

that all mankind in the world must pass one day over the Sharp-edged Bridge, whose length shall be equal to that of this world, whose breadth shall not exceed that of one single thread of a spider's web, and whose height shall be proportionable to its extent. The righteous shall pass over it swifter than a flash of lightning; but the impious and the ungodly, shall not, in as much time as the present age shall endure, be able to surmount the difficulties thereof, and that through the want of good works. For which reason, they shall fall and precipitate themselves into hell-fire, in company with the infidels and blasphemers, with these of little faith and bad conscience, who have done few deeds of charity, because they were void of virtue. There shall be some among the good, notwithstanding, whose passage shall be lighter and swifter than that of many others, who shall therein meet with temptations and obstructions from every precept which they shall have ill-observed in this life. Good God! how dreadful to our sight will this formidable bridge appear! What virtue, what secret grace from the Most High shall we not need to be enabled to pass over it?

XII.—Of Paradise.

We are to believe and to hold for a certainty, that God did create Paradise which he prepared for the blessed, from among the number of the faithful, by which are meant the followers of the true religion, and of our holy prophet, Mahomet; where with him they shall be placed in perpetual light, and in the enjoyment of heavenly delights: for ever beautiful in the vigour of their age, and brighter than the sun; and where they shall be found worthy to contemplate and adore the face of the Most High God. As for those who shall be detained in the tortures of hell, to wit, the sinners and transgressors, who have nevertheless believed in one only God, they shall be released at the second intercession of the prophet, by whom they shall immediately be washed in the sacred laver, from whence being come forth whiter than snow and more resplendent than the sun, they shall, with the rest of the blessed, behold themselves seated in paradise, there to enjoy all the glory they can desire. This is what shall befall the body composed of clay; and what then shall be the state of our souls? To the which it shall be granted eternally to behold the light and brightness of the divine majesty. Let us then endeavour to do works of such a character, that we may have no cause to fear hell-fire. Let us, I say, chiefly apply ourselves to good works, let us not refuse to exert our utmost strength in the exact observation thereof, and of the fast of our venerable month of Ramadan, and of the prayers and ceremonies which are ordained; and let us not defraud the poor of a tenth of all our goods.

XIII.—Of Hell.

We must sincerely believe and hold for certain, that there is a hell prepared for the unrighteous, the refractory transgressors of the divine law accursed of God for their evil works, and for whom it would have been better had they never have been born, and to have never seen the light of day. It is for such as those that a place of torment is appointed, or rather a fire which burneth without touching them, a fire of ice and north winds, where there shall be nothing but snakes and serpents, with other venomous and ravenous creatures, which shall bite them without destroying them, and shall cause them to feel grievous pains. That place shall be the abode of the impious and of the devils, where these shall, with all sorts of cruelty and rage, incessantly torture those.