor passengers, for the sake of "our lord El-Hoseyn." This custom I have mentioned in a former chapter.<sup>1</sup>

On entering the mosque, I was much surprised at the scene which presented itself in the great hall, or portico. This, which is the principal part of the mosque, was crowded with visitors, mostly women, of the middle and lower orders, with many children; and there was a confusion of noises like what may be heard in a large school-room where several hundred boys are engaged in play: there were children bawling and crying; men and women calling to each other; and, amid all this bustle, mothers and children were importuning every man of respectable appearance for the alms of the 'ashr. Seldom have I witnessed a scene more unlike that which the interior of a mosque generally presents; and in this instance I was the more surprised, as the Gámè' el-Hasaneyn is the most sacred of all the mosques in Cairo. The mats which are usually spread upon the pavement had been removed; some pieces of old matting were put in their stead, leaving many parts of the floor uncovered; and these, and every part, were covered with dust and dirt brought in by the feet of many shoeless persons: for on this occasion, as it is impossible to perform the ordinary prayers in the mosque, people enter without having performed the usual ablution, and without repairing first to the tank to do this; though every person takes off his, or her, shoes, as at other times, on entering the mosque; many leaving them, as I

<sup>1</sup> On Industry.



did mine, with a door-keeper. Several parts of the floor were wetted (by children too young to be conscious of the sanctity of the place); and though I avoided these parts, I had not been many minutes in the mosque before my feet were almost black, with the dirt upon which I had trodden, and with that from other persons' feet which had trodden upon mine. The heat, too, was very oppressive; like that of a vapour-bath, but more heavy; though there is a very large square aperture in the roof, with a *malḳaf*<sup>1</sup> of equal width over it, to introduce the northern breezes. The pulpit-stairs, and the gallery of the *muballigheen*, were crowded with women; and in the assemblage below, the women were far more numerous than the men. Why this should be the case, I know not, unless it be because the women are more superstitious, and have a greater respect for the day of 'Āshoorà, and a greater desire to honour El-Ḥoseyn by visiting his shrine on this day.

It is commonly said, by the people of Cairo, that no man goes to the mosque of the Ḥasaneyn on the day of 'Āshoorà but for the sake of the women; that is, to be jostled among them; and this jostling he may indeed enjoy to the utmost of his desire, as I experienced in pressing forward to witness the principal ceremonies which contribute with the sanctity of the day to attract such swarms of people. By the back-wall, to the right of the pulpit, were seated, in two rows, face to face, about fifty *darweeshes*, of various orders. They had not yet begun their performances, or "zikrs," in concert; but one old *darweesh*, standing between the two rows, was performing a *zikh* alone; repeating the name of God (Alláh), and bowing his head each time that he uttered the word, alternately to the right and left. In pushing forward to see them, I found myself in a situation rather odd in a country where it is deemed improper for a man even to touch a woman who is not his wife or slave or a near relation. I was so compressed in the midst of four women, that, for some minutes, I could not move in any direction; and was pressed so hard against one young woman, face to face, that, but for her veil, our cheeks had been almost in contact: from her panting, it seemed that the situation was not quite easy to her; though a smile, expressed at the same time by her large black eyes, shewed that it was amusing: she could not, however, bear it long; for she soon

<sup>1</sup> The "malḳaf" has been described in the Introduction to this work, page 20.

cried out, "My eye!<sup>1</sup> do not squeeze me so violently." Another woman called out to me, "O Efendee! by thy head! push on to the front, and make way for me to follow thee." With considerable difficulty, I attained the desired place; but in getting thither I had almost lost my sword, and the hanging sleeves of my jacket: some person's dress had caught the guard of the sword, and had nearly drawn the blade from the scabbard before I could get hold of the hilt. Like all around me, I was in a profuse perspiration.

