

parish is erected half a mile back from the coast. It is constructed out of materials from the old church, only this tower being left. How pathetic is its aspect. High up in the circular tower are two windows, on opposite sides, like watchful eyes, which seem as if wistfully looking out, one over the land, the other over the ocean. There is something unspeakably suggestive and profoundly poetic in this lonely tower, fixed in this commanding position, and seeming to keep guard with sleepless eyes over the numerous graves in which rest, till the resurrection, the men and women who lived in days gone by. The old church tower stands in utter loneliness. Not a tree or bush casts a shadow near it. The dead encircle it. On a calm summer day the deep hush of this God's acre is only broken by the occasional sighing of a soft breeze over the downs, or the echoes of the rippling tide lapping the shore far below.

It is melancholy to reflect on the certain doom of this beautiful relic of the past. The sea steadily perseveres in its work of corrosion. Already the north-eastern corner of the graveyard wall has fallen into the ocean, and soon the whole of the side next the cliff will be gone. In a few years the tower will be engulfed, and the Garden of Sleep will be swallowed up.

Now we may return to Cromer by the high road, or we may walk on along the cliff to Trimmingham, and thence to Mundesley. If we turn off on to the turnpike road, we presently find ourselves close to the old mill which is one of

the landmarks of Poppyland, as the tower in the Garden of Sleep is a sea-mark, left, indeed, standing at the wish of the Government for the benefit of sailors.

The old wooden mill looks as ruinous and picturesque as any artist would wish. It seems almost in danger of catching fire from the countless poppies which flame on every side. But here is the cottage which, according to a rough home-made inscription on a board, claims to be the very heart of Poppyland. It looks like it. Here Mr. Scott made his home when exploring the district. It is a sweet and romantic specimen of an English rustic little villa. Thousands of poppies hold up their banners to vindicate the claim of the cottage.

It is a moot point whether the country is the more charming on this eastern side of Cromer, or on the western side. In that direction lies Sheringham, with its matchless woods inland, and its famous race of fishermen manning its fishing-boats. The bell-shaped tents which take the place of bathing-machines, make up a very curious spectacle on the strand at Sheringham. I counted one hundred and twenty of them. One might have thought a little army of soldiers had encamped on the beautiful sands. Here again, as in any spot you may please to choose, quietude and beauty blend their supreme charms to allure the tired toiler to make his abode for a season, in scenes difficult to excel for combinations of attractiveness and for conditions of salubrity.

## THE SULTAN'S SELAMLIK.

BY MAY CROMMELIN.



It was a March morning in Constantinople. Before our eyes rose the domed mosque by the Yildiz Kiosk, white marble picked out with buff. Its sharp minarets were outlined like snowy needles against the pale blue sea, studded with sails and steamers. Below us the changing crowd was flecked with red fez-caps like blood-gouts. Further, the fluttering crimson pennants of lancer regiments showed like a hovering cloud of red-winged birds.

"Isn't it lovely, dad! Like a little Jubilee!" exclaimed Molly, laying her hand on my shoulder as we stood together. I rather wish she wouldn't. Molly is five feet eleven and a half, whereas I, her

father, am slightly less. Molly has not long come back from Oxford, but she bears very kindly with my old-fashioned notions, and though I say it "as shouldn't," she is splendidly handsome.

"Two hours to wait," I grumbled. For the clock tower opposite showed 4.30, Turkish time. The Turks reckon from sunrise, therefore 6.30 would be noon. Now we were a large party on a personally-conducted yachting cruise, and were come to see the Sultan Abdul Hamid say his prayers this Friday.

Splendidly the Turkish soldiers swung up the red-gravelled road, lining it to the palace gates.

"Look at those ten or twelve lovely Arab horses, and the dear little boys in Hussar uniforms being lifted on them!" exclaimed Molly. "Who are they, dad?"—as if I could tell.

"Those are the young princes," said a young man beside us, eyeing Molly's sparkling black eyes and rich complexion with respectful admiration—or so I thought.

"Oh, thanks!" murmured my daughter condescendingly, glancing at the insignificant stranger.

Thinking Molly's tone unnecessarily snubbing, I observed to my neighbour, smiling cynically under my grey beard—

"Look at that dirty fellow sluicing down the horse-shoe marble steps of the mosque beside those gorgeous turkey-gobblers of pashas!"

