

**The Slave-trade**

Arabia, the cradle of Islam, is still a center of the slave-trade, and, according to the Koran, slavery and the slave-trade are divine institutions. Some Moslem apologists of the present day contend that Mohammed looked upon the custom as temporary in its nature; but slavery is so interwoven with the laws of marriage, of sale, of inheritance, and with the whole social fabric, that its abolition strikes at the foundations of their legal code. Whenever and wherever Moslem rulers have agreed to the abolition or suppression of the slave-trade they have acted contrary to the privileges of their religion in consenting to obey the laws of humanity. From the Koran<sup>1</sup> we learn that all male and female slaves taken as plunder in war are the lawful property of the master, that the master has power to take to himself any female slave, either married or single, as his chattel; that the position of a slave is as helpless as that of the stone idols of old Arabia; and that, while a man can do as he pleases with his property, slaves should be treated kindly and granted freedom when able to purchase it. Slave-traffic is not only allowed, but legislated for by Moham-medan law and made sacred by the example of the prophet. In Moslem books of law the same rules apply to the sale of animals and slaves.

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<sup>1</sup> Suras 4:3; 28:40; 23:49; 16:77; 30:27; 24:33, etc.