

the new monarch. On their arrival the traders found the "Ju Ju" rites, performed on the death of the native kings, still in progress, and about forty victims had been sacrificed. The old king was still lying in an open grave large enough to accommodate nine of the departed ruler's youngest wives, who had been murdered in the most cruel manner. Each of them had her ankles and wrists broken, so that she could neither walk nor crawl. In this maimed condition, and suffering most excruciating pain, the poor creatures were placed at the bottom of the grave, seven of them lying side by side. The king's body was then placed on them in a transverse direction.

Then the two remaining women were placed by his side. They were left without food or water to wait for death, which, it is said, did not come until after four or five days of intense suffering. In the meantime four men were stationed around the grave, armed with clubs, ready to knock backward any of the women who, despite their tortures and their pain, might manage to crawl to the side of the pit. In other parts of the town other human sacrifices were taking place. Suspended from various trees were the bodies of several men. They, too, were undergoing agonizing deaths, holes having in most cases, been bored through their feet near the ankles. Through these holes ropes were drawn, and the men were tied to a high tree, head downward, and left to die.—*Presbyterian Review*.

SYRIAN CUSTOMS.

WE have three very sacred covenants in the East, and I want to tell you a little about them to-night. The first is the covenant of water, the second the covenant of bread and salt, and the third is the covenant of blood. Water is not so plentiful in the East as here. When travelling in Egypt at every station where the train stops little boys and girls will come on board, with bottles of water, trying in every language which they can speak, to make you understand what they have got, so that they can sell you a little of the precious water. When you reach Cairo you go out all alone into the city, and are ready to pay any amount of money for a drink. Unless you are a Mohammaden you cannot enter into the mosque and drink the water there. But all at once from the midst of the mule-drivers in a crowded street you will hear a musical voice crying, "Who is thirsty, let him come here and drink!" And elbowing your way through the crowd you will see a group of water-men, with skin bags of water and cups, offering a drink freely to every one who will take it. You notice however, that each one as he drinks says something to the man, and as you go up for your own cup of water you find that by drinking it, you have entered into a covenant. In yonder harem a mother is watching by her dying boy, and in her agony she has sent out these water-men asking every one who drinks to pray to their God, that he may recover. The water is not exactly free, it is the water of a covenant. This covenant is only for a time, but every time you drink with an Oriental you enter into it.

The bread and salt covenant lasts for forty years. If you should attempt to go through the wilderness

of Syria to Tadmor, you would be killed by the first tribe you met, unless you were able to enter into the bread and salt covenant with the chief. Then he would be obliged to defend you for forty years. On Friday evening in every Jewish home there is a preparation for the Sabbath. Part of it consists in sending a little boy to the top of the house to watch for the first star. As soon as it appears he runs down and tells the family. They have bread ready and the head of the family serves it to the rest at once. The meaning of it is that they there enter into a covenant with God.

What is the covenant we stand on with Him to-day? We know our Lord drank water with the woman of Samaria, and that He ate bread with sinners, but He entered into the blood covenant also. In Upper Egypt there lives a wealthy gentleman, the vice-consul of the land, and a great friend of the United States Government. When the American Grant visited the country and he heard that he was coming up the Nile, he sent an invitation to him to come and visit him. When he knew that he was coming, he sent out servants to clean the streets; then he decorated the city with the stars and stripes. Some of the houses were completely covered with them. On the day of his arrival all the people in the city and for miles around assembled to see the wonderful American Grant. When he arrived at the consul's house, a servant stood near the steps, holding a bullock by one hand and a dagger in the other. As Grant alighted, with one blow of the dagger the servant cut off the head of the bullock, sprinkled the blood over the steps, and threw the body to one side of the walk and the head to the other. The American Grant had to enter the house by stepping upon the sprinkled blood. The meaning of it was that the owner of the house established a blood covenant with him, and promised to be his friend forever. He would never be untrue to him as long as blood flowed in his veins.

There is another custom practised among the people in Northern Syria, which sheds more light on this blood covenant. Walking along the streets you will observe a young man wearing a charm, and, upon asking what it means, will be told that he is in a covenant, and has a friend somewhere who would protect him with his life. In order to enter into it they both went to a public place in the city, and proclaimed their intention to the people. Then with a spear they cut open their arms, and each drank the other's blood. They were then in such solemn covenant with each other that no wife or child could ever separate them. They were not ashamed then to wear the charm that proclaimed their friendship.

I believe that David and Jonathan entered into this blood covenant. It is the very Passover blood that was sprinkled in Egypt; nay, the precious blood shed upon Calvary was like it. God has bound Himself to us in an eternal covenant of blood. He knew nothing else could save us.

May God bless you abundantly, and enter into a sacred covenant with you, and enable you to do what you can for His glory. When I first heard there was a Berachah Home in New York, I said, "Why, where did they get that name? That is a Syrian word, and means 'blessing.' It is like my own name, Barakat—