

ness, while it states the origin of this monstrous delusion, and the character of its founder, affords a good specimen of the manner in which Mr. Barth condenses his materials.

"At the city of Mecca, in Arabia, near the shores of the Red Sea, was born, in the year 570, the man who was to become a more terrible scourge to the degenerate Church of Christ than any of its former persecutors. Every former persecution had wrought more good than harm to the cause of Christianity, as was evident from the result; but the violent overspreading of Mohammedanism was evidently a punishment from the just judgment of God; for the calls to repentance and reformation which God hereby addressed to the Christian Church were not attended to.

"Mohammed was originally a merchant, who travelled to neighbouring countries for the purpose of traffic, and thus became acquainted with the religious peculiarities of Jews and Christians. Being of a nation descended from Ishmael, the son of Abraham, he easily found, both in Judaism and Christianity many materials for his own new doctrine. He taught that as there is but one God, so Mohammed was his greatest prophet, greater than Moses and Christ; that every thing which comes to pass is fore appointed by an inevitable fate, that, after death, good is rewarded and evil punished. Frequent prayer, at certain fixed hours, beneficence to the poor, circumcision, fasting, pilgrimages to Mecca, and abstinence from wine, are the chief rules of his religion. On the other hand, he allowed polygamy, made divorce easy, and represented the future state as a perpetual enjoyment of sensual pleasures; hence, it is not surprising that he found so many followers. In the fortieth year of his age, after having come forward with the assertion that the angel Gabriel had appeared to him, and had recalled all this to him, he gained over a number of his countrymen, whom he confirmed in the persuasion that his doctrine was from God, by relating to them many pretended miracles of his own, and by appearing to work others equally pretended. Nevertheless he met with much opposition, and being expelled from Mecca, in the year 633, he fled to Medina. From this period the Mohammedans date their era, which they call the Hegira, that is "the flight of the prophet." At Medina, the number of his followers so increased that, in 630, he led 10,000 men to Mecca, and took the city; after which he required all kings and emperors, by special embassies which he sent to them, to acknowledge him as the apostle and prophet of God, and resolved to propagate his religion by the sword. But, before he could proceed any farther, he died, at the age of 63, in the year 632.

After his death, his doctrines were collected into a volume which is called Koran (or, The Reading), and which is regarded by his followers as their sacred code. It is full of improbable and foolish tales, mixed up with some particulars taken from the Bible, principally relating to the Patriarchs. His successors the Caliphs, conquered in a few years all Syria, Palestine, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Asia Minor. Whoever resisted them was put to the sword; temples and cities were destroyed, and Mohammed's doctrine imposed on the oppressed inhabitants." Page 78—80.

"Fearful was the havoc which the Christian church suffered in the course of this century. Hundreds of thousands of Christians were slain in the barbarous conflict, thousands of their churches were laid in ruins, and large numbers of them yielded to the imposture of the false prophet, through fear of the Arabian sword."—Page 81.

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This is a small part of a very long title to a very excellent Volume. As it is a work of reference and consultation, and not of consecutive reading, our readers will not expect us to have actually perused the many thousands of articles it contains; but we have read many of them with much interest, have frequently consulted the volume, and can bear our testimony to the faithful and able manner in which the information on the important and multifarious objects it embraces is collected and detailed. In order to secure impartiality of statement, "where it was practicable some leading man of the principal sects has been employed to prepare the articles relating to it; and where it has not been, the matter has been drawn from some one or more prominent writer of the denomination, of acknowledged authority." The whole is designed for a complete book of reference on ALL religious subjects, and is well calculated to answer that design. We know not where, in the same compass, so large a mass of valuable matter can be found. The execution altogether is highly creditable to the American press.