

share of the wide provinces, rendered the survival of the Ayyūby dominion precarious. Saladin's brother, El-'Adil, the "Saphadin" of the Crusades, indeed controlled the centrifugal tendencies of his kindred for a while, and his son El-Kāmil gloriously defeated Jean de Brienne on the spot where the commemorative city of El-Mansūra, "the Victorious," was afterwards erected by the conqueror. After his death, in 1237, however, the forces which made for disintegration became too strong to be resisted; various petty dynasties of the Ayyūby family were temporarily established in the chief provinces, only to make way shortly for the Tartars, and in Egypt and Syria notably for the Mamlūks, who in 1250 succeeded to the glories of Saladin.

The monuments of the Ayyūbis that are still standing, besides the Citadel and third wall, are very few. The fine ornament of the interior in the tomb-mosque of Esh-Shāfi'y belongs at least in part to El-Kāmil; the tomb and college of Es-Sālih Ayyūb, son of El-Kāmil, are still partly preserved opposite Kalaūn's Māristān; and there are, or were, fragments of his once splendid castle on the Island of Rōda, on the Nile—the island which gave his Mamlūks the epithet of *Bahry*, or "River-y"—the materials of which were used in the construction of En-Nāsir's Mosque in the Citadel. The Kāmiliya Mosque has unhappily disappeared, though not before some valuable sketches had been made by Mr. James Wild.

7. The word *Mamlūk* means "owned," and is applied to white slaves, acquired by capture in war or purchase in the market. The two dynasties of Mamlūks were lines of white slaves, imported for the protection of the Ayyūby Es-Sālih against his kinsmen and the Franks, and who presently acquired the power and the government of Egypt. They were reinforced from time to time by fresh purchases, for the climate of Egypt was unfavourable to the fertility of foreign immigrants, and the stock had to be refreshed from outside. Es-Sālih's Mamlūks were loyal servants; they defended his kingdom while he lived, and it was their brilliant charge under Beybars that routed the French army and brought about the cap-

ture of St. Louis himself. Es-Sālih's son was a drunken debauchee, and helpless to meet the difficulties in which his kingdom was involved. In circumstances that hardly left an alternative, he was put out of the way, and a lady, Sheger-ed-durr, "Tree of Pearls," ascended the throne of her late husband and master Es-Sālih, as the first Slave Monarch of Mohammadan Egypt. Her rule was but brief; jealousy led her to murder the Mamlūk chief Aybek, whom she had married for political reasons, and she paid the penalty of her crime by being herself beaten to death with the bath-clogs of some female slaves who sympathized with her rival. After her death began that singular succession of Mamlūk Sultans, which lasted, in spite of special tendencies to dissolution, for two hundred and seventy-five years.

The external history of these years is monotonous. Wars to repel the invasions of the Tartars or to drive the Christians from the Holy Land, struggles between rival claimants to the throne, embassies to and from foreign powers, including France and Venice, the Khan of Persia, and the King of Abyssinia, constitute the staple of foreign affairs. To enumerate the events of each reign, or even the names of the fifty Mamlūks who sat on the throne at Cairo, would be wearisome and unprofitable to the reader: the chronological tables at the end of this chapter will tell all that need be told. But it is different with the internal affairs of the Mamlūk period. In this flowering time of Saracenic art, a real interest belongs to the life and social condition of the people who made and encouraged the finest productions of the Mohammadan artist, and it will not be superfluous to explain briefly what the condition of Egypt was under her Mamlūk rulers. Some consideration of this subject is almost demanded by the startling contrasts offered by the spectacle of a band of disorderly soldiers, to all appearance barbarians, prone to shed blood, merciless to their enemies, tyrannous to their subjects, yet delighting in the delicate refinements which art could afford them in their home life, lavish in the endowment of pious foundations, magnificent in

their mosques and palaces, and fastidious in the smallest details of dress and furniture. Allowing all that must be allowed for the passion of the barbarian for display, we are still far from an explanation how the Tartars chanced to be the noblest promoters of art, of literature, and of public works, that Egypt had known since the days of Alexander the Great.

During this brilliant period the population of Egypt was sharply divided into two classes, who had little in common with each other. One was that of the Mamlüks, or military oligarchy, the other the mass of the Egyptians. The latter were useful for cultivating the land, paying the taxes which supported the Mamlüks, and manufacturing their robes, but beyond these functions, and that of supplying the judicial and religious posts of the empire, they had small part in the business of the state, and appear to have been very seldom incorporated into the ranks of their foreign masters. The names of the Mamlüks that have descended to us in the accurate and detailed pages of El-Makrizy are generally Tartar or Turkish,* and even when they are ordinary Arabic names, they were borne by Tartars who had put on an Arabic name along with the speech, dress, and country of their adoption. In the glories, military and ceremonial, of the Mamlüks the people had no part. They were indeed thankful when a mild sovereign, like Lāgīn, ascended the throne, and when taxes were reduced and bakhshish distributed, and they would join, like all populaces, in the decoration of the streets and public rejoicings, when the Sultan

* Among the principal Mamlük nobles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the following names most frequently occur; they are Turkish or Tartar, and Mr. J. W. Redhouse, C.M.G., has kindly given me their significations: Beybars, and Bars Bey, Prince Panther; Altünbugha, Gold (yellow) Bull; Ketbughā, Lucky Bull; Kurt, Wolf; Tunkuz, Boar; Aktai, White Colt; Karakush, Black bird of prey, Eagle; Tughan, Falcon; Sunkur Ashkar, Bay Falcon; Aksunkur, Jerfalcon; Karasunkur, Black Falcon; Lāgīn, Perigrine Hawk; Balban, Goshawk; Singar, Bird of prey; Kalaun, Duck. The preceding names are derived from animals and birds of prey, and it is probable that corresponding images were blazoned on their owners' shields. Names

came back from a career of conquest, or recovered from an illness ; but they had no voice in the government of the country, and must make the best they might of the uncertain characters of their ever-changing rulers. The men who governed the country were the body of white military slaves, who had been imported by Es-Sālih, and were renewed by purchase as death or assassination reduced their numbers.