"An Eastern touch. What galaxies of stars they wear! Those old fellows could stock a sky of their own," said the young man languidly. He and I slid into talk, and I rather liked him. He tried to interest Molly, but it was of no use.

Both crowd and excitement thickened.

Harem carriages crawled by, showing sections of pretty faces, with snowy veils, white and rose satin draperies, their running guardians in bright red uniforms. A baby prince in full Hussar attire was carried on the arm of a general, who dumped the toy soldier down on the steps, ready to salute his imperial parent.

"Look at the Ministers! There is the Grand Vizier," said my new friend, as a group of ponderous old gentlemen with swords and ribbons marched stoutly downhill.

At that moment the muezzin's call to prayer sounded in the upper air from a minaret. Rattle went the soldiers' arms and the crowd shouted. It is the Sultan. Bands crashed, muezzins chanted their long-drawn wail. Within a green satin-lined landau sat a long-nosed, narrow-faced, sad-looking Turk. He touched his forehead in greeting as a roar of welcome surged alongside him till it seemed to wash him out of the carriage on to the carpeted steps.

Alone the Sultan walks up, turns, touches his forehead once more, disappears within.

"For a sick man and a weekly festival, this is a fair amount of pomp," I observed to my new acquaintance.

"Few potentates can show more," he replied. "But what a cowardly cruel face the man has!"

"Come along, dad. Hurry up to lunch in the palace," commanded Molly. "Who is your mean-looking youth? I cold-shouldered him, for one meets such dreadful Britishers abroad. Did you notice the delightful Turkish pasha who has been talking to me? Ah, here he comes!"—and a fat pasty-faced officer in blue and gold, with a

clanking sword, smiled up in my girl's face in a free and easy way.

Passing through a gate near the kiosk, we found ourselves in a small garden; rows of chairs awaiting us under the trees, and a table laden with cold delicacies, and champagne too, served in beautiful cut-glass goblets.

"Would I had been born a kleptomaniac! All sizes and shapes, too! They'd never miss 'em," I murmured to my friend, who, to Molly's disgust, had rejoined us.

"Mr. Niminy-piminy! That's what I call him!" the saucy beauty whispered in my ear. And when he offered her tart and candied fruits, she refused, though she likes them. A minute later she accepted coffee and cigarettes from her Turkish admirer, though she never takes the former in the middle of the day. As to the cigarettes she meant these for her brother at home, but, putting them in her pocket, she sat upon them rather heavily.

Of late years, foreigners seeing the Selamlık have been often invited to lunch by the Sultan. But very few had our luck to be shown the Yildiz Kiosk gardens, his library, stables, and porcelain factory. But, then, among our company were two distinguished British Naval officers, old messmates of Woods Pasha, the Turkish Admiral.

"Our countryman, the Pasha, is also one of the Sultan's six privy councillors," said Niminy-piminy, adding with a smile, "Besides, Ladysmith has just been relieved. We Britishers are worth making friends with."

"Little wretch! He gives himself airs as if he knew all about it," muttered my girl. "Father, I am sure he is a traveller, sent out to buy Turkish antimacassars."

Going back we saw Abdul Hamid returning in a green gem of a phaeton, gold wheels, and emerald satin lining. He drove the snowy Arab horses himself, their tails like a silver fleece, almost sweeping the dust, while the red and gold head-coachman ran sturdily by his side. With a last shout the crowd melted—green turbaned Arabs from Tripoli, petticoated Albanians, priests, devotees, beggars.

Off galloped our mob of carriages, the drivers, excited by this unusual honour of seeing the palace grounds, racing their lean gees. Through a gateway we entered the high-walled grounds, sloping down from the palace in a horse-shoe gully to the Bosphorus.

"Like a small Regent's Park, but badly kept," said I, glancing at a summer house and pond with fancy ducks, beyond which came a deer enclosure. "Rather waste to have only clipped evergreen on these walls, and a meagre pansy border."

"But when those shrubberies and woods are green, the winding walks into the valley will be charming. And see the almond-blossom!" cried Molly.

"There are said to be some hundreds of detectives guarding these grounds and the shore," remarked Mr. Niminy.

He had asked my leave to make a third in our victoria, and one could not well refuse. Besides, I really liked his manners.

