

glow of the afternoon light the melancholy majesty of ruined dome and wall and minaret, with their delicate Saracenic tracery, was wonderfully impressive. Some of them were occupied as squalid dwellings, and there was quite a hurrying and scurrying of women and girls to bring the clumsy keys of those which were closed. The very names of many of the Mameluke sovereigns to whom these once stately tombs were erected are in many cases unknown—a striking comment on the vanity of human greatness. The whole region is dotted with low plaster-covered graves, half-covered with drifted sand, the very picture of desolation, not a blade of grass being visible. The tombs of the Caliphs are more recent, and many of them contain, beneath the vaulted dome lit with coloured glass, elaborately draped tombs with brilliant gilt inscriptions.

Returning homeward we climbed a huge mound of rubbish—broken potsherds and the accumulated *debris* of centuries—crowned with a number of picturesque-looking windmill towers. One of these I ascended and had a wonderfully impressive view of the lonely group of domes and minarets, which, in the light of the setting sun, seemed to glow as with hidden fire. Precisely as the sun went down a muezzin came out on the gallery of a neighbouring minaret and chanted his weird call to prayer. His strong, musical voice rang out, clear and sweet, the oft reiterated summons: “God is most great. I testify that there is no god but God. I testify that Mohammed is God’s apostle. Come to prayer. Come to security. God is most great.”

The morning call is a much more elaborate confession of faith, and in the solemn watches of the night he adds the words, “prayer is better than sleep.” The muezzin’s cry at the canonical hours was one of never-failing interest. At Cairo, at Jerusalem, at Damascus, at Constantinople, as well as from the shabby minarets of village mosques along the Nile and throughout Palestine, Syria, and Turkey, we heard that strange, sweet cry floating out upon the air. It cannot but impress the dullest imagination that for a thousand years, from Delhi to Morocco, five times every day, this call to prayer has sounded forth, reminding men, amid the ceaseless changes of the seen and temporal, of the realities of the unseen and eternal.

And this Moslem faith has not been permitted by God to mould the lives of so many millions for centuries without its important teachings. It was, as some of the missionaries with whom I conversed, said, a protest against the idolatry of the heathen and the Mariolatry and saint-worship of a corrupt Christianity. It was an assertion of the unity and supremacy of God, and in-