Before Es-Sālih's death a certain number of his Mamlūks had risen from the ranks of common slaves to posts of honour at their master's court ; they had become cup-bearers, or tasters, or masters of the horse to his Majesty, and had been rewarded by enfranchisement ; and these freed Mamlūks became in turn masters and owners of other Mamlūks. Thus, at the very beginning of Mamlūk history, we find a number of powerful *Amirs* (or "commanders," lords), who had risen from the ranks of the slaves and in turn become the owners of a large body of retainers, whom they led to battle, or by whose aid they aspired to ascend the throne. The only title to kingship among these nobles was personal prowess and the command of the largest number of adherents. In the absence of other influences the hereditary principle was no doubt adopted, and we find one family, that of Kalaūn, maintaining its succession to the throne for several generations, though not without brief interruptions. But as a rule the successor to the kingly power was the most powerful lord of the day, and his hold on the throne depended chiefly on

connected with the moon are common: *e.g.* Tūlūn, Setting Moon ; Aybek, Moon Prince ; Aydaghdy, The Moon has risen ; Aytekīn, Moon-touching, tall ; others relate to steel, as Janbalāt, Whose soul is steel ; Aydemir, Battle-axe ; Erdemir, Male Iron (tempered steel) ; Bektemir, Prince Iron ; Esendemir, Sound Iron ; Tukuzdemir, Pig-iron (?). Others refer to some personal characteristic, as Beysary, Prince Auburn ; Salār, The Attacker ; Karamūn, Black Man ; Aghirlu, Sedate ; Bektūt, Prince Mulberry ; Kagkar and Kagkīn, Fleet in running ; Kurgy means Armour-bearer ; Takgi, Moun-taineer ; Suyurghatmish, A present ; Ezbek, True Prince ; Bektāsh, Prince-peer ; Satilmish, Who was sold.

his strength of following, and his conciliation of the other nobles. The annals of Mamlūk dominion are full of instances of a great lord reducing the authority of the reigning Sultan to a shadow, and then stepping over his murdered body to the throne. Most of the Mamlūks died violent deaths at the hands of rival Amīrs, and the safety of the ruler of the time depended mainly upon the numbers and courage of his guard. This body-guard, or *halka*, enjoyed remarkable privileges, and was the object of continual solicitude on the part of the Sultan. As his own safety and power depended upon their fidelity, he was accustomed to bestow upon them grants of lands, rich dresses of honour, and unstinted largesse. A great part of the land of Egypt was held by the soldiers of the guard in feofs granted by the crown;* and the Amīrs who commanded them, nobles specially attached to the Sultan, and generally promoted from among his own Mamlūks, received handsome appanages. These soldiers of the guard numbered several thousand, and must have passed from Sultan to Sultan at every change of ruler; their colonels, or "Amīrs over a Thousand," as they were called, became

* Beybars, following the example of Saladin, organized a feudal system by granting lands to the chief lords of his court in return for service in the field, and his arrangement appears to have lasted until the time of Lāgīn, when we find the whole land of Egypt was divided into twenty-four kīrāts, of which four belonged to the Sultan, ten to the Amīrs and the holders of royal grants, and ten to the soldiers of the guard. Lāgīn made a fresh survey and reconstructed the feofs: ten kīrāts were allotted to the Amīrs and guard together, one was reserved for compensating the dissatisfied, four as before belonged to the Sultan, and the remaining nine were assigned to the cost of levying a new body of troops. We learn that the Sultan's sixth part comprised Boheyrā, Atfih, Alexandria, Damietta, Manfalūt, with their villages, and Kōm Ahmar. The feof of Mangūtīmūr, the viceroy, included Semhoud, Edfū, Kūs, and others, and brought in a revenue of more than 100,000 ardebbs (each of five bushels) of grain, without reckoning money-payments, sugar-candy (for which there were seventeen factories), fruits, cattle, and wood. The only lands excepted from this general distribution among the Amīrs and soldiers were the pious foundations, heritages, and the like. Lāgīn considerably reduced the value of the individual feofs, which had previously been worth, at the time of Kalāūn, at least 10,000 francs a year.—El-Makrīzy (Quatremère), II. ii. 65 ff.

important factors in the choice of rulers, and often deposed or set up a Sultan as seemed good to them. The Sultan, or chief Mamlūk, was in fact more or less, according to his character, at the mercy of the officers of his guard; and the principal check he possessed upon their ambition or discontent was found in their own mutual jealousies, which might be played upon so as to neutralize their opposition.

Each of the great lords, or Amirs, were he an officer of the guard, or a court official, or merely a private nobleman, was a Mamlūk Sultan in miniature. He too had his guard of Mamlūk slaves, who waited at his door to escort him in his rides abroad, were ready at his behest to attack the public baths and carry off the women, defended him when a rival lord besieged his palace, and followed him valiantly as he led the charge of his division on the field of battle. These great lords, with their retainers, were a constant menace to the reigning Sultan. A coalition would be formed among a certain number of disaffected nobles, with the support of some of the officers of the household and of the guard, and their retainers would mass in the approaches to the royal presence, while a trusted cup-bearer or other officer, whose duties permitted him access to the king's person, would strike the fatal blow, and the conspirators would forthwith elect one of their number to succeed to the vacant throne. This was not effected without a struggle; the royal guard was not always to be bribed or overcome, and there were generally other nobles whose interests attached them to the reigning sovereign rather than to any possible successor, except themselves, and who would be sure to oppose the plot. Then there would be a street fight; the terrified people would close their shops, run to their houses, and shut the great gates which isolated the various quarters and markets of the city; and the rival factions of Mamlūks would ride through the streets that remained open, pillaging the houses of their adversaries, carrying off women and children, holding pitched battles in the roads, and discharging

arrows and spears from the windows upon the enemy in the street below. These things were of constant occurrence, and the life of the merchant classes of Cairo must have been sufficiently exciting. We read how the great bazaar, called the Khān El-Khalily, was sometimes shut up for a week while these contests were going on in the streets without, and the rich merchants of Cairo huddled trembling inside the stout gates.

The contest over, and a new Sultan set on the throne, there remained the further difficulty of staying there. "J'y suis" was a much easier thing to say in Egypt than "j'y reste." The same method that raised him to power might set him down again. An example, drawn from the annals of the thirteenth century, will show better than any generalizations, the uncertain tenure of power among the fickle military oligarchy of the Mamlūks. In 693 A.H., or A.D. 1293, En-Nāsir Mohammad was raised to the throne, which had been occupied by his father Kalaūn and his brother Khalil. En-Nāsir was a mere child, nine years old, and the real authority devolved on his Vizir (or "Viceroy," *Nāib-es-Saltana*, as this minister was generally styled under the Mamlūks), by name Ketbugha. Naturally there were several other nobles who envied Ketbugha his position of influence and authority; and one of these, Shugay, taking the lead, offered armed resistance to the authority of the Viceroy. Ketbugha's Mamlūks used to assemble at the gate of the Citadel to defend him in his progress through the city, and Shugay, with his retainers, would waylay the vice-regal *cortège* as it rode through the narrow streets, and bloody conflicts ensued. The gates of the city were kept closed, and the markets were deserted, until at length Shugay was captured, and his head was paraded on a pike through the streets of Cairo. But disaffection was not quelled by the slaughter of Shugay and his followers. There dwelt a body of 300 Mamlūks called Ashrafy* (after their master El-Ashraf Khalil) in the quarter

* It will be useful here to explain the system of Mamlūk names and titles. Every Mamlūk had (1) a proper name, such as Ketbugha, Lāgin, Beybars,

of Cairo called El-Kebsh, and these warriors, finding their occupation gone by the murder of their master, made an attempt to seize the sovereign power. They assembled and went to the royal stables at the foot of the Citadel, and thence to the armourers' market, plundering and destroying on their way, and eventually they encamped at the gate of the Citadel, and laid siege to the fortress. Whereupon Ketbugha's immediate supporters mounted their horses and rode down to meet them. The Ashrafis were dispersed, and given over to various horrible tortures—blinded, maimed, drowned, beheaded, and hanged, or nailed to the city gate Zuweyla—and only a few were so far spared that they were allotted as slaves to their conquerors. Thus the rebellion was put down; but the next day, the Viceroy Ketbugha, calling a council of the great nobles of the Court, protested that such exhibitions were dishonourable to the kingly state, and that the dignity of Sultan would be irreparably compromised if a child like En-Nāsir were any longer suffered to occupy the

