

at the influx of new doctrines amongst their brethren, they gave themselves up to a closer and more constant perusal of the Scriptures alone; that they did not return to the Holy Land along with the rest of the Jews, when the term of their bondage had expired, but had remained ever since that time on the spot where he found them. 'By the rivers of Babylon they sat down; yea, they wept when they remembered Zion.' Now, considering that the Caraites are not a proverb or a by-word among the nations where they dwell, but, on the contrary, that they are every where respected by their Gentile neighbours, and appear to be an industrious, honest, and hospitable race, is it inconceivable that they are not descendants of those who called down vengeance on their own head, and on the heads of their posterity, when they cried aloud to Pilate, 'His blood be on us and on our children?' Would not the foregoing remarkable feature in their history, seem rather to have excluded them from the company of such as are lying under the affliction of the last curse, while, nevertheless, they live confessedly in a state of banishment from the beloved land of Israel?

With respect to the morality of this singular people, Wolff says, that they are distinguished, on the admission of the Arabs themselves, for such veracity as raises them far above anything like Arab rivalry. From all the inquiries that have yet been made, according to a certain Christian writer, there rests not a stain on the name of Caraites from its appearance, in the calendar of crime. They are vilified on all hands by their brethren of the Jewish faith, being regarded by them in the light of heretics: but it is easy, from the calumnious language of the one, to demonstrate the superior morality of the other. The head and front of their offending, according to the Rabbinical Jews, appears to be, that they adhere with scrupulous pertinacity to the written Law, and decline to subscribe to the authority of the Talmud, both in its explanations and additions. In opposition to the Rabbies, who teach that a wife may be dismissed at the will of her husband, and that a fairer rival, or even a fault in her household economy, is a legitimate ground for putting asunder those whom God has joined together, the Caraites maintain that a divorce can be justified by adultery alone. Moreover, their teachers are chargeable with delivering discourses on morality every Sabbath, whereas the Rabbies do not descend to such employment, except twice a year, and then only according to the fashion of the Talmud.

Their religious creed consists in this:—They believe that all things are created, with the exception of the Creator himself; that there exists no similitude of the Uncreated One, but that He stands alone, and cannot be compared or likened to any other object; that Moses, their master, was sent by him; that, through the instrumentality of his servant Moses, he communicated his law; that the faithful are bound to become acquainted with the divine law, and its interpretation; that the blessed God moved and guided the other prophets by the Spirit of inspiration; that he will restore the children of men to life at the day of judgment; that he will judge every man according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil; that he has not cast off his people in captivity, even while under his chastisements. They agree with the other Jews in denying the advent of the Messiah; and professing to