The darweeshes I found to be of different nations, as well as of different orders. Some of them wore the ordinary turban and dress of Egypt; others wore the Turkish *ká-ook*, or padded cap; and others, again, wore high caps, or *řartóors*, mostly of the sugar-loaf shape. One of them had a white cap of the form last mentioned, upon which were worked, in black letters, invocations to the first four Khaleefehs, to El-Ĥasan and El-Ĥoseyn, and to other eminent saints, founders of different orders of darweeshes.<sup>2</sup> Most of the darweeshes were Egyptians; but there were among them many Turks and Persians. I had not waited many minutes before they began their exercises. Several of them first drove back the surrounding crowd with sticks; but as no stick was raised at me, I did not retire so far as I ought to have done; and before I was aware of what the darweeshes were about to do, forty of them, with extended arms and joined hands, had formed a large ring, in which I found myself enclosed. For a moment I felt half inclined to remain where I was, and join in the *zikr*: bow, and repeat the name of God; but another moment's reflection on the absurdity of the performance, and the risk of my being discovered to be no darweesh, decided me otherwise; so, parting the hands of two of the darweeshes, I passed outside the ring. The darweeshes who formed the large ring (which enclosed four of the marble columns of the portico) now commenced their *zikr*, exclaiming, over and over again, "Alláh!" and, at each exclamation, bowing the head and body, and taking a step to the right, so that the whole ring moved rapidly round. As soon as they commenced this exercise, another darweesh, a

<sup>1</sup> This is a common expression of affection, meaning, "Thou who art as dear to me as my eye."

<sup>2</sup> The words were "Yá Aboo-Bekr, Yá 'Omar, Yá 'Osmán, Yá 'Alee, Yá Ĥasan, Yá Ĥoseyn, Yá seyyid Aĥmad Rifá'ah, Yá seyyid 'Abd-El-Kádir El-Geelánee, Yá seyyid Aĥmad El-Bedawee, Yá seyyid Ibráheem Ed-Dasooķee."

Turk, of the order of Mowlawees, in the middle of the circle, began to whirl, using both his feet to effect the motion, and extending his arms: the motion increased in velocity until his dress spread out like an umbrella. He continued whirling thus for about ten minutes; after which he bowed to his superior, who stood within the great ring; and then, without shewing any signs of fatigue or giddiness, joined the darweeshes in the great ring, who had now begun to ejaculate the name of God with greater vehemence, and to jump to the right, instead of stepping. After the whirling, six other darweeshes, within the great ring, formed another ring, but a very small one; each placing his arms upon the shoulders of those next him; and thus disposed, they performed a revolution similar to that of the larger ring, except in being much more rapid: repeating, also, the same exclamation of "Alláh!" but with a rapidity proportionably greater. This motion they maintained for about the same length of time that the whirling of the single darweesh before had occupied; after which, the whole party sat down to rest.—They rose again after the lapse of about a quarter of an hour; and performed the same exercise a second time.—I saw nothing more in the great portico that was worthy of remark, except two faķeers (who, a bystander told me, were "megázeeb," or idiots), dancing, and repeating the name of God, and each beating a tambourine.

I was desirous of visiting the shrine of El-Hoseyn on this anniversary of his death, and of seeing if any particular ceremonies were performed there on this occasion. With difficulty I pushed through the crowd in the great portico to the door of the saloon of the tomb; but there I found comparatively few persons collected. On my entering, one of the servants of the mosque conducted me to an unoccupied corner of the bronze screen which surrounds the monument over the place where the martyr's head is said to be buried, that I might there recite the Fát'hah: this duty performed, he dictated to me the following prayer; pausing after every two or three words, for me to repeat them, which I affected to do; and another person, who stood on my left, saying "Ámeen" (or Amen), at the close of each pause. "O God, accept my visit, and perform my want, and cause me to attain my wish; for I come with desire and intent, and urge Thee by the seyiddeh Zeyneb, and the Imám Esh-Sháfe'ee, and the Sulţán Aboo-So'ood."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Aboo-So'ood was a very famous saint; and, being esteemed the most holy person of his day, received the appellation of "Sulţán," which has