Kalaūn, generally of Tartar derivation; (2) a surname or honourable epithet, as Husām-ed-dīn, "Sword-blade of the Faith," Nūr-ed-dīn, "Light of the Faith," Nāsir-ed-dīn, "Succourer of the Faith;" (3) generally a pseudo-patronymic, as Abu-l-Feth, "Father of Victory," Abu-n-Nasr, "Father of Succour;" (4) if a Sultan, an epithet affixed to the title of Sultan or King, as El-Melik Es-Sa'īd, "The Fortunate King," El-Melik En-Nāsir, "The Succouring King," El-Melik El-Mansūr, "The Victorious King;" (5) a title of possession, implying, by its relative termination *y* or *ī*, that the subject has been owned as a slave (or has been employed as an officer or retainer) by some Sultan or Lord, as El-Ashrafy, "The Slave or Mamlūk of the Sultan El-Ashraf," El-Mansūry, "The Mamlūk of the Sultan El-Mansūr." The order of these titles was as follows: first the royal title, then the honourable surname, third the patronymic, fourth the proper name, and last the possessive: as Es-Sultān El-Melik El-Mansūr Husām-ed-dīn Abu-l-Feth Lāgīn El-Mansūry, "The Sultan, Victorious King, Sword-blade of the Faith, Father of Victory, Lāgīn, Mamlūk of the Sultan El-Mansūr." It is usual, in abbreviating these numerous names, to style a Sultan by his title, El-Mansūr, &c., or by his proper name, Lāgīn, &c., omitting the rest, while a Noble (Amīr) is conveniently denoted by his proper name alone. It may be added that the word *ibn*, of frequent occurrence in these pages, means "son;" as, Ahmad ibn Tūlūn, "Son of Tūlūn."

throne. The child was therefore sent away to grow up, and Ketbugha, as a matter of course, assumed the sceptre of his ward. This was in 1295, and in the end of 1296, on his return from a journey to Syria, the new Sultan had the misfortune to excite the latent jealousy of some of the powerful nobles who accompanied him: his tent was attacked; his guards and Mamlüks, by a devoted resistance, succeeded in enabling their master to fly, and the leader of the rebellion, Lāgin, was forthwith chosen Sultan in his stead.

Husām-ed-dīn Lāgin, who now ascended the throne under the title of El-Mansūr, had originally been a slave of El-Mansūr 'Aly son of Aybek (whence he was called El-Mansūry), and had then been bought for the trifling sum of about £30 by Kalaūn, under whom he rose from the grade of page to that of *silāhdār*, or armour-bearer; and Kalaūn, coming to the throne, gave him the rank of Amīr and made him governor of Damascus. Kalaūn's son Khalil, on succeeding to the sovereignty, cast Lāgin into prison, and in return for this treatment Lāgin assisted in his murder. During the brief reign of Ketbugha, he held the highest office in the land, that of Viceroy (*Nāib-es-Saltana*) and now he had turned against his latest lord, and had seized the crown for himself. The terms of his election throw an interesting light upon the precarious authority of the Mamlūk Sultans. His fellow-conspirators, after the flight of Ketbugha, marched at Lāgin's stirrup, hailed him Sultan, and payed him homage; but they exacted as a condition of their fealty that the new monarch should continue as one of themselves, do nothing without their advice, and never show undue favour towards his own Mamlüks. This he swore; but so suspicious were they of his good faith, that they made him swear it again, openly hinting that when he was once instated he would break his vow and favour his own followers, to the injury of the nobles who had raised him to the throne. When this had been satisfactorily arranged, Es-Sultān El-Melik El-Mansūr Husām-ed-dīn Lāgin, "The Sultan,

Victorious King, "Sword-blade of the Faith, Lāgin," rode on to Cairo, attended by the insignia of sovereignty, with the royal parasol borne over his head by the great Lord Beysary; the prayers were said in his name in the mosques, drums were beaten in the towns he passed through; the nobles of Cairo came out to do him fealty; and, escorted by a crowd of lords and officers, he rode to the Citadel, displayed himself as Sultan to the people in the Hippodrome, and made his royal progress through the streets of the capital, from the Citadel to the Gate of Victory. The 'Abbāsī Khalif of Egypt, a poor relic of the ancient house of Baghdād, rode at his side; and before them was carried the Khalif's diploma of investiture, without which very nominal authority no Sultan in those days would have considered his coronation complete. The streets were decorated with precious silks and arms, and great was the popular rejoicing; for the benevolence and generosity of Lāgin made him a favourite with the people, and he had already promised to remit the balance of the year's taxes, and had even vowed that if he lived there should not be a single tax left. The price of food, which had risen to famine height during the late disturbances, now fell fifty per cent.; bread was cheap, and the Sultan was naturally adored.

In spite of his share in a royal murder and a treacherous usurpation, this Mamlūk Sultan seems to have deserved the affection of his subjects. Not only did he relieve the people from much of the pressure of unjust and arbitrary taxation under which they had groaned, but he abstained, at least until he fell under the influence of another mind, from the tyrannical imprisonments and tortures by which the rule of the Mamlūks was too commonly secured. His conduct to his rivals was clement to a degree hardly paralleled among the princes of his time. He did not attempt to destroy the ex-Sultan Ketbugha, but gave him a small government in Syria by way of compensation. The child En-Nāsir had nothing to fear from Lāgin, who invited him to return to Egypt, and told him that, as the Mamlūk of the boy's father,

Kalaūn, he only regarded himself as his representative, holding the throne until En-Nāsir should be old enough to assume the government himself. Lāgin was zealous in good works, gave alms largely in secret, and founded many charitable endowments. Among his services to art must be mentioned his restoration of the Mosque of Ibn-Tūlūn, at a cost of £10,000, to which he was impelled by the circumstance that he had found refuge in the then deserted building during the pursuit which followed the murder of Khāilil. Hidden in the neglected chambers and arcades of the old mosque, where so few worshippers repaired that but a single lamp was lighted before the niche at night, and the muëzzin cared to come no further than the threshold to chant the call to prayer, Lāgin vowed that he would repay his preservation by repairing the mosque that had sheltered him; and it is interesting to know that the panels of the pulpit, which, with a cupola over the niche, formed the chief additions (beyond mere repairs) that Lāgin made to the mosque, are now in the South Kensington Museum (figs. 35—8.) Such good deeds, and the magnanimous release of many prisoners, and not least, a bold foreign policy, as when he sent an army to capture towns on the distant borders of Armenia, could not fail to endear him to the populace; and when he was confined to the Citadel for two months with injuries resulting from a fall at polo, the rejoicings on his return to public life were genuine and universal. All the streets were decorated with silks and satins, the shops and windows were hired by sight-seers, eager to catch a glimpse of the Sultan, and drums were beaten during his state progress through the capital. He celebrated the occasion by giving a number of robes of honour to the chief lords, freeing captives, and distributing alms to the poor. His private life commended him to the good Muhammadans of Cairo; for although in his youth he had been a wine-bibber, gambler, and given over to the chase, when he ascended the throne he became austere in his practice, fasted two months in the year besides Ramadān, affected the society of good pious kādis and

the like, was plain in his dress, as the Prophet ordains that a Muslim should be, and strict in enforcing simplicity among his followers. His ruddy complexion and blue eyes, together with a tall and imposing figure, indeed marked the foreigner, but his habits were orthodoxy itself; he bastinadoed drunkards, even if they were nobles; and his immoderate eating was not necessarily wicked.

