

But the end came at last. One day John Detmold entered the Power House as he had now done for so many years. It was a Wednesday morning in December, and the snow was lying deep upon the ground. How it happened nobody ever knew, for the fireman had stepped over to the blacksmith's for a coal shovel he had left there the day before to be mended. Possibly unknown gases had been generated in the boilers, as is sometimes the case. Most likely the engine as well as the engineer was old and worn out by long service. However that may be, as the town clock struck ten there was an explosion in the Power House, and a sudden fog of white steam had enveloped the building. It did not take long before half the population was upon the spot. But no one seemed to care about the shattered building, any more than they did whose panes of glass were shattered in the houses all around. For, lying in the snow upon the very spot where he had been hurled when a lad, lay John Detmold. The long defiant Force had been captured, but it had not forgotten who had seized upon and subdued it, and now it was escaping in wild and noisy glee while the people gathered about the old engineer, for this time his Samson had slain him.

The neighbors agreed from the first as to what would follow in the case of the wife. From ever since she could remember anything she had depended upon John. If she had always been the frailest of vines, he had been the sturdiest of oaks, and she had continued to exist only because she had wound her feebleness about him, decking him out—it was all she could do—with her fragile and colorless flowers. Within a month after her husband's death, his grave was opened to receive her also. The two were not made to live apart. He had been a faithful husband to her; but she—had she not been, and in the way God made her to be, a helpmeet for him?

THE FAMILY LIFE OF THE TURKS.

THOSE who have visited Constantinople, and have passed along the Bosphorus, have observed the houses of the Turkish grandees. These houses are huge buildings of wood, which seem to form an endless line, standing at the water's edge, and at the base of green and wood-

ed hills. They are noticeable for many peculiarities of construction. A very striking feature in all of them is that the apartments of the women, marked by latticed windows, occupy much the largest part of the building.

There is a smaller section in each of the houses which is devoted to the men. Here the windows are not latticed, and the doors are always open. This abode of the masculine members of the family is called the "place of greeting." In this part of the house the master receives his guests, and transacts much of his business. But in it the rooms are comparatively bare of decoration, and contain nothing to suggest the rest and comfort of a home. That all lies beyond the single well-guarded door which leads from one of the upper rooms into the apartments of the women.

The place of the women, or the harem, of these Turkish houses, is entirely separated from the "place of greeting." It has a separate entrance, carefully screened to disappoint curious eyes. Commonly this entrance leads to the street through the garden. Whenever the means of the owner will permit, the garden of the harem is a wilderness of beauty, climbing the hill-sides on terraces connected by long winding paths among the trees. The garden is filled with exquisite flowers, and it is sure to have little boxes of pleasure-houses set down wherever some bit of sea view is particularly delicious to look upon. But it is always surrounded by high walls, and its walls are surmounted by high wooden screens wherever there is danger of investigation by Peeping Toms. In fact, Turkish architects display all the forethought and ingenuity of the military engineer who has to lay out traverses to cover a garrison. They anticipate and defeat all efforts of masculine curiosity to take observations from distant heights. The harem is thus completely secluded. We may, however, on this occasion, defy lattices and screening walls, and make a general survey of the place.

The house is always large and roomy beyond the needs of its occupants. Its rooms are grouped about a series of great halls, which are the coolest of sitting-rooms in hot weather. Passing through these halls, you may enter the large airy rooms. You will find gayly decorated walls; marble pavements, with cool fount-

ains plashing in the midst; bath-rooms of marble, with great furnaces underneath to heat the whole floor; and you will be astonished at the vast number of windows opening upon all conceivable vistas. The theory of Turkish builders seems to be to provide these encaged beauties of the harem with abundant facilities for observing the outside world. Hence they break the walls of their houses into many salient and re-entering angles, carry the upper floors on brackets three or four feet beyond the lower walls, and then open as many windows as the stability of the edifice will permit. Every room is thus made to command some view of the street on which it fronts.

Within the rooms, the floors are covered with Egyptian matting, and carpeted with heavily napped rugs. There are numerous wide divans, on which the ladies may lounge, or curl up their feet under them as they sit; there are curious octagonal stands inlaid with mother-of-pearl; there are carved wooden boxes, and French clocks endowed with odd tricks of producing singing birds, or dancing puppets, or moving landscapes; there are embroideries to turn one's head with their beauty, and heavy moresque hangings at the doors, and damask curtains at the windows. But you will not find a bedstead, nor a chair, nor a table, in the house.

