

to the perpendicular between each bow. They begin slowly, and quicken the time of repeating the syllables until it is so rapid that only "*il-lah*" can be distinguished. The Sheik stamps upon the floor. The time is still quickened, and "*lah*" only is heard—as a *groan*, while an occasional voice, with power enough left to rise above the rest, shouts, "*Hoo-yah-hoo!*" (He—He is God) which sounds much like an Indian war-whoop. The frenzy increases. Garments are thrown off one by one, until only enough remain for decency, and the perspiration flows in streams. One almost expects to see the body entirely unhinged and fall in fragments on the floor! Spectators catch the excitement, and take places at the ends of the rows, and begin the "*Il-lah!*" Attendants pass around from one to another taking the white linen skull-caps that are saturated with perspiration, and giving dry ones in their place.

Still it goes on; faces are fearfully contorted and lose almost all look of humanity; the cries have lost all distinctness, and sound like a mingling of yells, roars and groans! Sights and sounds are horrid, and yet the horror fascinates! Even the stranger who has no sympathy with the wild fanatical performance begins to feel as though sense and reason are about to take their departure, when the sounds gradually die away—as if the *menagerie* was retreating.

The reeking, exhausted company, hardly able to stand without reeling, have a sacred girdle held before them to be kissed and mumbled over; and various other ceremonies, without any special significance to the spectators, are performed, and afterwards our attention is attracted from the howlers to the Sheik.

A child about six years old is brought to the Sheik and placed flat upon its stomach upon the floor, and the Sheik stands with both feet firmly planted on his back! We expected to see the breath quite pressed out of him, but he rises fresh and smiling, raises the hand of the Sheik to his lips and kisses it, while the father of the boy looks as though he considered the child supremely blessed. Several men prostrate themselves and are more or less *walked over*, and each one on rising kisses the hand of the Sheik.

It was an altogether disgusting spectacle, and most sadly depressing to see men trying to please God by such debasing ceremonies.