After this followed similar words in Turkish, which were added in the supposition that I was a Turk, and perhaps did not understand the former words in Arabic. This short supplication has been often dictated to me at the tombs of saints in Cairo, on festival days. On the occasion above described, before I proceeded to make the usual circuit round the screen which encloses the monument, I gave to the person who dictated the prayer a small piece of money, and he, in return, presented me with four little balls of bread, each about the size of a hazel-nut. This was consecrated bread, made of very



WHIRLING DARWEEESH.

fine flour at the tomb of the seyyid Ahmad El-Bedawee, and brought thither, as it is to several saints' tombs in Cairo on occasions of general visiting, to be given to the more respectable of the visitors. It is called "Eysh es-seyyid El-Bedawee." Many persons in Egypt keep a little piece of it (that is, one of the little balls into which it is formed,) constantly in the pocket, as a charm; others eat it, as a valuable remedy against any disorder, or as a preventive of disease.

Generally, towards the end of "Şafar" (the second month), the caravan of Egyptian pilgrims, returning from Mekkeh, arrives at Cairo: hence, this month is vulgarly called "Nezlet

been conferred upon several other very eminent welees, and, when thus applied, signifies "King of Saints." The tomb of Aboo-So'ood is among the mounds of rubbish on the south of Cairo.

el-Hágg" (the Alighting of the Pilgrims). Many pilgrims, coming by the Red Sea, arrive before the caravan. A caravan of merchant-pilgrims arrives later than the main body of pilgrims.

An officer, called "Sháweesh el-Hágg," arrives about four or five days before the caravan, having pushed on, with two Arabs, mounted on fleet dromedaries, to announce the approach of the Hágg,<sup>1</sup> and the expected day of their arrival at the metropolis, and to bring letters from pilgrims to their friends. He and his two companions exclaim, as they pass along, to the passengers in the way, "Blessing on the Prophet!" or, "Bless the Prophet!" And every Muslim who hears the exclamation responds, "O God, bless him!"<sup>2</sup>—They proceed directly to the Citadel, to convey the news to the Báshà or his representative. The Sháweesh divides his letters into packets, with the exception of those which are to great or wealthy people, and sells them, at so many dollars a packet, to a number of persons who deliver them, and receive presents from those to whom they are addressed, but sometimes lose by their bargains. The Sháweesh himself delivers those to the great and rich, and obtains from them handsome presents of money, or a shawl, &c.

Some persons go out two or three days' journey, to meet their friends returning from pilgrimage, taking with them fresh provisions, fruits, &c., and clothes, for the wearied pilgrims. The poorer classes seldom go further than the Birket el-Hágg (or Lake of the Pilgrims, about eleven miles from the metropolis), the place where the caravan passes the last night but one before its entry into the metropolis; or such persons merely go to the last halting-place. These usually take with them some little luxury in the way of food, and an ass, as an agreeable substitute to the pilgrim for his jaded and uneasy camel;<sup>3</sup> together with some clean, if not new, clothes; and

<sup>1</sup> The term "hágg" is applied both collectively and individually (to the whole caravan, or body of pilgrims, and to a single pilgrim).

<sup>2</sup> The Arabic words here translated are given in two notes in Chap. XIII., near the beginning.

<sup>3</sup> Many persons who have not applied themselves to the study of natural history are ignorant of the remarkable fact that the camel has in itself a provision against hunger, besides its well-known supply against thirst. When deprived of its usual food for several successive days, it feeds upon the fat of its own hump, which, in these circumstances, gradually disappears before the limbs are perceptibly reduced. This explanation of the use of an excrescence which would otherwise seem a mere inconvenient incum-

many go out with musicians to pay honour to their friends. It is very affecting to see, at the approach of the caravan, the numerous parties who go out with drums and pipes to welcome and escort to the city their friends arrived from the holy places, and how many, who went forth in hope, return with lamentation instead of music and rejoicing; for the arduous journey through the desert is fatal to a great number of those pilgrims who cannot afford themselves necessary conveniences. Many of the women who go forth to meet their husbands or sons receive the melancholy tidings of their having fallen victims to privation and fatigue. The piercing shrieks with which they rend the air as they retrace their steps to the city are often heard predominant over the noise of the drum, and the shrill notes of the hautboy, which proclaim the joy of others.—The pilgrims, on their return, are often accosted, by passengers, with the petition, "Pray for pardon for me;" and utter this short ejaculation, "God pardon thee!" or, "O God! pardon him!" This custom owes its origin to a saying of the Prophet—"God pardoneth the pilgrim, and him for whom the pilgrim imploreth pardon."