But Lāgin, with all his virtues, had a weakness, too common among Mamlūk sovereigns; he was passionately attached to one of his retainers, named Mangūtimūr, and by degrees suffered himself to be led by this favourite where his better judgment would never have allowed him to stray. Mangūtimūr was neither a bad nor a contemptible man; but he was devoured by ambition and pride, and had no scruples when it was a question of removing an obstacle in his path to power. One of these was the great Lord Beysary, who had himself declined the crown, and who, when consulted by Lāgin on the wisdom of making Mangūtimūr his viceroy, reminded the Sultan of his vow when he was elected to the supreme power, and told him in blunt language that Mangūtimūr was not worthy of the honour to which the Sultan destined him. The favourite, when he was made Viceroy after all, did not forget Beysary or his other detractors; some he banished, others were imprisoned and bastinadoed, and Beysary himself was placed in a sort of regal confinement, and there kept till his death. We shall hear more of Lord Beysary when we come to describe his perfume-burner in the chapter on metal-work, and it is enough to say here that he was too much devoted to the comforts and enjoyments of good living to care to trouble himself with the uneasiness which proverbially attends crowned heads. He was moreover an old man, and had been a notable and respected figure in Mamlūk court life for the past fifty years; his arrest was therefore the more wanton. Mangūtimūr's oppressions were not tamely endured by the Amirs; but it was no light thing to risk the horrors of incarceration in the Citadel dungeon, a noisome pit, where foul and deadly exhalations, unclean vermin, and

bats, rendered the pitchy darkness more horrible, and where for nearly half a century it was the practice to incarcerate refractory nobles, until, in 1329, En-Nāsir had the dreaded hole filled up. At length a combination was formed ; Lāgin was treacherously murdered as he was in the act of rising to say the evening prayers, and immediately afterwards Mangūtīmur was entrapped. He was for the moment consigned to the pit under the Citadel, when the Amir who had dealt the fatal stroke to Lāgin arrived on the scene, and crying with a strident voice, "What had the Sultan done that I should kill him? By God, I never had aught but benefits from him ; he brought me up, and gave me my steps of promotion. Had I known that when the Sultan was dead this Mangūtīmūr would still be living, I would never have done this murder, for it was Mangūtīmūr's acts that led me to the deed." So saying, he plunged into the dungeon, slew the hated favourite with his own hands, and delivered his house over to the soldiers to pillage.

This sketch of a few years of Mamlūk history will serve to show the perils that surrounded the kingly state. It is a fair sample of the whole history, although now and again a sovereign would ascend the throne whose personal qualities or diplomatic talents succeeded in keeping the reins of government in his hands for a considerable period. The uncertainty of the tenure of power, and the general brevity of their reigns, (they average about five years and a half,) make it the more astonishing that they should have found time or leisure to promote the many noble works of architecture and engineering, which distinguish their rule above any other period of Egyptian history since the Christian Era. The Sultan's office was indeed no sinecure, apart from the constant watchfulness needed to manage the refractory Mamlūks. Two days a week did Lāgin devote to sitting in the Hall of Justice and hearing any complaints that his subjects might bring before him, in addition to those petitions which were constantly presented to him as he rode through the city. The correspondence of the empire, again,

was no light matter, and most of the Sultans took a personal share in drawing up the despatches. Beybars had established a well organized system of posts, connecting every part of his wide dominions with the capital. Relays of horses were in readiness at each posting-house, and twice a week the Sultan received and answered reports from all parts of the realm. Besides the ordinary mail, there was also a pigeon post, which was no less carefully arranged. The pigeons were kept in cots in the Citadel and at the various stages, which were further apart than those of the horses; the bird knew that it must stop at the first post-cot, where its letter would be attached to the wing of another pigeon for the next stage. The royal pigeons had a distinguishing mark, and when one of these arrived at the Citadel with a despatch, none was permitted to detach the parchment save the Sultan himself; and so stringent were the rules, that were he dining or sleeping or absorbed in polo, he would nevertheless at once be informed of the arrival, and would immediately proceed to disencumber the bird of its message. The correspondence conducted by these posts was often very considerable. Here is an example of the business-hours of the famous Sultan Beybars. He arrived before Tyre one night; a tent was immediately pitched by torchlight, the secretaries, seven in number, were summoned, with the commander-in-chief; and the adjutant-general (Amir 'Alam) with the military secretaries were instructed to draw up orders for drums and standards, &c. For hours they ceased not to write letters and diplomas, to which the Sultan affixed his seal; this very night they indicted in his presence fifty-six diplomas for high nobles, each with its proper introduction of praise to God. One of Beybar's letters has been preserved; it is a very characteristic epistle, and displays a grim and sarcastic appreciation of humour. Boemond, Prince of Antioch, was not present at the assault of that city by Beybars, and the Sultan kindly conveyed the information of the disaster in a personal despatch. He begins by ironically complimenting Boemond on his change of title, from

Prince to Count, in consequence of the fall of his capital, and then goes on to describe the siege and capture of Antioch. He spares his listener no detail of the horrors that ensued: "Hadst thou but seen thy knights trodden under the hoofs of the horses! thy palaces invaded by plunderers and ransacked for booty! thy treasures weighed out by the hundredweight! thy ladies bought and sold with thine own gear, at four for a *dinār*! hadst thou but seen thy churches demolished, thy crosses sawn in sunder, thy garbled Gospels hawked about before the sun, the tombs of thy nobles cast to the ground; thy foe the Muslim treading thy Holy of Holies; the monk, the priest, the deacon, slaughtered on the altar; the rich given up to misery; princes of royal blood reduced to slavery! Couldst thou but have seen the flames devouring thy halls; thy dead cast into the fires temporal, with the fires eternal hard at hand! the churches of Paul and of Cosmas rocking and going down!—then wouldst thou have said, 'Would God that I were dust! Would God that I never had this letter!' . . . This letter holds happy tidings for thee: it tells thee that God watches over thee, to prolong thy days, inasmuch as in these latter days thou wert not in Antioch! Hadst thou been there, now wouldst thou be slain or a prisoner, wounded or disabled. A live man rejoiceth in his safety when he looketh on a field of slain. . . . As not a man hath escaped to tell thee the tale, we tell it thee; as no soul could apprise thee that thou art safe, while all the rest have perished, we apprise thee!" Nevertheless, Boemond was mightily incensed with the Sultan's sarcastic attentions.*