The Turks cling to the customs of their nomad ancestors. As if emigration were always imminent, every man's bed is a roll which he may take with him upon his back.

The ladies of the harem have never heard of spring mattresses, and they sleep upon improvised bedding, produced at night from cavernous cupboards, and spread upon the floor. They have no tables, because they always sit on the floor to eat, and when they write, they hold the paper on the palms of their hands. They have no chairs, for it is torture to them to sit upright. It is true that in these modern degenerate times the harems do often possess tables of gilt, and gilded chairs upholstered in red velvet or yellow satin. But these are mere imitations of European furniture, stiffly arranged around the walls of the room, to be regarded with an awful admiration, but never touched lest they fall to pieces.

The Turkish woman is a curious compound of the ill-bred child and the shrewd

woman of the world. In early years she has been oppressed by the boys among her associates, and petted by all the men she has met. She thus learns when to yield her will, and when it is safe to assert it. She therefore may be obstinate to the last degree. She has never been taught self-denial, and is selfish upon principle, believing that every one is an enemy who has not interested motives for friendship. Still, she may be an agreeable though garrulous acquaintance, and she is perfectly contented with herself and her position in society.

The Turkish woman is a fanatical conservative. The world in which she lives is unmoved by the practical facts of the nineteenth century which make life a burden to her husband. No Chinaman was ever more impervious to ideas of improvement. She is fiercely intolerant in matters of religious belief. The teachings of the Koran have reached her by word of mouth, and surrounded by a perfect Talmud of tradition, and these teachings shape her view of the outside world. In obedience to them, she commonly hates foreigners with passion. As she passes you on the street she will pray with audible fervor that your eyes may become blind, or that God may curse you.

She is superstitious in the extreme. In sickness she will use the saliva of an old woman who has never been divorced, or will inhale the fetid breath of an odoriferous and saintly dervish, in preference to the choicest prescriptions of an educated physician. She is assured that Satan in person teaches Americans their skill in mechanical arts. She believes in charms. She will not live an hour bereft of her three-cornered bit of leather which incloses the mystic phrase that is potent to ward off the evil-eye. She distrusts Tuesday as the mother of ill luck, and will not celebrate the birthday anniversaries of her children, nor even record the date, lest some magician use it to cast a spell against the child.

These women can not rise above such ignorance by education, because they are refused education, on the ground that learning can only add to a woman's power of harm. They can not rise above it by the evolution of a higher type among themselves, for the race is constantly reverting to primitive types through the admixture of baser blood. The men choose their wives for beauty alone. The

children of the most intelligent families may thus be tainted with the blood of dissolute races like the Georgians, or of barbarian hordes like the Circassians, Tartars, and gypsies, or of ignorant peasants like the Turkish farmers of Asia Minor.

This introduction of low-born women into the highest circles makes Turkish women democratic in their relations to each other. A sort of freemasonry exists between Turkish women, which is heightened by their seclusion. No barriers prevent the poorest woman of the common people from visiting the harems of the richest among the nobility. This fact, together with the freedom which they enjoy in the matter of going into the streets, or to the bazars, or to the bath, may explain somewhat of the content of these women with their condition.

Property owned by a woman before her marriage is her own, but property acquired by her hands after marriage belongs to her husband. Hence wives are often valued for their capacity to work, as in the case of the many-wived men of Ushak, whose women weave the Turkish rugs so much prized in this country. The business is profitable, and the thrifty men of Ushak marry wife after wife as their means increase, regarding women in the light of weaving machines. I once heard a Turk remark that in his district the women never learn to sew.

"When so much as a button comes off," said he, "they send it to the tailor to be replaced."

"Why," asked an unsophisticated bystander, "if your women do not sew, what do they do?"

"Oh," replied the man, "they do woman's work. They go to the mountains and cut wood, and bring it home on their backs; they plough or hoe in the fields. Then they have the cattle to look after, and the dinner to cook. You see, they have no time to sew."