I write the following account of the *Nezlet el-Hágg* just after witnessing it, in the year of the Flight 1250 (A.D. 1834).—The caravan arrived at its last halting-place, the *Haşweh*, a pebbly tract of the desert, near the northern suburb of Cairo, last night, on the eve of the 4th of *Rabeea el-Owwal*. A few pilgrims left the caravan after sunset, and entered the metropolis. The caravan entered this morning, the fourth of the month. I was outside the walls soon after sunrise, before it drew near; but I met two or three impatient pilgrims, riding upon asses, and preceded by musicians or by flag-bearers, and followed by women singing; and I also met several groups of women who had already been out to make inquiries respecting relations whom they expected, and were returning with shrieks and sobs. Their lamentation seemed more natural, and more deeply felt, than that which is made at funerals. This year, in addition to a great many deaths, there were to be lamented a thousand men who had been seized for the army; so that, perhaps, there was rather more wailing than is usual. About two hours and a half after sunrise, the caravan began to draw

brance shews how wonderfully the camel is adapted to the peculiar circumstances in which Providence has placed it, and perhaps may be applied with equal propriety to the hump of the bull and cow, and some other animals, in hot and arid climates.

near to the gates of the metropolis, parted in three lines; one line towards the gate called *Báb en-Naşr*; another directly towards the *Báb el-Futooh*; and the third, branching off from the second, to the *Báb el-'Adawee*. The caravan this year was more numerous than usual (though many pilgrims went by sea); and, in consequence of the seizure of so many men for the army, it comprised an uncommon proportion of women. Each of the three lines into which it divided to enter the metropolis, as above-mentioned, consisted, for the most part, of an uninterrupted train of camels, proceeding one by one; but sometimes there were two abreast; and in a few places the train was broken for a short space. Many of the pilgrims had quitted their camels to take the more easy conveyance of asses, and rode beside their camels; many of them attended by musicians, and some by flag-bearers.

The most common kind of camel-litter used by the pilgrims is called a "*musatṭah*," or "*ḥeml musatṭah*." It resembles a small, square tent, and is chiefly composed of two long chests, each of which has a high back: these are placed on the camel in the same manner as a pair of panniers, one on each side; and the high backs, which are placed outwards, together with a small pole resting on the camel's pack-saddle, support the covering which forms what may be called the tent. This conveyance accommodates two persons. It is generally open at the front, and may also be opened at the back. Though it appears comfortable, the motion is uneasy; especially when it is placed upon a camel that has been accustomed to carry heavy burdens, and consequently has a swinging walk; but camels of easy pace are generally chosen for bearing the *musatṭah* and other kinds of litters. There is one kind of litter called a "*shibreeyeh*," composed of a small, square platform, with an arched covering. This accommodates but one person, and is placed on the back of the camel: two *sahḥárah*s (or square chests), one on each side of the camel, generally form a secure foundation for the *shibreeyeh*. The most comfortable kind of litter is that called a "*takht'rawán*," which is most commonly borne by two camels, one before, and the other behind: the head of the latter is painfully bent down under the vehicle. This litter is sometimes borne by four mules, in which case its motion is more easy. Two light persons may travel in it. In general, it has a small projecting *meshrebeeyeh* of wooden lattice-work at the front and back, in which one or more of the porous earthen water-bottles so much used in Egypt may be placed.