Beybars was exceptionally active in the discharge of his royal functions, and was indefatigable in making personal inspections of the forts and defences of his empire. Once he left his camp secretly, and made a minute inspection of his kingdom in disguise,

* The greater part of the translation above is Col. Yule's (*Marco Polo*, i. 25): the Arabic text and French version are given by Quatremère, in El-Makrizy's *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks*, I. ii. 190—194.

returning before his absence had been found out by his troops. He maintained 12,000 soldiers under arms, of whom a third were stationed in Egypt, a third at Damascus, and the remaining third at Aleppo. On his expeditions he was escorted by 4000 horsemen. His history is a good example of the adventurous career of the Mamlūk. He was a native of Kipchak, between the Caspian and the Ural Mountains,—a tall, ruddy fellow, with blue eyes, one of which had a cataract on it, and this defect nearly lost him a purchaser in the slave-market: indeed, he only fetched 800 francs, a sum hardly equal to £20. He was afterwards bought by the Amir 'Alā-ed-din Aydekin, El-Bundukdār, "the Arblasteer," from whom Beybars took his title El-Bundukdāry, or "Bendocquedar," as Marco Polo writes it. Subsequently he passed into the possession of Es-Sālih Ayyūb, and his strong, determined nature, his promptitude and resource in action, high mettle, and resonant voice, soon gained him the admiration and fear of his contemporaries. His charge at Mansūra won the day and annihilated the crusade of St. Louis, and in due course he made his way to the throne, through, we are sorry to add, the usual road of assassination. His was not a scrupulous nature, and his own death was caused by poison which he had prepared for another; but he was the first great Mamlūk Sultan, and the right man to lay the foundations of the empire. "Bondogar," says William of Tripoli, "as a soldier was not inferior to Julius Caesar, nor in malignity to Nero;" but he allows that the Sultan was "sober, chaste, just to his own people, and even kind to his Christian subjects."* So well did he organize his wide-stretching provinces that no incapacity or disunion among his successors could pull down the fabric he had raised, until the wave of Ottoman conquest swept at last upon Egypt and Syria. To him is due the constitution of the Mamlūk army, the rebuilding of a navy of 40 war-galleys, the allotment of feofs to the lords and soldiers,

* Col. H. Yule, *Marco Polo*, i. 24.

the building of causeways and bridges, and digging of canals in various parts of Egypt. He strengthened the fortresses of Syria and garrisoned them with Mamlüks; he connected Damascus and Cairo by a postal service of four days, and used to play polo in both cities within the same week. His mosque still stands without the north gates, and his college till lately formed an important feature among the splendid monuments in the street known as "Betwixt the Palaces;" he founded an endowment for the burial of poor Muslims; in short, he was the best ruler Egypt had seen since the death of Saladin, whom he resembled in many respects, but not in chivalrous clemency. Some idea of the luxury and refinement of his court may be gathered from the list of his presents to the Persian Ilkhān Baraka, which included a Korān, said to have been transcribed by the Khalif 'Othmān, enclosed in a case of red silk embroidered with gold, over which was a leather cover lined with striped silk; a throne encrusted with carved ivory and ebony; a silver chest; prayer-carpets of all colours and sorts; curtains, cushions, and tables; superb swords with silver hilts; instruments of music of painted wood; silver lamps and chandeliers; saddles from Khwārizm, bows from Damascus, with silk strings; pikes of Kana wood, with points tempered by the Arabs; exquisitely fashioned arrows in boxes plated with copper; large lamps of enamel with silver-gilt chains; black eunuchs, ingenious cook-girls, beautiful parrots; numbers of Arab horses, dromedaries, mules, wild asses, giraffes, and apes, with all kinds of saddles and trappings. Only remarkable qualities could have raised Beybars from the condition of a one-eyed slave to the founder of an empire that endured for nearly three centuries.

In addition to necessary business, state ceremonies occupied no inconsiderable part of the Sultan's time. The Mamlūk court was a minutely organized system, and the choice of officers to fill the numerous posts of the household, and the tact demanded in satisfying their jealousies and disagreements, to say nothing

of the constant presentation of ceremonial dresses of honour, writing of diplomas, and granting of titles and appanages, must have been a tax upon their master. The posts about the royal person were no sinecures, and it needed no doubt some diplomacy to arrange the cabinet and household appointments to the satisfaction of everybody. The chief officers of the court, which of course included the administration, were these :—

1. The *Nāib-es-Saltana*, or Viceroy, chief officer of the empire, corresponding to the Vizir of other periods, who controlled alike the army, finances, posts, and appointments; rode at the head of the troops in state progresses, and was escorted by nobles to and from the Sultan's presence. He was styled *Melik el-Umara*, or "King of Nobles," and had a special palace (*Dār-en-Niāba*) in the Citadel, where all the functionaries of the state came to him for instructions.

2. The *Atābek*, or *Atābek-el-asākir*, Commander-in-Chief, also styled (after the middle of the fourteenth century) *El-Amir-el-Kebir*, or "the Great Lord."

3. The *Ustaddar*, Majordomo, superintendent of the household, the kitchen, pages (*ujākīs*), and servants and officers generally; he had entire authority to obtain the supplies, money, and clothing for the royal household. By the time of Barkūk, A.D. 1400, this official had so waxed in importance, that he had become practically Grand Vizir, and enjoyed the management of the finances and the royal domains. His military rank—for all Mamlūks, though their posts might be purely civil, had military grades—was that of Bicenturion, or Major over 200. Under him were servants supplied from among the Lords of the Drums and Captains over Ten, and he had a legal assessor and *mubāshirs*, or superintendents, to assist him.

4. The *Rās Nauba*, or Chief of the Guard, commanded the Sultan's Mamlūks, and settled their differences. Another and superior *Rās Nauba* commanded the Lords and adjusted their quarrels, and the latter was not only addressed as "His

Excellency the Generous the Exalted," الجنب العالی الکریم, but the Sultan called him "Brother."*

5, 6. The *Silāhdār*, Armour-bearer, carried the Sultan's armour. There were several, and their chief was called *Amīr Silāh*, "Lord of the Arms," who inspected the Armoury, was a centurion or Captain over 100, and was addressed by the Sultan as "Brother," with the same style as the *Rās Naubat el-Umara*. The Lord of the Arms was one of the highest officers in the realm after the *Atābek Amīr el-Kebīr*.

7. The *Amīr Akhōr*, Master of the Horse, presided over the royal stables, assisted by the *Selākhōry*, who saw to the horses' food, and sometimes by a second *Amīr Akhōr*, who was a Captain over Ten; minor equerries superintended the colts, oxen, water-wheels, &c., separately, but all were under the supreme control of the great Master of the Horse.

8, 9. The *Sāky*, Cup-bearer, and the *Gāshenkīr*, Taster, whose duty it was to taste the Sultan's food before it was served, to ward against poison, were officers of trust, and enjoyed frequent intercourse with the sovereign, and thus often carried great influence in the management of the empire. The *Gāshenkīr* was a Bicenturion.