And now, if we turn to the men, we shall find that the Turk is not a terrible creature. You see this as soon as you have seen his tender ways with children, his love for flowers, his enjoyment of the beauty of nature. Taken at his best, the Turk is strongly religious, believing in God as the almighty benefactor of mankind, and as a ruler whose decrees are all good to those who trust in Him. He is often upright in business relations. As a friend he is faithful and trustworthy

when his confidence has been thoroughly gained. But he is ignorant of all wisdom outside of the wisdom of his own people.

It will always be found that the life of the Turk has great superficiality. His easy-going nature often leads him to admire much that he sees in foreigners. He may even be led by proper means to imitate foreigners, because he admires them. But after he is seemingly polished and refined by foreign civilization, if he is subjected to analysis he will be found entirely unchanged, and still a Turk in feeling, to the very backbone. You have only to touch his ancient usages with a threatening hand, and you will instantly have him at his very worst—a blood-thirsty fanatic fiend, who is ready to take arms against the world.

It is not only when in contact with Europeans that the life of the Turk is strained and artificial. His own ancient customs fetter his conduct by iron rules which not only meet no response in his soul, but humiliate him at every step. In Turkey, etiquette is reduced to a science which fixes with vexatious precision the place and privileges of every man. Society is carefully graded, and its numerous lines of demarkation can only be passed, as in military life, by a regular brevet of promotion from the supreme power. Thus the master of a house always knows, as his guest is announced, the precise bearing which he must observe in receiving him. If the guest is an inferior, he must show him small ceremony. If he is an equal, he must avoid too great condescension. But if he is a superior, the host must hasten to receive him as he enters the house, he must cringe before him, must seat him in the highest place, and must humbly stand before him, speaking only when addressed, and daring to seat himself only by permission of his lordly visitor. Servile adulation of rank is the leading principle of all these rules of etiquette. If a man meets one of much higher rank on the street, he must back up against the wall, and humbly wait to be recognized. Some men are condemned all their lives long to forego the high privilege of wearing a full beard, because of their relation to some great man, etiquette forbidding inferiors to wear the beard if they are much in the presence of one to whom they look for favor. Etiquette in Turkey has precise and formal rules for every emergency of intercourse between man and man.

But a man is freed from these rules the moment he has entered his harem. Outside of the harem, even in the more public apartments of his own house, he may be made to feel his insignificance at every step. Within those sacred walls he is a man, and master of himself once more. This fact only tends to emphasize the comfortless character of all life outside of the apartments of the women, and to forestall any possible development of home feeling toward that part of his house which is so often the scene of the restraints and the humiliations of etiquette.

Outside of the harem, the Turk can somewhat throw off these restraints only in the public coffee-shop, where all men are equal. Popular descriptions of Turkish coffee-shops surround them with romantic interest, with their picturesque groups of long-robed men, their Persian water-pipes, their perfumed fountains, their fragrant Mocha, and the vivid romances of their professional story-tellers. But with experience there comes to the foreigner a dissolving of romance. The flowing robes of the picturesque groups are stained with the faithful service of years, the air of the room is thick with smoke, and the only perfume which mingles with the odor of cheap tobacco is the all-pervading perfume of garlic. The waiter blows the dust from your cup before he fills it, and when he sugars your coffee, he first wipes the spoon upon his trousers. As to the legends of the professional story-tellers, the less said about them the better, since the most of them would bring blushes to the cheek of a street rowdy. Such is the coffee-shop, the principal retreat of the Turk who would find rest outside of the hospitable shelter of his harem.

There is a Turkish saying, doubtless born in bitterness of soul of some hen-pecked wretch, that to be a bachelor is to be a king. But notwithstanding this cynical fling at the married state, there are many proofs of the fact that the harem is the only place on earth where a Turk may be his own master. Hence the man spends all his thoughts and all his spare money upon the work of beautifying his harem. When it is finished, it is like a kingdom to him. No other living man may enter its gates without his permission. Even officers of justice dare not enter it. The officer who should be guilty of such temerity would speedily flee before the screams of its fair inmates, for

Turkish ladies perfectly know the moral effect of a series of well-directed shrieks. In case a criminal has taken refuge in his harem, the only course open to the law is to decoy him out by stratagem, or to lay regular siege to the place until the garrison has exhausted its supplies. With such privileges attaching to the abode of the women, the young man is led to set up his own establishment quite early in life.