I went on to the place where the caravan had passed the last night. During my ride from the suburb to this spot, which occupied a little more than half an hour (proceeding at a slow pace), about half the caravan passed me; and in half an hour more, almost the whole had left the place of encampment.<sup>1</sup> I was much interested at seeing the meetings of wives, brothers, sisters, and children, with the pilgrims: but I was disgusted with one pilgrim: he was dressed in ragged clothes, and sitting on a little bit of old carpet, when his wife, or perhaps his sister, came out to him, perspiring under the weight of a large bundle of clothes, and fervently kissed him, right and left: he did not rise to meet her; and only made a few cold inquiries.—The Emeer el-Ĥágg (or chief of the caravan) and his officers, soldiers, &c., were encamped apart from the rest of the caravan. By his tent a tall spear was stuck in the ground; and by its side also stood the “Maḥmal,” or “Maḥmil”<sup>2</sup> (of which I shall presently give a sketch and description); with its travelling cover, of canvass, ornamented with a few inscriptions.

Many of the pilgrims bring with them, as presents, from “the holy territory,” water of the sacred well of “Zemzem” (in China bottles, or tin or copper flasks), pieces of the “kisweh” (or covering) of the Kaʿbeh (which is renewed at the season of the pilgrimage), dust from the Prophet’s tomb (made into hard cakes), “libán” (or frankincense), “leef” (or fibres of the palm-tree, used in washing, as we employ a sponge), combs of aloes-wood, “sebḥahs” (or rosaries) of the same or other materials, “miswáks” (or sticks for cleaning the teeth, which are generally dipped in Zemzem-water, to render them more acceptable), “koḥl” (or black powder for the eyes), shawls, &c., of the manufacture of the Ḥegáz,<sup>3</sup> and various things from India.

It is a common custom to ornament the entrance of a pilgrim’s house, a day, or two or three days, before his arrival; painting the door, and colouring the alternate courses of stone on each side and above it with red ochre, and whitewash; or, if it be of brick, ornamenting it in a similar manner, with

<sup>1</sup> Had I remained stationary, somewhat more than two hours would have elapsed before the whole caravan had passed me.

<sup>2</sup> This later is the correct appellation, but it is commonly called “Maḥmal;” and I shall follow, on future occasions, the usual pronunciation. “Miḥmal” is also correct, but not usual.

<sup>3</sup> Or, as pronounced in Arabia, Ḥejáz.



broad horizontal stripes of red and white: often, also, trees, camels, &c., are painted in a very rude manner, in green, black, red, and other colours. The pilgrim sometimes writes to order this to be done. On the evening after his arrival, he entertains his friends with a feast, which is called "the feast of the Nezleh." Numerous guests come to welcome him, and to say, "Pray for pardon for me." He generally remains at home a week after his return; and on the seventh day gives to his friends another entertainment, which is called "the feast of the Subooa." This continues during the day and ensuing night; and a khatmeh, or a zikr, is usually performed in the evening.

On the morning after that on which the main body of the pilgrims of the great caravan enter the metropolis, another spectacle is witnessed: this is the return of the Maḥmal, which is borne in procession from the Ḥaṣweh, through the metropolis, to the Citadel. This procession is not always arranged exactly in the same order: I shall describe it as I have this day witnessed it, on the morning after the return of the pilgrims of which I have just given an account.

First, I must describe the Maḥmal itself. It is a square skeleton-frame of wood, with a pyramidal top; and has a covering of black brocade, richly worked with inscriptions and ornamental embroidery in gold, in some parts upon a ground of green or red silk, and bordered with a fringe of silk, with tassels surmounted by silver balls. Its covering is not always made after the same pattern, with regard to the decorations; but in every cover that I have seen, I have remarked, on the upper part of the front, a view of the Temple of Mekkeh, worked in gold; and, over it, the Sulṭán's cipher. It contains nothing; but has two muṣ-ḥafs (or copies of the Ḳur-án), one on a small scroll, and the other in the usual form of a book, also small, each enclosed in a case of gilt silver, attached externally at the top. The sketch which I insert will explain this description. The five balls with crescents, which ornament the Maḥmal, are of gilt silver. The Maḥmal is borne by a fine tall camel, which is generally indulged with exemption from every kind of labour during the remainder of its life.