10. The *Hāgīb*, Chamberlain, was the officer who guarded the access to the royal presence.

11. *Amīr Gandār*, Equerry-in-waiting, introduced nobles to the presence, and commanded the *gandārs* or equerries, and *berd-dars*, grooms of the bedchamber; superintended the executions and tortures by order of the Sultan, and had charge of the *zarākhānāh*, or royal prison. He was chosen from the ranks of the Colonels (*mukaddam*) or Lords of the Drums.

12. The *Dawādār*, or Secretary, took charge of the imperial

* The Sultan never forgot that he had risen from the ranks of the Mamlūks, and was accustomed to address his late comrades in brotherly style. "The Mamlūk" was a common title much esteemed by the Sultan and retained in the days of his greatest power.

correspondence, received and addressed despatches, was a Lord of the Drums, or a Captain over Ten, and enjoyed great influence and consideration.

13. The *Kātim es-Sīrr*, or Private Secretary, was the depository of the Sultan's secret affairs, shared the correspondence with the *Dawādār*, was the first to go in to the sovereign and the last to come out, and was his chief adviser in all matters.

Besides these great officers, there were many smaller posts, which often commanded great power and influence. The *Amīr Meglīs*, Lord of the Seat, so called because he enjoyed the privilege of sitting in the Sultan's presence, was the superintendent of the court physicians and surgeons; the *Gamdār*, or Master of the Wardrobe, was a high official; the *Amīr Shikār*, or Grand Huntsman, assisted the king in the chase; the *Amīr Tabar*, or Drum-Major, held almost the rank of the Chief of the Guard, and commanded the *Tabardārs* or Halbardiers of the Sultan, ten in number; the *Bashmakdār* carried the sovereign's slippers; the *Gūkandār* bore the Sultan's polo-stick, a staff of painted wood about four cubits long, with a curved head; the *Zimamdārs* were eunuch guards. The various household departments had also their officers, who were often great nobles, and men of influence in the realm. The *Ustaddār-es-Suhba* presided over the cookery; the *Tabl-khānāh*, or Drummery, was the department where the royal band was kept, and it was presided over by an officer called the *Amīr 'Alam*, or adjutant-general. The Sultan's band is stated at one time to have comprised four drums, forty kettle-drums (كوسات), four hautbois (زبور), and twenty trumpets (نعير). The permission to have a band was among the most coveted distinctions of Mamlūk times, and those Lords who were allowed to have a band playing before their gates were styled *Amīr Tabl-khānāh*, or Lord of the Drums; they were about thirty in number, and each had command of a body of forty horsemen, with a band of ten drums, two hautbois, and four trumpets, and an appanage of

about the value of 30,000 dinārs. The practice of employing these ceremonial bands went out with the Turkish conquest.

Then there was the *Tisht-khānāh*, or Vestuary, where the royal robes, jewels, seals, swords, &c., were kept, and where his clothes were washed. The servants of the *Tisht-khānāh* were called *tishtdārs*, or grooms of the wardrobe, and *rakhtwānis*, or grooms of the chamber, under the command of two *mihtārs*, or superintendents. The *Sharāb-khānāh*, or Buttery, where were stored the liquors, sweetmeats, fruits, cordials, perfumes, and water for the sovereign, was also managed by two *mihtārs*, aided by a number of *sharāb-dārs*, or buttery-men; the *Hawāig-khānāh*, or Larder, where the food and vegetables required for the day were prepared, was under the superintendence of the *Hawāig-kāsh*. At the time of Ketbugha the daily amount of food prepared here was 20,000 pounds, and under En-Nāsir the daily cost of the larder was from 21,000 to 30,000 francs. The *Rikāb-khānāh*, or Harness-room, and *Firāsh-khānāh*, or Lumber-room, had also their staff of officials. And besides the household and military officers, there were the various judicial officers, *Kādīs* and the like, and the police authorities, to be appointed by the Sultan; such were the *Wāly*, or chief magistrate of Cairo, who kept order in the city, commanded the patrols, inspected the prisons, opened and shut the city gates, and was obliged always to sleep in Cairo; the *shādds* and *mushidds*, inspectors in their various departments, and the *muhtesib*, the important officer who corrected the weights and measures in the markets, and guarded public morals.

It will be seen that court life was complicated even in the fourteenth century, and the state ceremonies of a Mamlūk Sultan must have involved as much etiquette as any modern levée, and presented a much more splendid spectacle. When the Sultan rode abroad in state, to hold a review or to make a progress through his dominions, the composition of his escort was elaborately ordered. The Sultan Beybars, for example, rode in the centre, dressed in a black silk *gubba*, or vest with large sleeves, but without embroidery

or gold ; on his head was a turban of fine silk, with a pendant hanging between his shoulders ; and a Bedawy sword swung by his side, and a Dawūdy cuirass was concealed beneath his vest. In front, a great lord carried the *Ghāshia*, or royal saddle-cloth. emblem of sovereignty, covered with gold and precious stones ; and over his head, a Prince of the Blood, or the Commander-in-chief, bore the state parasol, made of yellow silk, embroidered with gold, and crowned with a golden bird perched upon a golden cupola. The housing of his horse's neck was yellow silk embroidered with gold, and a *zunnāry* or cloth of red atlas satin covered the crupper. The royal standard of silk and gold thread was borne aloft, and the troops had their regimental colours of yellow Cairene silk, embroidered with the escutcheons of their leaders. Just before the Sultan rode two pages on white horses, with rich trappings ; their robes were of yellow silk with borders of gold brocade, and a kuffiya of the same : it was their duty to see that the road was sound. A flute-player went before, and a singer followed after, chanting the heroic deeds of former kings, to the accompaniment of a hand-drum ; poets sang verses antiphonally, accompanying themselves with the kemenga and mōsil. Tabardārs carried halberts before and behind the Sultan, and the state poniards were supported by the polo-master (*gūkandār*) in a scabbard on the left, while another dagger with a buckler was carried on the monarch's right. Close beside him rode the *Gamak-dār*, or Mace-bearer, a tall, handsome man, who carried the gold-headed mace aloft, and never withdrew his eyes from the countenance of his master. The great officers of the court followed with little less pomp. When a halt was called for the night, on long journeys, torches were borne before the Sultan, and as he approached the tent, which had gone on in front and been pitched before his arrival, his servants came to meet him with wax candles in stands inlaid with gold ; pages and halbardiers surrounded him, the soldiers sang a chorus, and all dismounted except the Sultan, who rode into the vestibule of the tent, where he left his

horse, and then entered the great round pavilion behind it. Out of this opened a little wooden bed-room, warmer than the tent, and a bath with heating materials was at hand. The whole was surrounded by a wall, and the Mamlûks mounted guard in regular watches, inspected periodically by visiting rounds, with grand rounds twice in the night. The *Amîr Bâbdâr*, or Grand Door-keeper, commanded the grand rounds. Servants and eunuchs slept at the door.*