Marriage with the Turks is a purely civil contract, which generally refers only to the amount of dowry to be paid the woman for her own separate enjoyment, and for her provision in case of misfortune or divorce. The public ceremony of marriage is not in itself regarded as of prime importance. In any case, the declaration of marriage is made by the bridegroom alone. This declaration is made an occasion for prayers and festivities; but neither prayer nor feast is a necessary part of the engagement. A man may take a woman to be his wife without any ceremony whatever, and the law will protect the interests and the honor of the woman. The ceremonies connected with marriage in Turkey must, therefore, be regarded as a general invocation of good luck rather than as a seal of a holy bond between the newly mated pair.

It should be noted just here that the Turks are not always polygamists. They all may, and many do, marry more than one wife. But in most cases the great cost of a large family, the risk of quarrels among the women, and the great increase of care which a man brings on himself with every new matrimonial venture, all act as strong arguments against polygamy. Men who travel much often have a wife in each of two or three cities, so that they are at home in either. In the cities, and among the rich, men use their privilege of a choice of wives, but in the purer air of the country, public opinion is, on the whole, against the practice.

Divorce can be effected at any time if the husband pronounces a certain formula of discharge. A man often uses this formula in the heat of a connubial discussion, but he must wait by law three months before the divorce becomes final. He generally makes up with his wife before this time has passed. In this case the separated couple begin life together again without further ceremony. If the man, however, makes use three times of

this summary form of divorce, he may not take his wife back until she has been married and divorced by another man. An irascible husband whose lack of self-control has brought him into this predicament may evade the law by asking some friend to go through the form of marrying the woman in order to divorce her the next day. Confidence sometimes proves misplaced in such a case, for the friend may conclude to keep the lady whom he has married for form. Then neither entreaty nor oburgation will bring redress to the unlucky victim.

Very few Turkish women reach old age without having been divorced once or twice. Women who are exceptions to this rule are supposed by the people to possess certain magnetic powers denied to ordinary mortals.

Mohammedan law feebly attempts to lessen the wrongs that are sure to spring up as the fruit of easy divorce. It obliges the husband to provide for the woman whom he has cast off. She has her dowry, and a reasonable sum besides. Yet the law favors the husband if the woman is childless, and rather considers the settlement of the question of support of such a wife after divorce as a matter to be arranged between the two families concerned. The law offers no other than a financial remedy, however, to wrongs sustained by the woman. A repudiated wife is doomed by usage to live in celibacy. She can not hope to find a second husband, unless she has the rank or the money needful to buy one.

Marriage is contracted in Turkey under these general conditions. But since the tie is loose, the form is often modified. A mother who has a son to settle in life will commonly make ready for the event by purchasing a girl of three or four years, and bringing her up in the family. If she has not done this, and still does not wish to see the wife of her son assume airs as mistress of the house, she buys a good-looking girl in the market, and hands her over to her son, telling him to take her and be happy.* The girl in such

* In spite of laws against slavery, girls can always be bought in Constantinople. The trade can not be detected by those who would stop it, for it is carried on in the harems. Women buy small children on speculation, and after bringing them up as their own daughters, sell them when they reach maturity. All the officers of government are interested in this traffic, either as buyers or as sellers. Hence they will not enforce the laws against it.

a case may be rated as a wife or not, as the young man prefers.

The harem does not of necessity consist of more than one woman, since a single wife is always spoken of as the harem of her husband. The vagueness here seen is doubtless aimed to defeat curiosity as to the number of participators in the comforts of the household. But all the women of a house are known as the harem of the master, whatever their relation to him. The word harem literally means that which is forbidden to men. The very place where the women live is forbidden to the thoughts and eyes of all men save one. So the women who live there are included in the name, and become technically known to the outsiders as the harem of the householder. The harem of a Turk is not, of necessity, the mere abode of dalliance that it seems to be. It would not have half of its present power if this were its only characteristic. It is as the family, the home, the centre of existence of the Turk, that the harem gains such a hold upon him as to control his action in every department of life.

This control is doubly assured by the influence which the mother of a Turk exercises over him throughout her life. The Koran commands obedience to parents, but aside from this, a man is pretty sure to find that his mother is his only disinterested adviser. The father of the present Sultan of Turkey one day explained to the English Ambassador the respect which he paid to his mother's wishes, by saying, with tears in his eyes, "I have multitudes of slaves, but the only friend I have in the world is my mother."

