

power, "the Sublime Porte," has reference to the exalted gate of one of the palaces of the Sultan.

The city gates are heavy, iron-studded, two-leaved structures which swing on ponderous sockets in an arched recess. A huge bar fastens



SWEETMEAT STALL.

them when closed. It was a proof of the strength of Samson that he was able to carry off the gates of Gaza on their hinges, bar and all. The lock is a massive iron contrivance which is opened, not by a key like ours, but by one resembling a club studded with nails which fit in corresponding recesses of the lock. This key the porter carries upon his shoulder. Probably to this is allusion made in the words "the government"—the authority, the keys—"shall be upon his shoulder," and this, doubtless, is the symbolical meaning of giving to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

At the city gate the elders, judges, even the governor of the city would administer justice and transact important business in the presence of the assembled citizens. "Ephron, the Hittite, answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of the city, saying, Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee." See also

the graphic account of the transaction between Boaz, Ruth, and the elders of Bethlehem. Ruth iv. 1-12.

The ponderous city gate was shut at set of sun and travellers arriving later could enter only through the small wicket. It has been thought that this is the "needle's eye," to which allusion is made in the words of our Saviour in Matt. xix. 24: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." But this probably is merely a proverbial expression. To these two gates our Saviour may refer in the words: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." "We look at these curious little doors," says Dr. Van-Lennep, "and imagine that when our Lord uttered those memorable words He had in mind these two gates—the one wide, easy, and traversed by the multitude in broad daylight, the other narrow, high in the step, to be found in the dark, and sought amidst danger by a few anxious travellers."



VEGETABLE STALL, CAIRO.

Sometimes the different bazaars and quarters of the city, occupied often by diverse or hostile peoples, are divided by gates with watchmen to guard them. In Jerusalem, for instance, the Christians, the Moslems and the Jews all occupy different