

Lecture on Mohammed.—Continued from P. S. Advocate.

Mohammed could see that the probabilities were in his favor. But he knew that secrecy inviolable is necessary to success. He gave up business and retired to the Cave of Hira, three miles from Mecca. There alone with the Monk (who figures in the Koran as the Angel Gabriel,) the plan of the new religion was sketched; the Koran was prepared, and there too, we suspect, he diligently applied himself to learn to read and write—poetry and eloquence also received a share of his attention. Having spent the day at his studies in the cave, he returned at night to tell his wife the wonderful revelations that had been made to him by the Angel Gabriel.—Thus his life passed in obscurity for fifteen years. He had now reached his fortieth year, the same in which Moses, whom he copied, made himself known to his people. He resolved to commence his mission. About this time either the Monk died, or more probably, as some suppose, he put him out of the way lest he should disclose his imposture. At all events, he had no more use for him. This brings us to the third great period in his history to wit, *His Mission*.

His first convert was his wife, and she converted her uncle Waraka, who, it appears, had some knowledge of the *Old Testament Scriptures*. He professed to believe that Mohammed was the *great Prophet foretold by Moses*. His slave was next converted, and for his faith manumitted. His third disciple was his cousin Ali, a boy of fourteen years.—Thus for three years he continued to make proselytes to the new faith in secret, which consisted in believing *That there is One God, and Mohammed is His Prophet*.

In the fourth year of his mission he had made eleven converts, and some of these were principal men in Mecca. He now felt himself strong enough to make a public declaration of his claims as a Prophet. To secure a favorable hearing he made a feast, and invited all the descendants of Motaleb his grandfather; about forty of them came. After the repast Mohammed arose and thus addressed them: "I know of no man in Arabia who can make his relatives a better proposal than what I now make you; I of-

fer you the happiness both of this world and that which is to come. God Almighty hath commanded me to call you unto him. Who, therefore, among you will be my vizer?" No one replied until Ali, his boyish cousin, rose and said—"O Prophet of God, I will be thy vizer; I will beat out the teeth, pull out the eyes, rip up the bellies, and cut off the legs of all who dare to oppose thee."

Mohammed then calmly arose and tenderly embraced the boy, and said—"This is my brother, my deputy, and my Caliph; therefore, submit to him and obey him." The company laughed to scorn both Ali and the pretended prophet; but Mahommed, unabashed by this unpropitious beginning, resolved to preach in public. His piercing wit and lively imagination, combined with great strength of memory, had been improved by both travel and study. And such was the beauty of his person, and the fascination of his address, that he was likely to be very successful in proselyting the people.

All this, however, was counterbalanced by his cutting rebukes of their senseless idolatry. The men of his own tribe rose against him, and declared themselves his enemies. His uncle Abutaleb still protected him from their fury, though he was an unbeliever in his doctrine and claims. Persecution now raged so fiercely that many of the followers of the prophet were forced to flee across the Red Sea, and seek protection from the King of Ethiopia. Among the fugitives was his own daughter and her husband.

In the seventeenth year of his mission the great families of the Korish formed a league against the Hashamites, because they would not give up their relative Mohammed to their fury, engaging to have no communion with them, and to contract no marriages with their families, and to make this covenant more solemn, they reduced it to writing, and placed the document in the *Caba*. Thus the great tribe of the Korish became divided. At the end of three years from this disruption Mohammed told his uncle Abutaleb that God had showed his disapprobation of the league of the Korish against them, by sending a worm