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From Bentley's Miscellany.

DARKNESS.

Darkness hath bound
All nature around,
And the night-queen summons her pearly train,
Lighting each star
To its watch from afar,
O'er a world of visions and dreams again.

Lulled to its sleep
Is the mighty deep,
And hushed the lament of its glutton wave;
But false the smile,
As a demon's guile,
That sports on its bosom, and fades in its grave.

Trust not the rest
Of a traitor-broust,
Billows now slumbering shall wake, and be free,
Their syren chain
Shall they burst again,
And the storm-fiend call them to liberty.

Soon the grey dawn
Shall usher the morn
With a tale of woe for her sainted breath;
Night winds shall rush,
Torrents shall gush
O'er the mariner's brow in its ocean-death.

JULIAN.

FALL OF THE ARABIAN EMPIRE.

From a Paper of great power and beauty, in Blackwood's Magazine.

Three thousand years had elapsed since Ishmael, a friendless wanderer, left his parent's home, and owed his preservation in the desert to a miracle. More than six centuries had passed since Mahomed, like the great ancestor of his people, was expelled from the place of his birth, and was banished from the city of his fathers. The polished Arab now yielded to the ferocious Bactrian; and as the great Roman Empire had fallen beneath the inundating torrents from the European north, so the great Arab power was overwhelmed by impetuous invasions from the Asiatic deserts. Similar in grandeur, it was similar in fate; it had risen more rapidly, its ruin was as hasty, not more complete. It left behind a moral and a memory of desolation; its scattered vestiges of magnificence are a standing evidence of temporary pride; its recollection is suggestive of mournful and chastening feelings. The Arabic heroes are forgotten by name; their monuments are admired for their architectural beauty, not for the nobility of the spirit they were erected to honour; the bones deposited within them, to employ the eloquent elegiac language of Sir Thomas Browne, "have now rested quietly in the grave beneath the drums and trappings of three conquests." The field of Tours has been whitened by them, but even tradition there bears no record of the event; Jerusalem has seen them laid side by side with prophets and with kings, and the tombs of all are forgotten together. Ishmael and Isaac, foes on earth, rest peacefully in alliance in the same grave. Spain has been beautified by their memorials, but degraded by the practical negation of their independent, heroic spirit; and if there is truth, as we would desire to believe, in the tale of the Cid's funeral, when death re-assumed vitality to protect nobility from profanation, surely there has been in that land enough of degradation to arouse alike Christian and Moorish warriors from the sepulchre to vindicate the character of the nation. Every where

"Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers."

Every where Saracenic glory and power have faded away; the Arabian aspiring blood has sunk into the ground, and not to vegetate there. Shorn of strength, the Arabs have lost also the moral splendour that adorned them. Their sciences, their refinement, their valour, have decayed, or been wasted; their hand once more is against every man, and every man's hand against them; the Turk is their master and the desert is their home! Their fathers—where are they? Departed from memory as their nation has faded from fame, their history is a blank, their boasted empire has vanished and gone for ever! The standard of Islam no longer is the banner carrying terror and dismay along the confines of Christendom; the pale despots that rear it are defeated, despite its sacred and inspiring renown; fanaticism, pointing to heaven as a conqueror's reward, utters a feeble sound unheeded in the regions it formerly startled from torpor; the deluge of Mahomedanism having at length subsided from the ark of Christianity, the dove has gone forth to show every nation that the olive branch of peace now tranquilly and triumphantly waves over this globe to

add a pure and moral loveliness to those fields of nature designed as the dwelling-place of man!

Our remaining consideration is the influence of the Arabian empire on the world. That it must have operated powerfully, few will deny; for a mighty dominion could not have been raised and then fall, without leaving traits of influence on every land once stamped by the powerful ensigns of its transient authority.

"What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?"

Still we must not hope to find evidences of direct effects very perspicuously displayed in history. The fall of an empire chiefly operates on the mind with a force which can scarcely be calculated, and yet which is sensibly felt. When a thralldom is shaken off, and the restraints that tinged the sentiments with a particular colour, and directed the energies of the population in a particular direction, are suddenly loosened, the re-action, like that of the fabled oak, may be destructive and must be severe. Its extent and precise power remain more matters of speculation than of certainty; the equilibrium of the mind, once disturbed, may easily settle again, or, once shaken, may, like the pendulum, under regulated laws, continue vibration. We know that, shortly after the Arabian empire departed, mankind commenced those strides which since have incessantly been taken, leading onward to ends as yet dimly developed, opening constantly fresh hopes of advancement, and expanding the horizon which recedes from our approach, and tempts us by its resplendent brilliancy still further in the search. But we cannot positively determine the value of the impulse afforded by the stirring events we have considered—the crash of thrones, the destined fall of dynasties—we can merely admit them into the catalogue of causes, and acknowledge their united power, without attributing to each individual agency a definite relative importance. When we see civilization creeping into a country once the residence only of the barbarous and the bold—

"Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode,
To his hills that encircle the sea;"

and in the rising state of society observe the intellect more asserting its sovereignty over matter, and controlling the passions; the sword and the spear rusting on the walls, the national phalanx disappearing altogether; the posterity of heroes seeking the glories of peace, and adorning by mental triumphs the bright land of their nativity, consecrating every effort to mental improvement, and speculating with sublimated affections, yet not resisting the force of those patriotic emotions which burned in the bosoms of their fathers, we can recognise the effect of some great causes, without distinguishing with exactitude their nature, or the force of each; we see knowledge increase, and refinement influence the heart, and we marvel whence they came. But when, as in the case of the Arabian empire, we know that there was a degree of learning, a latent moral influence, which could not be entirely lost, we can appreciate the operation in subsequent events, and trace it in future changes. We know that we owe to the Arabs the use of the numerical character, the manufacture of paper, of cotton, and perhaps of gunpowder; we know that we are indebted to them for much of that spirit of scientific and experimental inquiry which for a time was abused indeed by the alchemists, but which afterwards was visible in the pursuits of Lavoisier and Black. In mechanics too, and in medicine, we experience the advantage of Arabian researches; and still more have we felt that advantage in earlier and less cultivated times. In some things, however, the immediate contemporaries of the Arabs, or the generations living directly after them, have experienced benefits which we should not have enjoyed, had they not handed down to us a tradition of their knowledge. Our acquaintance with the sublime truths of astronomy would, for instance, have been as deep, had Eastern philosophers never turned their eyes to the realms of illimitable space, gazed enraptured on the canopy above, and watched with enraptured and admiring minds the harmonious movements of the countless worlds that career along in unrivalled beauty, adorning the firmament they people. "The moment," says Sir John Herschel, "astronomy became a branch of mechanics, a science essentially experimental, (that is to say, one in which any principle laid down can be subjected to immediate and decisive trial, and where experience does not require to be waited for,) its progress suddenly acquired a tenfold acceleration, nay, to such a degree, that it has been asserted, and we believe with truth, that were the results of all the observations from the earliest ages annihilated, leaving only those made in Greenwich Observatory during the single life-time of Maskelyne, the whole of this most perfect of sciences might, from those data, and as to

the objects included in them, be at once re-constructed, and appear precisely as it stood at their conclusion. The operation, indeed, of Arabian knowledge of astronomy in the early ages, was perhaps principally to lend a plausibility to astrology. The observers of stars, like Columbus predicting the eclipse, had the power of astonishing, when they prepared to delude. We must not, however, under-rate the debt we owe the Arabians. If it be true that they have added nothing to our astronomical lore, they have at least been greatly influential in imparting to us the bold spirit of inquiry, by which alone that lore can be collected. We do in some measure owe it to those early philosophers that we now have reached a noble enlightenment, and live in days when Galileo is no longer heretical, and Kepler no longer mad; for surely we must frankly acknowledge that we can trace the enterprising time to no source but the example of Arabian speculators; and therefore it is to them we should feel indebted, if not for our stores of learning, at least for the energy that dictates their discovery, and the spirit that directs their use. If we have in some cases improved on the legacy they left us, in some we remain listless, without any effort to increase the value of our possession; and in others we have, it must be feared, degenerated. Heraldry may have been expanded in its uses, but it can scarcely be considered improved; and when we regard the gorgeous relics of the olden time, the architectural adornments of the East; when we contemplate the delicate fretwork, and the ingenious combination of their ornaments, the boldness of their design, their gigantic proportions, we must admit, that though other lands may possess attractions derived from noble exertions of art, yet that our country is covered with few modern evidences that we can can despise the graceful power of the Saracenic artists. Generally, we have benefited greatly by Arabian examples. Universally the influence of that empire has not only been good, but lasting. It aroused that European genius from the lethargy of inactivity which since has wrought such marvels in moulding matter, and in elevating mind, which has alone in the conceptions of our poets and our statesmen, in the daring schemes of the foes of tyranny and wrong. That influence, though slow in its operation, though for a time lost in the darkness of the ages succeeding the Arabian fall, now operates with powerful effect; it has cast round the western nations an electric chain, that conveys a mysterious emotion to the very core, and touches the nerves and the springs of action; it has awakened the populations to an ennobling and still-improving appreciation of their destinies and hopes; it has penetrated the most humble ranks, from which of times since the greatest of our intellectual nobility have sprung. So long as the spirit shall live which is not content with first impressions or casual observations, which dives into the recesses of nature for accumulating evidences of a great first cause, which traverses the regions of space, and dignifies earth by making it the receptacle of knowledge, shall the empire and the men whence so much of that spirit was derived live in the memory, and be cherished there. Ay, and when the recollection of Arabian conquests has departed, the remembrance of their nobler deeds shall not perish. Arabia, a desert, shall be venerated as the birthplace of wisdom; and once the shrine of the wise, though desolate, it shall not be despised. And Arabian power, a name, shall yet be revered, because used to exalt the sentiments, and to advance the interests of every tribe of man. The vanquishers of the world shall be remembered long after their temporal ambition is forgotten, from a just admiration of their mental triumphs, and of the impulse they imparted to its people.

ARAB BEAUTY.—Among them was one of the most beautiful girls I ever saw, apparently about twenty years of age. She was of a dark complexion, with eyes black as jet; the inside of her eyelids was blackened with kohl, her teeth were white as ivory, and her long hair fell down her neck and over her shoulders behind long enough for her to sit down upon. She had large silver ear-rings, and a silver ring through her under lip, gently drawing it down and displaying her fine teeth. Through her hair was passed a silver arrow, confining her veil to the top of her head, which was thrown back negligently over her shoulders; she was habited in a long, blue, loose shirt, open at the breast; her bare arms were covered with bracelets and amulets, and a string of beads was wound round her neck; her feet wore bare, and two large rings were fastened round her ankles. She walked as all the Arab women do, with a grace and beauty of carriage I never saw surpassed; nor in simplicity and elegance of appearance have I ever seen a fine lady of Europe, with her jewels and pearls, equal this plain and simple Arab girl.—*Addison's Travels*