It is related that the Sulṭán Ez-Záhir Beybars, King of Egypt, was the first who sent a Maḥmal with the caravan of pilgrims to Mekkeh, in the year of the Flight 670 (A.D. 1272), or 675; but this custom, it is generally said, had its origin a few years before his accession to the throne. Sheger-ed-Durr (commonly called Shegeret-ed-Durr), a beautiful Turkish female slave, who

became the favourite wife of the Sultán Eş-Şáleh Negm-ed-Deen, and on the death of his son (with whom terminated the dynasty of the house of Eiyooob) caused herself to be acknow-



THE MAḤMAL.

ledged as Queen of Egypt, performed the pilgrimage in a magnificent "hódag" (or covered litter), borne by a camel; and for several successive years her empty hódag was sent with the caravan merely for the sake of state. Hence, succeeding

princes of Egypt sent, with each year's caravan of pilgrims, a kind of *hódag* (which received the name of "Maḥmal," or "Maḥmil"), as an emblem of royalty; and the kings of other countries followed their example.<sup>1</sup> The Wabhábees prohibited the Maḥmal as an object of vain pomp: it afforded them one reason for intercepting the caravan.

The procession of the return of the Maḥmal, in the year above mentioned, entered the city, by the Báb en-Naşr, about an hour after sunrise. It was headed by a large body of Nizám (or regular) infantry. Next came the Maḥmal, which was followed, as usual, by a singular character: this was a long-haired, brawny, swarthy fellow, called "Sheykh-el-Gemel" (or Sheykh of the Camel), almost entirely naked, having only a pair of old trowsers: he was mounted on a camel, and was incessantly rolling his head. For many successive years this sheykh has followed the Maḥmal, and accompanied the caravan to and from Mekkeh; and all assert that he rolls his head during the whole of the journey. He is supplied by the government with two camels and his travelling provisions. A few years ago there used also to follow the Maḥmal, to and from Mekkeh, an old woman, with her head uncovered, and only wearing a shirt. She was called "Umm-el-Ḳuṭaṭ" (or the Mother of the Cats), having always five or six cats sitting about her on her camel.—Next to the sheykh of the camel, in the procession which I have begun to describe, followed a group of Turkish horsemen; and then, about twenty camels, with stuffed and ornamented saddles, covered with cloth, mostly red and green. Each saddle was decorated with a number of small flags, slanting forward from the fore part, and a small plume of ostrich-feathers upon the top of a stick fixed upright upon the same part; and some had a large bell hung on each side: the ornaments on the covering were chiefly formed of the small shells called cowries. I think I perceived that these camels were slightly tinged with the red dye of the *ḥenna*; as they are on other similar occasions. They were followed by a very numerous body of Bedawee horsemen; and with these the procession was closed.

Having been misinformed as to the time of the entry of the

<sup>1</sup> Almost all travellers have given erroneous accounts of the Maḥmal; some asserting that its covering is that which is destined to be placed over the tomb of the Prophet: others, that it contains the covering which is to be suspended round the Kaṭbeh. Burckhardt, with his general accuracy, describes it as a mere emblem of royalty.