The historian of the Mamlûks is fond of telling how the Sultan made his progresses, held reviews of his troops, led a charge in battle, or joined in the games at home. The Mamlûks were ardent votaries of sport and athletic exercises. En-Nâsir was devoted to the chase, and imported numbers of sunkurs, sakrs, falcons, hawks, and other birds of prey, and would present valuable feofs to his falconers, who rode beside him hawk on wrist. Beybars was a keen archer, and a skilful hand at making arrows. He erected an archery-ground outside the Gate of Victory at Cairo, and here he would stay from noon till sunset, encouraging the Amirs in their practice. The pursuit of archery became the chief occupation of the lords of his court. But Beybars, like most of the Mamlûks, was catholic in his tastes; he was fond of racing horses; spent two days in the week at polo; was famous

* Joinville describes the Sultan Beybars' camp at Damietta: It was entered through a tower of fir-poles covered round with coloured stuff, and inside was the tent where the lords left their weapons when they sought audience of the Sultan. "Behind this tent there was a doorway similar to the first, by which you entered a large tent, which was the Sultan's hall. Behind the hall there was a tower like the one in front, through which you entered the Sultan's chamber. Behind the Sultan's chamber there was an enclosed space, and in the centre of this enclosure a tower, loftier than all the others, from which the Sultan looked out over the whole camp and country. From the enclosure a pathway went down to the river, to the spot where the Sultan had spread a tent over the water for the purpose of bathing. The whole of this encampment was enclosed within a trellis of wood-work, and on the outer side the trellises were spread with blue calico (?) . . . and the four towers were also covered with calico." Hutton's trans. p. 94.

for his management of the lance in the tournaments which formed one of the amusements of the day; and was so good a swimmer, that he once swam across the Nile in his cuirass, dragging after him several great nobles seated on carpets. Such outward details of the life of the Mamlūks may be gathered from the pages of El-Makrīzy and other historians. But if we seek to know something of the domestic life of the period, we must go elsewhere than to these sources. We find indeed occasionally in El-Makrīzy an account of the revels of the court on great festivals, and he tells us how during some festivities in Beybars' reign there was a concert every night in the Citadel, where a torch was gently waved to and fro to keep the time. But to understand the home-life of the Mamlūks, we must turn to the *Thousand and One Nights*, where, whatever the origin and scene of the stories, the manners and customs are drawn from the society which the narrators saw about them in Cairo in the days of the Mamlūks. From the doings of the characters in that immortal story-book, we may form a nearly accurate idea of how the Mamlūks amused themselves; and the various articles of luxury that have come down to us, the goblets, incense-burners, bowls, and dishes of fine inlaid silver and gold, go to confirm the fidelity of the picture. The wonderful thing about this old Mohammadan society is that it was what it was in spite of Islām. With all their prayers and fasts and irritating ritual, the Muslims of the Middle Ages contrived to amuse themselves. Even in their religion they found opportunities for enjoyment. They made the most of the festivals of the Faith, and put on their best clothes; they made up parties—to visit the tombs, indeed, but to visit them right merrily on the backs of their asses;* they let their servants go out and amuse themselves too in the gaily illuminated streets, hung with silk and satin, and filled with dancers, jugglers, and revellers, fantastic figures, the Oriental

* Nāsir i-Khusrau (eleventh century) says that 50,000 donkeys were on hire at Cairo in his time. They stood at street-corners, with gay saddles, and everybody rode them.

Punch, and the Chinese Shadows; or they went to witness the thrilling and horrifying performances of the dervishes. There was excitement to be derived from the very creed; for did they not believe in those wonderful creatures the Ginn, who dwelt in the Mountains of Kāf, near the mysterious Sea of Darkness, where Khidr drank of the Fountain of Life? And who could tell when he might come across one of these awful beings, incarnate in the form of a jackal or a serpent; or meet, in his own hideous shape, the appalling Nesnās, who is a man split in two, with half a head, half a body, one arm and one leg, and yet hops along with astonishing agility, and is said, when caught, to have been found very sweet eating by the people of Hadramaut? To live among such fancies must have given a relish to life, even when one knew that one's destiny was inscribed in the sutures of the skull, and in spite of those ascetic souls who found consolation in staring at a blank wall until they saw the name of Allah blazing on it.

What society was like at the time of the first Mamlūks may be gathered very clearly from the poems* of Behā-ed-dīn Zuheyr, the secretary of Es-Sālih Ayyūb, who survived his master and died in 1258. The Egyptians of his acquaintance, as reflected in his graceful verse, seem to have resembled our own latter-day friends in their pleasures and passions. Love is the great theme of Zuheyr as well as Swinburne; the poet waxes eloquent over a long succession of mistresses, blonde and brown, constant and fickle, kind and coy,—

"Like the line of beauty her waving curl,
Her stature like the lance."

We read of stolen interviews, in despite of parents and guardians, maidens "waiting at the tryst alone," and various other breaches of Mohammadan morals. If Zuheyr fairly represented his

* Admirably translated by the late Prof. E. H. Palmer. (Cambridge, 1877.)

time, life at Cairo in the thirteenth century was not without its savour:—

Well ! the night of youth is over, and grey-headed morn is near ;
 Fare ye well, ye tender meetings with the friends I held so dear !
 O'er my life these silvery locks are shedding an unwonted light,
 And revealing many follies youth had hidden out of sight.
 Yet though age is stealing o'er me, still I love the festive throng,
 Still I love a pleasant fellow, and a pleasant merry song ;
 Still I love the ancient tryst, though the trysting time is o'er,
 And the tender maid that ne'er may yield to my caresses more ;
 Still I love the sparkling wine-cup, which the saucy maidens fill, &c.

The wine-cup plays a prominent part in Zuheyr's catalogue of the joys of life, and he is full of contempt for the prudent mentor who reproved him:—

Let us, friends, carouse and revel,
 And send the mentor to the devil !

The great indoor amusement of the mediaeval Muslim was feasting. The Arabs indeed never understood scientific gastronomy ; they coarsely drank to get drunk, and ate to get full. We read of a public banquet (under the Fātimis, but probably equalled many a time in the Mamlūk period), where the table was covered with 21 enormous dishes, each containing 21 baked sheep, three years old and fat, and 350 pigeons and fowls, all piled up together to the height of a man, and covered in with dried sweetmeats. Between these dishes were 500 smaller ones, each holding seven fowls and the usual complement of confectionery. The table was strewn with flowers and cakes of bread, and two grand edifices of sweetmeats, each weighing 17 cwt., were brought in on shoulder-poles. On such occasions a man might eat a sheep or two without being remarkable. But if he ate somewhat heartily, he did not omit to wash it down afterwards with plenty of wine, despite all the ordinances of the Prophet. If the bowls that have descended to us were drinking-cups, the Mamlūk thought very little of a pint stoup. Like our own Norse and Saxon ancestors, he loved his wassail, and took it right jovially, until he found himself under the table, or would

have done so had there been any tables of the right sort. Zuheyr sings:—

Here, take it, 'tis empty ! and fill it again
 With wine that's grown old in the wood ;
 That in its proprietor's cellars has lain
 So long that at least it goes back to the reign
 Of the famous Nushirwan the Good—

With wine which the jovial friars of old
 Have carefully laid up in store,
 In readiness there for their feast-days to hold—
 With liquor, of which if a man were but *told*,
 He'd roll away drunk from the door !

