

way running up to the pulpit, and the khoteeb ascends it and preaches to the Mohammedans every Friday noon. When Christian missionaries, coming to that country, begin to preach, they understand it as a divine ordinance. They believe in preaching; they listen to preaching; they are accustomed to it all their lives.

7. There is no more *temperate* people on the face of the earth. The Koran forbids the use of wines and liquors in any shape. The orthodox Moslem is afraid to cultivate grapes, for fear of their being converted into wine; but the Koran promises them rivers of wine in Paradise if they will only wait. I have seen in one day since I have been in America more drunken men than I have seen in Syria in five years. They use coffee. Their coffee-houses are to be found everywhere. Instead of meeting at night in the beastly manner of civilized nations, and filling themselves with poisonous spirituous liquors, they sit down in the coffee houses on low stools, sip their egg-shell cups of coffee, listen to the reading of the Arabian Nights, or the story of Antar, the Arab Hercules, till nine o'clock. Then they go home; the lights are extinguished, and the city is in profound darkness and silence.

The temperate habits of the Mohammedans are very favourable to the reception of divine truth—for their sober consideration of the truth when it is presented.

8. Again, they all believe in the need of religion; they all believe in the certainty of retribution; they all believe that God is a God who will avenge His own name. One of the Moslem sheikhs in Mecca had a vision two years ago. He was so zealous for his own faith that he mourned over the relapse from it. He looked into Paradise and he only saw seven Mohammedans; all the rest had been faithless; and he preached a revival of Mohammedanism. They believe in the need of religion; they have no respect for a man who has no religion. If a man has a religion, they say, very well; but the idea of a man without a religion is beyond the understanding of a Mohammedan.

Again, they believe in the doctrine of fate. I believe that that doctrine is going to have a great bearing in the future, in the days when the Mohammedans begin to turn to Christ. If the Moslems in Syria were to hear to-day that the Sultan himself had become a Christian, they would say: "It is the decree of God; God so ordered it." That is the way they receive everything that is unpleasant or disagreeable to them.

Again, in the conflict between civilization and barbarism, Islamism must be the loser. Their law is webbed, and woven, fast to the Koran; but it is contrary to modern civilization. It is contrary to the Koran to pay interest. They are consistent in that respect with regard to the interest on Turkish bonds; but it is contrary to the Koran to take or to give interest. It is contrary to the Koran to establish quarantine. Banks are contrary to the Koran; the whole system of custom-houses is contrary to the Koran; yet there is an Ottoman bank, and quarantine laws of the most stringent character, and a new commercial code all through the empire. These are in deadly conflict with the Koran. One or the other must go down, and it is very easy to see which is to succumb.

Again, there are no Koran societies like the Bible societies of Christianity. If you go into a Mohammedan bookstore in Damascus to buy a Koran you will be refused; they will not sell that sacred book to an infidel. They will not allow you to teach or read it if they can help it; they will not allow you to translate it into another language. Christianity comes with its millions of copies of the Bible in a cheap and attractive form, in all the languages spoken by men, while the Moslem stands hugging his sacred Koran. In this respect Christianity has an immense advantage.

Again, the Mohammedans believe that, in the latter day, there is to be a great apostacy. The latter day is hurrying on when there will not be a Mohammedan left. The sun is going to rise in the West, and a wind will sweep through Syria which will blow away the Koran itself. They have no idea now that their religion is going to spread over the face of the earth. It