

whereas men are evidently called upon in Ps. xlvii. to join in the act of rejoicing. Moreover, the clapping of the hands in this and the other similar passages is not spoken of as a tribute of respect, or warm regard, or mere excitement, either grave or gay, as in the case of the *tahleel*, but rather as a sign and accompaniment of exuberant joy.

While considering this subject, it may not be out of place to observe, that when two Easterns desire solemnly to enter into covenant, or confirm a promise of help or friendship, they strike each other's hand. Thus, a man will say to another, "You will see the Pasha on my behalf, will you not?" and then stretch out his hand to the person so appealed to, that he may touch it in token that he will assuredly keep his word. A promise or undertaking thus made is binding under any circumstances. It would seem that this custom prevails throughout India. A Hindoo Mussulman gentleman, writing to the *Daily Telegraph* some time ago about the case of a poor fellow-countryman who had come to England to present a petition to "the Empress of India," said that his compatriot addressed to him the request, "'You will write to the *Rani* (the Indian name for the Queen); write to the Rani, pray?' he repeated, and stretched out his hand that I might touch it—an Eastern form which renders a promise binding under any circumstances." Bargains throughout the East are specially ratified in this way, and covenants of all kinds between man and man.

It is therefore most interesting to observe Scriptural allusions to becoming a surety to another in just this way. Speaking of the folly of rashly accepting suretyship, the wise man says—

"My son, if thou hast become surety for thy friend,
Hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,
Hast been ensnared by the words of thy mouth,
Hast been caught by the words of thy mouth,
Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself."¹

Job, boldly appealing to God from the accusations of his friends, says to the Most High—

¹ Prov. vi. 1. See also Prov. xxii. 6.