Many of the Mamlūk Sultans are described as being addicted to wine, and the great Lord Beysary was at one time stated to be incapable of taking part in affairs, because he was entirely given over to drink and hazard. Yet there are redeeming points in this sottishness. The Muslims of the days of good Harūn, and not less of the other "golden prime" of Beybars and Barkūk, did not take their wine moodily or in solitude. They loved to have a jovial company round them, and plenty of flowers and sweet scents on the board ; they scented their beards with civet, and sprinkled their beautiful robes with rose-water, while ambergris and frankincense, burned in the censers we still possess, diffused a delicious perfume through the room. Nor was the feast complete without music and the voices of singing women. A ravishing slave-girl, with a form like the waving willow, and a face as resplendent as the moon, sang soft, sad Arabian melodies to the accompaniment of the lute, till the guests rolled over in ecstasy. Other and less refined performances, the alluring gestures of the dancing-girls, the coarse feats of Punch or the hired buffoon, also enlivened the evening ; and the ladies of the Harim would share the pleasures of the men, separated by a lattice screen, or hidden behind gorgeously embroidered curtains. We shall see presently what palaces the Mamlūks built for themselves, how they hung them with rich stuffs, and strewed them with costly carpets ; what wealth of carving and ivory-work em-

bellished their doors and ceilings; how gloriously inlaid were their drinking and washing vessels, how softly rich the colouring of their stained windows. The Mamlūks offer the most singular contrasts of any series of princes in the world. A band of lawless adventurers, slaves in origin, butchers by choice, turbulent, blood-thirsty, and too often treacherous, these slave kings had a keen appreciation for the arts which would have done credit to the most civilized ruler that ever sat on a constitutional throne. Their morals were indifferent, their conduct was violent and unscrupulous, yet they show in their buildings, their decoration, their dress, and their furniture, a taste which it would be hard to parallel in Western countries even in the present age of enlightenment. It is one of the most singular facts in Eastern history, that wherever these rude Tartars penetrated, there they inspired a fresh and vivid enthusiasm for art. It was the Tartar Ibn-Tūlūn who built the first example of the true Saracenic mosque at Cairo; it was the line of Mamlūk Sultans, all Turkish or Circassian slaves, who filled Cairo with the most beautiful and abundant monuments that any city can show. The arts were in Egypt long before the Tartars became her rulers, but they stirred them into new life, and made the Saracenic work of Egypt the centre and head-piece of Mohammadan art.

The following tables will supply the necessary chronological details and the chief events and monuments of each reign. It should be noticed that a certain stability and duration of authority was necessary even among the Mamlūks to allow opportunity for artistic effort. The great monuments now standing of the Mamlūk Sultans are grouped about 9 Sultans: 4 of the Bahris, and 5 of the Burgis. But the reigns of these 9 Sultans amounted together to two-thirds of the whole period occupied by the 49 Mamlūk rulers. The reigns of Beybars I. (18 years), Kalaūn (11), En-Nāsir (42), and Sultan Hasan (11); of Barkūk (16), El-Muayyad (9), El-Ashraf Bars Bey (17), Kaït Bey (28), and El-Ghūry (16),

make a total of 168 years, out of 266, leaving but 98 years for the remaining 40 Sultans. The great Mamlūk builders had thus an average reign of nearly 19 years, while those who have left no signal monuments average only $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. Beybars Jāshenkir, however, is perhaps an exception; for he has left a beautiful mosque and many restorations, yet he ruled as Sultan for but a single year.

THE SARACEN RULERS OF EGYPT.

A.H. 21—926 = A.D. 641—1517.

I.—GOVERNORS APPOINTED BY THE KHALIFS.

A.H.	A.D.	Ruler.	Events and existing Monuments.
21 to 254	641 to 868	The list of 98 Governors, to whom no distinctive work of art can be ascribed, is omitted. (Cp. Wüstenfeld, <i>Die Statthalter d. Egyptens unter den Khalifen.</i>)	Conquest of Egypt completed, 21 A.H. <i>Mosque of 'Amr</i> , 21 A.H., but frequently restored. City of El-Fustāṭ, A.H. 21, and suburb of El-'Askar, A.H. 133.

II.—HOUSE OF ṬULŪN.

254	868	Aḥmad ibn Ṭulūn	Suburb of El-Ḳaṭāi', 256. <i>Mosque of Ibn-Ṭulūn</i> , 263-5. Annexation of Syria as far as Aleppo, 264.
270	883	Khumāraweyh (son of Aḥmad)	} (sons of Khumāraweyh)
282	895	Geysh Abu-l-Asākir	
283	896	Hārūn	
292	904	Sheybān (son of Aḥmad)	

III.—SECOND LINE OF GOVERNORS.

292 to 323	905 to 934	} Thirteen Governors.	} Partial burning of El-Ḳaṭāi', 292. Invasion of Egypt by El-Mahdy the Fātimy, 307.
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IV.—HOUSE OF IKHSHĪD.

A.H.	A.D.	Ruler.	Events and existing Monuments.
323	934	Mohammad El-Ikshīd ibn Tukg	Syria again annexed. The kings of this dynasty were buried at Damascus, and have therefore left no tomb-mosques in Egypt.
334	946	Abu-l-Kāsim Ūngūr (son of El-Ikshīd)	
349	960	Abu-l-Hasan 'Aly (son of El-Ikshīd)	
355	966	Abu-l-Misk Kāfūr, a Eunuch	
357 to 358	968 to 969	Abu-l-Fawāris Aḥmad (son of 'Aly)	

V.—FĀṬĪMY KHALIFS.

A.—IN TUNIS.

297	909	El-Mahdy 'Obeyd-Allah	Invades Egypt, 307.
322	934	El-Kāim Moḥammad	
334	945	El-Manṣūr Ismā'il	
341	952	El-Mu'izz Ma'add	

B.—IN EGYPT.

358	969	„ „	Conquest of Egypt, 358. Syria and part of Arabia annexed.
			Foundation of El-Kāhira (Cairo). <i>Mosque El-Azhar</i> , 359-61.
			Invasions of the Karmatis.
365	975	El-'Aziz Nizār	Conversion of the Azhar into a University.
			<i>Mosque of El-Hākim</i> , 380.
386	996	El-Hākim El-Manṣūr	Founder of the Druse sect.
			<i>Mosque of El-Hākim completed</i> , 403.
411	1020	Edh-Dhāhir 'Aly	Loss of Aleppo.
427	1035	El-Mustanṣir Ma'add	Great famine, 7 years long, which caused the desertion and decay of El-Fustāṭ and other parts of the capital.
			<i>Restoration of Mosque of 'Amr</i> , 441-2.
			<i>The 3 great Gates and 2nd wall of Cairo built</i> .
			Usurpation of Naṣir-ed-dawleh, 462-5.
487	1094	El-Musta'ly Aḥmad	First Crusade; loss of Jerusalem.
495	1101	El-Amir El-Manṣūr	Further losses in Syria.
524	1130	El-Hāfiḍh 'Abd-el-Megīd	Nūr-ed dīn ibn Zenky makes himself master of Aleppo and Damascus.
544	1149	Edh-Dhāfir Ismā'il	
549	1154	El-Fāiz 'Isā	