In the harem, a Turk is free from all interruptions, because no servant will venture to call him on the request of a visitor, however importunate. During the late war with Russia, the observance of this rule lost to Turkey a battle, an army, and perhaps a province. In January, 1878, the Russian armies were swarming along the northern slopes of the Balkan Mountains. These mountains formed the last defensive line of Turkey. The line was, however, so long, that if the Russians broke through it at any point, they could place the whole Turkish army in danger of destruction. The Russians did break the line of the Balkans, at Shipka Pass, and cut the Turkish army in two. Suleiman Pasha, the Turkish general in command of the left wing, heard rumors of the battle, and tel-

ographed to the commander-in-chief, who was also Minister of War, at Constantinople, asking if the rumor was true, and, if so, what he should do. Suleiman Pasha knew very well that the only safety for his troops lay in rapid retreat to Adrianople. If he could have begun to move within an hour, possibly he might have escaped. But no answer came to his telegram. All night he waited, and at noon the next day he took the responsibility of ordering the retreat. But he met the Russians upon the road, and was routed, and driven into Macedonia, losing a large part of his army and all of his artillery. This disaster left the Turks no chance. Adrianople was abandoned, and in one month the Russians were in possession of the fortifications of Constantinople, and dictated a peace with their camps in full view of the royal mosques.

Afterward, the inevitable court-martial was called to fix the responsibility for this catastrophe. It then appeared that the Minister of War was in his harem when Suleiman Pasha's telegram arrived, and his servants refused to disturb him.* He only heard of the message at noon the next day, and by that time the Cossacks had cut the telegraph wires. The ancient usage which permits a man to shut himself up in his harem was respected by the court. The Minister of War was not blamed, but his subordinate, the luckless Suleiman, was condemned to exile for having lost his army.

These particulars show that while the Turk finds his official or business life full of restraint, the harem must possess strong attractions for him, if solely from the fact that it offers him all that he is denied in the outer world. The character of the influence which the family exerts upon the man may now be fully appreciated.

By the Mohammedan system the man of the house is made the sole bond of connection between the women of his family and the rest of masculine humanity. Upon this man, therefore, that system concentrates, as a lens the rays of the sun, the whole persuasive power of these women. We have already seen that the characteristics of Turkish women must prevent their influence from being lofty, generous, or inspiring. It needs no interpreter to tell us that the man whose

best hours are spent under the influence of these women is held back from development by all the witchery of grace and beauty. If the Turk wavers in religious devotion, the women of his harem bring him back to the observance of the strict letter of the Mohammedan law. If he is tempted to admire the habits of foreigners, they tax him with lack of respect for the memory of his ancestors. Whenever his sense of right rises to the point of leading him to a change of conduct, the women lay their personal interest against his conscience, and turn the scale. Reason can not outweigh the many appeals which these women can bring to bear upon the heart. For the women possess no overmastering intellectual powers; they simply appeal to the man's sense of his obligations to the devoted friends and faithful companions of his hours of relaxation.

Woman everywhere throws great enthusiasm into any cause which seems to make her a defender of the weak. In Turkish women, at least, this trait calls out great activity in managing affairs, and a real love for difficult negotiation. A single step from this point makes these women the arrant plotters that they are. They enter into every detail of the public life of their husbands, and are recognized by all classes as a power in political questions. Any one who has a private scheme to advance, a policy to develop, an office to gain or to keep, a boy to provide for, or an enemy to crush, sends his wife to the harem of a grandee. There she flatters, cajoles, or bribes the women, and having once gained a promise of their interest, she is sure of success; for the ladies of the great man's establishment will skillfully watch their chance. Then, in some unguarded moment, they will unmask all of their artillery upon the unfortunate who imagines himself to be their lord and master. The persistence which sometimes seems woman's chief endowment accomplishes the rest. The man is as wax in the hands of his harem.

By such means the women of Turkey accomplish the most astounding results. Incompetent men are appointed to office, the Treasury of the nation is depleted to support wild follies, and criminals are shielded from justice. It is notorious that Circassian robbers on the highways of Asia Minor often owe their impunity in crime to the fact that they have relatives in the harems of Constantinople.

* See official record of the trial of Suleiman Pasha, published at Constantinople, 1879.