Maḥmal, on my arriving at the principal street of the city I found myself in the midst of the procession; but the Maḥmal had passed. Mounting a donkey that I had hired, I endeavoured to overtake it; but it was very difficult to make any progress: so, without further loss of time, I took advantage of some by-streets, and again joined the procession: I found, however, that I had made very little advancement. I therefore dismounted; and, after walking and running, and dodging between the legs of the Bedaweeshes' horses, for about half an hour, at length caught a glimpse of the Maḥmal, and by a great effort, and much squeezing, overtook it soon after, about a quarter of an hour before it entered the great open place called the Rumeyleh, before the Citadel. After touching it three times, and kissing my hand, I caught hold of the fringe, and walked by its side. The guardian of the sacred object, who walked behind it, looked very hard at me, and induced me to utter a pious ejaculation, which perhaps prevented his displacing me; or possibly my dress influenced him; for he only allowed other persons to approach and touch it one by one, and then drove them back. I continued to walk by its side, holding the fringe, nearly to the entrance of the Rumeyleh. On my telling a Muslim friend, to-day, that I had done this, he expressed great astonishment, and said that he had never heard of any one having done so before, and that the Prophet had certainly taken a love for me or I could not have been allowed: he added that I had derived an inestimable blessing, and that it would be prudent in me not to tell any others of my Muslim friends of this fact, as it would make them envy me so great a privilege, and perhaps displease them. I cannot learn why the Maḥmal is esteemed so sacred. Many persons shewed an enthusiastic eagerness to touch it; and I heard a soldier exclaim, as it passed him, "O my Lord, Thou hast denied my performing the pilgrimage!" The streets through which it passed were densely crowded; the shops were closed, and the maṣtabahs occupied by spectators. It arrived at the Rumeyleh about an hour and a half after it had entered the metropolis: it crossed this large place to the entrance of the open space called *Karà Meydán*; next proceeded along the latter place, while about twelve of the guns of the Citadel fired a salute; then returned to the Rumeyleh, and proceeded through it to the northern gate of the Citadel, called *Báb el-Wezeer*.

A curious custom is allowed to be practised on the occasions of the processions of the Maḥmal and *Kisweh*; which latter,

and a more pompous procession of the Maḥmal, on its departure for Mekkeh, will be hereafter described. Numbers of boys go about the streets of the metropolis in companies; each boy armed with a short piece of the thick end of a palm-stick, called a "maḡra'ah,"<sup>1</sup> in which are made two or three splits, extending from the larger end to about half the length; and any Christian or Jew whom they meet they accost with the demand of "Hát el-'ádeh," or "Give the customary present." If he refuse the gift of five or ten faḡḡahs, they fall to beating him with their maḡra'ahs. Last year a Frank was beaten by some boys, in accordance with this custom, and sought refuge in a large wekáleh; but some of the boys entered after him, and repeated the beating. He complained to the Báshà, who caused a severe bastinading to be administered to the Sheykh of the wekáleh for not having protected him.

In the beginning of the month of "Rabeeā el-Owwal" (the third month) preparations are commenced for celebrating the festival of the Birth of the Prophet, which is called "Moolid<sup>2</sup> en-Nebee." The principal scene of this festival is the south-west quarter of the large open space called Birket el-Ezbekeyeh, almost the whole of which, during the season of the inundation, becomes a lake: this is the case for several years together at the time of the festival of the Prophet, which is then celebrated on the margin of the lake; but at present, the dry bed of the lake is the chief scene of the festival.<sup>3</sup> In the quarter above mentioned, several large tents (called "ṣeewáns") are pitched; mostly for darweeshes, who, every night, while the festival lasts, assemble in them, to perform zikrs. Among these is erected a mast ("ṣáree"), firmly secured by ropes, and with a dozen or more lamps hung to it. Around it, numerous darweeshes, generally about fifty or sixty, form a ring, and repeat zikrs. Near the same spot is erected what is termed a "ḡáim"; which consists of four masts erected in a line, a few yards apart, with numerous ropes stretched from one to the other and to the ground: upon these ropes are hung many lamps; sometimes in the form of flowers, lions, &c.; sometimes, of words, such as the names of God and Moḡammad, the profession of the faith,

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced "maḡra'ah;" but correctly written "miḡra'ah."

<sup>2</sup> I have before mentioned that this word is more properly pronounced "Mólid."

<sup>3</sup> This lake has been filled up, and planted as a garden, since the account here given was written; and the tract on the western side of the space that was occupied by the lake is now the chief scene of the festival.

&c. ; and sometimes arranged in a merely fanciful, ornamental manner. The preparations for the festival are generally completed on the second day of the month ; and on the following day the rejoicings and ceremonies begin : these continue, day and night, until the twelfth night of the month ; that is, according to the Mohammadan mode of reckoning, the night preceding the twelfth day of the month ; which night is that of the Moolid, properly speaking.<sup>1</sup> During this period of nine days and nights, numbers of the inhabitants of the metropolis flock to the Ezbekeeyeh.—I write these notes during the Moolid, and shall describe the festival of this year (the year of the Flight 1250, A.D. 1834), mentioning some particulars in which it differs from those of former years.

