

BARKER'S

CANADIAN MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

VOL. I. KINGSTON, SEPTEMBER, 1846. No. 5.

THE CANADIAN IN PARIS.

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CHAPTER IV.

SOUL of Gemaléddin, holy Mufti of Aden! it will soon be four hundred years since first thou didst taste in the lonely cave of a Persian hermit, that gentle stimulant to joyous wakefulness, so long sought for in vain, and which indeed as thou didst afterwards maintain, in opposition to the Dervish Hadji, was no where to be found, save in the Paradise of the Prophet, and in a cup of the delectable *caluah!* † True, Gemaléddin, many were the contradictions thou didst experience on first presenting thy dark brown beverage to the lips of men.—Religious bigotry and its attendant, ignorance and envy, whose shafts have ever been aimed against beneficent inventions, and their authors, were, in this case too, shot with temporary effect against the introducer of the coffee drink.

The Dervish Hadji, leader of the opposition, even went the length of asserting that coffee was nothing more nor less than *coal*; and opposed it with a text from the Koran, which commands every true believer to abstain from eating even a particle of *coal!* This was certainly a poser for the Mahometan religious world, and at first threatened to annihilate the use of coffee for ever among civilized men.

But if the Doctors of the Law could not agree, the people at least were obstinate in loudly asserting the '*vox populi, vox Dei*;' for, having once tasted of the forbidden cup, they continued practically to maintain the superior excellence and divine origin of their favorite beverage, despite the denouncings and opposition of their spiritual chiefs, and even against the seeming prohibition of the Koran itself.

This long vexed question was however at length submitted for decision to the Sovereign of the faithful; although it was

* Continued from the July number, page 129.

† The Arabic for Coffee.