"But, father, the man is not on our yacht—he is sneaking in with us! He has no right to be invited," whispered Molly warningly.

I verily think Molly sometimes wishes she could have had the upbringing of her mother and myself. As it is we often disappoint her. Now she looked at her Turk, who was making his grey arab curvet and show off beside us. He rode well, I own.

The library came first, a long, low, stone building in the grounds.

"A nice warm room to sleep in—locked bookcases—no books worth looking at," decided my girl. "Go in if you like, dad." She stayed to talk with her pasha.

The library seemed to me a rich man's freak, forgotten. The guardian told us that for ten years no visitors had entered it. The polished floors and rich carpet-strips were in perfect order, the wood-stoves glowed. "And there were some good Korans, Moll. My friend told me a lot about them, and Cufic writing," I triumphantly whispered, emerging. "You're wrong. He's been to Oxford."

"A smug. He looks it," jeered she.

Next came the porcelain factory—an expensive toy.

"Has this Imperial factory a special colour or design, as Sèvres blue, or Capo di Monte?" asked my friend of the Turkish officer, who clanked his sword still beside Molly.

"Eh? No. It is a little of everything," said he, smiling vacantly.

For a third time our carriage scimmaged onwards among its jealous companions to the immense wooden stables, said to be portable and brought from England. The first wide, airy gallery held some two hundred carriage horses on each side. All were big, some even huge. Here were heavy white "percherons" from France; there mainly a cross of Hungarian and Arab breed. Without vanity I may remark that Mr. Niminy asked me a hundred questions, for I hail from Yorkshire, and know a horse when I see it. The whole four hundred are all needed, we were told, what between horsing the harem carriages and those of court officials.

But still better was a similar stable of riding-horses. Ah! these were beauties. Above all, some purest-bred Arabs, in separate boxes, the most lovely dozen animals my eyes ever beheld. And these are kept only for the Sultan—who rarely rides.

"Look at this coffee-cream one, almost hidden by its mane, like Godiva's hair!" exclaimed Molly in delight.

"And this other with the most beautiful head and expression. See, it has eyes like Juno's own," added my unknown friend, caressing a chestnut that turned to him with gentlest pleasure. "These are to our horses what a well-bred collie is to a pariah dog. When out camping in the desert, I have seen these arabs brought up in tents, and avoiding stepping on the baby—"

But Molly had gone off with her Turk to the harness-rooms and coach-houses. I stayed, interested in a snow-white animal, thirty-four years old, that was being shown off with pride by a groom in blue and gold embroidery. "This was the favourite charger of Sultan Abdul Aziz. Oh, he feeds well—sometimes he will not lie down for a month." The veteran was painfully thin-flanked, but his eye was full of fire, and he held his flowing tail as gaily, and arched his neck with as proud an air as of old.

Coming out, our carriages were starting, the show was over.

"Oh, dad, you've missed the jewelled bridles, all gold and emeralds. And such lovely green carriages!" exclaimed Molly. "Where is Mr. Niminy?"

My friend came up, apologising politely for delaying us, and adding—

"Woods Pasha kept me. We were talking, and he has just asked me to drive back with him to his house. Thank you for so kindly allowing me the pleasure of accompanying you. May I give you my card? My vessel leaves tomorrow, but I hope we shall meet again some day." He shook hands with me, lifted his hat to Molly, and turned away.

I glanced at the card, raised my eyebrows, and sarcastically murmured, "Hal—lo!"

The inscription ran thus—

THE DUKE OF AYR,  
S.S. YACHT *Christabel*,  
ROYAL YACHT SQUADRON.

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"What luck you were in! We saw you," exclaimed some of our yacht party to Molly. "Why, you had the scholar duke all to yourself. They say he is one of the most rising young men of the day, and he has travelled nearly everywhere worth seeing. Had you much talk with him?"

"Not much. Father monopolised him," answered Molly briefly.

Now, does any impartial person call that fair?

By the way, Molly's "pasha" turned out to be a lieutenant of police, so I revenged myself by meekly remarking it was plain he thought her a suspicious person, on whom it was best to keep his eye. For the rest of the trip, when Molly tried at times to persuade me she knew best, I just slyly brought round the talk to "my friend, Mr. Niminy."