PART IV

THE JÂWAH
An enquiring Egyptian engineer-officer, who for several years accompanied the Egyptian pilgrim caravans and the Mahmal in an official capacity, twice published a report on his experiences.1 In his report published in 18862 he thus described the immigrant section of the population of Mekka: “they are a mixture of Jáwah, Indians, Egyptian, Turks, Takrûrîs, Yêmènîtes and Beduins: their sole merchandise is Zemzemwater, henna and arak-wood, from which are made a form of tooth-pick (used by Moslims as tooth brushes). Most of the merchants are foreigners, some lend out money at interest (ribh) so that they lend out 10 and get 12 or more back, or they exploit the pilgrims as much as possible, particularly the Jáwah because these are foreigners and well-to-do”. Apparently, the semi-European educated Egyptian had only superficially observed the conditions, but nevertheless it is significant that without any particular rhyme or reason he puts forward the Jáwah so prominently. Under this name3 are included in Arabia all people of Malay race, in the fullest meaning of the term; the geographical boundary is perhaps from Siam and Malacca to New Guinea. Moslims and non-Moslims in Mekka are called Jáwah, but the letter are all slaves.4 Travellers from Mekka however sometimes come into contact with Jáwah heathens or with Jáwah who profess Hinduism. A class of Jáwah who dwell outside the geographical boundaries but who in late years have made regular pilgrimages to Mekka are people from the Cape of Good Hope. They are derived from Malays, formerly brought to the Cape by the Dutch, with a small mixture of Dutch blood. Some words of their Malay speech have passed into the strange, clipped Dutch, dialect of the Boers.5 On the other hand they have exchanged their mother tongue for Cape Dutch, of course

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1 See page 113, Note.
3 All lands populated by them are called inclusively Bilâd el-Jâwah: an individual is called Djâwah (plur. Djâwât) also Jáwi (plur. Jáwah or Jáwiyyîn).
4 See above pages 14–15.
5 E.g. bayang = banyak, “much”, amper = ampir, “almost”.