

VII

PREDESTINATION VS. FATALISM

“Tis all a chequer-board of nights and days
Where destiny with men for pieces plays;
Hither and thither moves and mates and slays,
And one by one back in the closet lays.”

—Omar Khayyam.

“It is this dark fatalism which, whatever the Koran may teach on the subject, is the ruling principle in all Moslem countries. It is this which makes all Mohammedan nations decay.”—*Sell's "Faith of Islam."*

THE sixth great point of faith in Islam¹ is Predestination, and it has important bearing on the Moslem idea of God. It expresses God's relation to the creature and to man as a moral agent. Although the terms used in describing predestination by Moslems and Christians (especially Calvinists) have much similarity the result of their reasoning is far apart as the East from the West. It has often been asserted that the Mohammedan belief in God's eternal decrees and foreknowledge of good and evil is a sort of Oriental Calvinism. This, as we hope to

¹See the analysis of Islam in table, between pages 16 and 17.