

or "Muḥāḍram," or "Muḥāḍrim." A poet of the class next after the Mukḥāḍrams is termed an "Islámee:" and as the corruption of the language had become considerable in his time, even among those who aimed at chasteness of speech, he is not cited as an authority absolutely and unquestionably like the two preceding classes. A poet of the next class, which is the last, is termed a "Muwelled:" he is absolutely post-classical; and is cited as an unquestionable authority with respect only to the rhetorical sciences. The commencement of the period of the Muwelleds is not distinctly stated: but it must have preceded the middle of the second century of the Flight; for the classical age may be correctly defined as having nearly ended with the first century, when very few persons born before the establishment of El-Islám through Arabia were living. Thus the best of the Islámee poets may be regarded, and are generally regarded, as holding classical rank, though not as being absolute authorities with respect to the words and the significations, the grammar, and the prosody, of the classical language. The highest of all authorities, however, on such points, prosody of course excepted, is held by the Arabs to be the K̄ur-án. The Traditions of Moḥammad are also generally held to be absolute authorities with respect to everything relating to the prose of the classical language; but they are excluded by some from the class of absolute authorities, because traditions may be corrupted in language, and interpolated, and even forged. Women are often cited as authorities of equal rank with men: and in like manner, slaves reared among the Arabs of classical times are cited as authorities equally with such Arabs. (See the word **شَاهِدٌ** in the present work; and see also **مَوْلِدٌ** and **إِسْلَامِيٌّ** and **مُخَضَّرٌ** and **جَاهِلِيٌّ**.)

The poetry of the Jáhilees and Mukḥāḍrams consists, first, of *odes* (termed **قَصَائِدٌ**, plural of **قَصِيدَةٌ**), which were regarded as complete poems, and which were all designed to be chanted or sung: secondly, of shorter compositions, termed *pieces* (**قِطْعٌ**, plural of **قِطْعَةٌ**); many of which were also designed to be chanted or sung: and thirdly, of *couplets*, or *single verses*. In the first of these classes are usually included all poems of more than fifteen verses: but few odes consist of much less than fifty verses or much more than a hundred. Of such poems, none has been transmitted, and none is believed to have existed, of an age more than a few generations (probably not more than three or four or five) anterior to that of Moḥammad. It is said in the 49th Section of the Muzhir, on the authority of Moḥammad Ibn-Selám El-Jumaḥee, that "the pristine Arabs had no poetry except the few verses which a man would utter in his need: and odes (*ḳāseedehs*) were composed, and poetry made long, only [for the first time] in the age of 'Abd-El-Muṭṭalib [Moḥammad's grandfather], or Ḥāshim Ibn-'Abd-Menáf [his great-grandfather]." And shortly after, in the same Section of that work, it is said, on the same authority, that "the first who composed poems of this kind was El-Muhelhil Ibn-Rabee'ah Et-Teghlibee, on the subject of the slaughter of his brother Kuleyb:" "he was maternal uncle of Imra-el-Ḳeys* Ibn-Ḥojr El-Kindee." "Or, according to 'Omar Ibn-Shebbeh, each tribe claimed priority for its own poet; and not merely as the author of two or three verses, for such they called not a poem: the Yemánees claimed for Imra-el-Ḳeys; and Benoo-Asad, for 'Abeed Ibn-El-Abraṣ; and Teghlib, for [El-] Muhelhil; and Bekr, for 'Amr Ibn-Ḳamee-ah and El-Murakḳish El-Akbar; and Iyád, for Aboo-Du-ád: and some assert that El-Afwah El-Azdee was older than these, and was the first who composed *ḳāseedehs*: but these for whom priority in poetry was claimed were nearly contemporary; the oldest of them probably not preceding the Flight by a hundred years, or thereabout. Tha'alab says, in his 'Amálee,' El-Aṣma'ee says that the first of the poets of whom is related a poem extending to thirty verses is [El-] Muhelhil: then, Dhu-eyb Ibn-Kaḅ Ibn-'Amr Ibn-Temeem Ibn-Damreh, a man of Benoo-Kináneh; and El-Aḍbaṭ Ibn-Ḳureya: and he says, Between these and El-Islám was four hundred years: and Imra-el-Ḳeys was long after these." But this is inconsistent with the assertion of Ibn-Selám mentioned above, made also by En-Nāwawee in his "Tahdheeb el-Asmá," p. 163, that El-Muhelhil was maternal uncle of Imra-el-Ḳeys: and as the majority refer El-Muhelhil to a period of about a century before the Flight, we have a double reason for holding this period (not that of four hundred years) to be the more probably

* This name is generally pronounced thus, or "Imr-el-Ḳeys," by the learned among the Arabs in the present day; for most of them regard it as pedantic to pronounce proper names in the classical manner. The classical pronunciation is "Imraü-l-Ḳeys" and "Imruü-l-Ḳeys" and Imru-l-

Ḳeys;" in the last instance without hemzeh, because (as is said in the Tahdheeb and the Táj el-'Aroos on the authority of El-Kisá-ee and El-Farrà) this letter is often dropped.