

patient, and the nature of the disease, a female being sacrificed for one of the male sex, and a male for the women.

The Algerines have three principal officers who preside over all religious matters; these are the multi, or high priest; the cady, or chief judge in ecclesiastical causes, and such other matters as the civil and military power turns over to him; and the grand marabout, who is at the head of his order, which consists of a kind of eremitical monks in such high veneration, that they bear an extraordinary sway, not only in most private families, but even in the government. These three officers have their seats in the great divan next under the dey, and on his right hand, where they are allowed to give their opinion in all difficult and important affairs of state; but have not the liberty of voting with the rest of the members. As to religious affairs they are usually referred to them, and their decisions, if unanimous, are esteemed binding, and no longer to be disputed.

The people have a great veneration for the marabouts, who are usually persons of a rigid austere life, continually employing themselves either in counting over their beads, or in prayer and meditation. Their chapel usually consists of ninety-nine beads; on touching each of which they either say, "God is great. God be praised, or God forgive me." This kind of faintship usually goes by succession, and the son, if he can behave with equal gravity, is intitled to the same esteem and reverence with the father. Some of them pretend to see visions, and to converse with the Deity, while others are supposed to work miracles. Dr. Shaw says, that Seedy Mustafa, caliph of the western province, told him, that a neighbouring marabout had a solid iron bar, which, upon command, would give the same report, and do as much execution as a piece of cannon; and that once the whole Algerine army, on the dey's demanding too exorbitant a tax from the Arabs under his protection, were put to flight by the miracle: yet, notwithstanding the frequency, as they pretended, of the experiment, neither the arguments urged by that divine on the merit of convincing a Christian, nor the solicitations of the company, could prevail so far as to have the experiment tried before him; for the marabout had too much policy to hazard his reputation by putting it to the proof. At Setceef that learned gentleman saw a marabout famous for vomiting fire; but though he was at first greatly surpris'd at seeing his mouth suddenly in a blaze, and at the violent agonies he counterfeited at the same time, he afterwards plainly perceived that it was all a trick, and that the flames and smoke with which he was surrounded, arose from some tow and sulphur which he contrived to set on fire under his burnoose.

The roving and unsettled life of the Arabs, and the perpetual grievances the Moors frequently suffer from the Turks, prevent either of them enjoying that liberty and security which give birth and encouragement to learning; hence the knowledge of philosophy, mathematics, and medicine, which once flourished among the Arabs, are now lost, and there are scarce any traces of them remaining.

The sons of the Moors and Turks are sent to school at about six years of age, when they are taught to read and write for the value of about a penny a week. Each boy, instead of paper, has a piece of thin square board, slightly dawbed over with whitening; and on this he makes his letters, which may be wiped off or renewed at pleasure. On his having made some progress in the Koran, he is initiated in the several ceremonies and mysteries of religion: and when a boy has distinguished himself in any branch of learning, he is richly dressed, mounted upon a horse richly caparisoned, and, as hath been already mentioned in treating of Morocco, is conducted amidst the huzzas of his school-fellows through the streets, while his friends and relations assemble to congratulate his parents, and to load him with gifts. The boys, after being three or four years at school, are put to trades, or enrolled in the army, where most of them soon forget all they have learned at school.

While the reverend divine we have so often quoted, was chaplain at Algiers, he endeavoured to become acquainted with the persons most distinguished for their

learning; and though from their natural shyness to strangers, and contempt of the Christians, it is difficult to cultivate a real friendship with them, yet he soon found that their chief astronomer, who regulates and superintends the hours of prayer, had not the skill to make a sundial; that the whole art of navigation, as practised at Algiers and Tunis, only consists in what is termed pricking of a chart, and distinguishing the eight principal points of the compass; and that even chemistry, once the favourite science of these people, is at present only applied to distilling a little rose water. The physicians chiefly study the Spanish edition of Dioscorides; but they oftener consult the figures of plants and animals than their uses. Notwithstanding this, these people are naturally subtle and ingenious, and only want time, application, and encouragement, to cultivate and improve their faculties.

As the Mahometans are generally predestinarians, they pay little regard to medicine, and usually either leave the disorder to contend with nature, or make use of charms and incantations. Yet in all distempers they resort to bagnios, and there are a few other remedies in general use. Thus a dram or two of the root of round birthwort is an established remedy for the colic; in pleuritic and rheumatic cases, they make several punctures on the part affected with a red-hot iron, repeating the operation according to the violence of the disease, and the strength of the patient. The prickly pear roasted in the embers is applied hot for the cure of bruises, swellings, and inflammations. They pour fresh butter almost boiling hot into all simple gun shot wounds, and some of them inoculate for the small-pox; though this practice is not much in reputation in this part of Barbary, and they tell a number of stories to discourage the use of it. They have few compound medicines; however, they use a mixture of myrrh, aloes, saffron, and syrapp of myrtle-berries, which is frequently found effectual in the cure of the plague.

Our author was sometimes favoured with the sight of their ancient kalendars, in which the sun's place, the semi-diurnal and nocturnal arch, the length of the twilight, with the several hours of prayer for each day in the month are calculated to a minute, and beautifully wrote in proper columns; but these are as little consulted as their ancient mathematical instruments, of which they know not the use: thus, if the cloudiness of the weather prevents their adjusting their large and small hour-glasses to some inaccurate meridian lines they have made for that purpose, their times for devotion, which should be punctual to a minute, are entirely left to the will and pleasure of their cryers; for public clocks are not allowed in this country, which is perhaps owing to the great aversion of the Mahometans to bells.

Though their ancestors were also distinguished for their skill in arithmetic and algebra, not one in twenty thousand appears to be at present acquainted with the first operations in these branches of mathematics; yet the merchants are frequently very dexterous in the addition and subtraction of large sums by memory, and have also a very singular method of numeration, by putting their hands into each other's sleeves, and touching one another with this or that finger, or a particular joint, each denoting a determined sum or number; thus, without moving their lips, or giving the least intimation to the by-stander, they conclude bargains of the greatest value.

Though piracy seems to suit best with the temper of the Algerines, they suffer free Christians, Jews, either natives or foreigners, Arabians and Moors, to exercise a fair commerce both by sea and land, and to carry on trades and manufactures in silk, cotton, wool, leather, and other commodities, which are mostly conducted by Spaniards settled in Algiers, especially about the metropolis. Carpets are another manufacture of this country, though they are greatly inferior to those of Turkey for beauty and fineness; but being both cheaper and softer, are preferred by the people to lie upon. There are likewise at Algiers looms for velvet, taffeties, and other wrought silks, and a coarse sort of linen is made in most parts of the kingdom, of which Sufa produces the finest. These manufactures are chiefly consumed at home, some