During the day-time, the people assembled at the principal scene of the festival are amused by Shá'ers (or reciters of the romance of Aboo-Zeyd), conjurers, buffoons, &c. The Ghawázee have lately been compelled to vow repentance, and to relinquish their profession of dancing, &c. : consequently, there are now none of them at the festival. These girls used to be among the most attractive of all the performers. In some parts of the neighbouring streets, a few swings and whirligigs are erected, and numerous stalls for the sale of sweetmeats, &c. Sometimes, rope-dancers, who are gipsies, perform at this festival ; but there are none this year. At night, the streets above mentioned are lighted with many lamps, which are mostly hung in lanterns of wood :<sup>2</sup> numbers of shops and stalls, stocked with eatables, chiefly sweetmeats, are open during almost the whole of the night ; and so too are the coffee-shops ; at some of which, as well as in other places, Shá'ers or Moḥaddits amuse the persons who choose to stop and listen to their recitations. Every night, an hour or more after midnight, processions of darweeshes pass through this quarter : instead of bearing flags, as they do in the day, they carry long staves, with a number of lamps attached to them at the upper part, and called "menwars." The procession of a company of darweeshes, whether by day, with flags, or by night, with menwars, is called the procession of the "ishárah" of the sect ; that is, of the "banner ;" or, rather, the term "ishárah"

<sup>1</sup> The twelfth day of Rabea el-Owwal is also the anniversary of the death of Moḥammad. It is remarkable that his birth and death are both related to have happened on the same day of the same month, and on the same day of the week, namely, Monday.

<sup>2</sup> Like that represented in Chapter VI.

is applied to the procession itself. These darweeshes are mostly persons of the lower orders, and have no distinguishing dress: the greater number wear an ordinary turban, and some of them merely a *tarboosh*, or a padded or felt cap; and most of them wear the common blue linen or cotton, or brown woollen, shirt, the dress which they wear on other occasions at their daily work or at their shops.

On the last two nights, the festival is more numerously attended than on the preceding nights, and the attractions are greater. I shall describe what I have just witnessed on the former of these nights.

This being the eleventh night of the lunar month, the moon was high, and enlivened the scenes of festivity. I passed on to a street called *Sook El-Bekree*, on the south of the *Birket el-Ezbekeeyeh*, to witness what I was informed would be the best of the *zikrs* that were to be performed. The streets through which I passed were crowded; and persons were here allowed, on this occasion, to go about without lanterns. As is usually the case at night, there were scarcely any women among the passengers. At the scene of the *zikh* in the *Sook El-Bekree*, which was more crowded than any other place, was suspended a very large "*negefeh*" (a chandelier, or rather a number of chandeliers, chiefly of glass, one below another, placed in such a manner that they all appeared but one), containing about two or three hundred *ķandeels* (or small glass lamps).<sup>1</sup> Around this were many lanterns of wood, each having several *ķandeels* hanging through the bottom. These lights were not hung merely in honour of the Prophet: they were near a "*zāwiyeh*" (or small mosque) in which is buried the sheykh *Darweesh*<sup>2</sup> *El-'Ashmāwee*; and this night was his *Moolid*. A *zikh* is performed here every Friday-night (or what we call Thursday-night); but not with so much display as on the present occasion. I observed many Christian black turbans here; and having seen scarcely any elsewhere this night, and heard the frequent cry of "A grain of salt in the eye of him who doth not bless the Prophet!" ejaculated by the sellers of sweetmeats, &c., which seemed to shew that Christians and Jews were at least in danger of being insulted, at a time when the zeal of the Muslims was unusually excited, I asked the reason why so many Copts should be congregated at the scene of this *zikh*: I was answered, that a Copt, who had become a

<sup>1</sup> Represented in Chapter V., near the end.

<sup>2</sup> This was his name, not a title.