

WOMAN IN THE EAST.

By PHILIP J. BALDENSPERGER, Esq.

INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE tried to compare the life of woman in Palestine, as she lives and works in the nineteenth century, with the woman of Bible ages. The reader will, it is hoped, be very indulgent if, in spite of the trouble taken to be as accurate as possible, errors may have slipped into the following pages. Woman in the East is a secluded being to a great degree, yet not as much so as is generally believed in the West.

As I was born in Jerusalem, and grew up in the country, living partly in towns, partly in villages and amongst the Bedawin, the greater part of these observations are taken from memories extending more than twenty years back. In fact, without my mother—in the towns at least, where men are never admitted to the women's apartments—I could never have seen the interior of the houses; and among the other classes the facts have been gathered during a number of years by picking up grains, as it were, here and there. When compiled, the result does not seem to represent the labour of many years' observations, for these are condensed into a few pages.

Moreover, it must be remembered that it is now nearly six years since I left the Orient, and I had never intended writing anything till the idea struck me that many persons have an altogether false idea of the Oriental woman, and that I might contribute to knowledge in a slight degree by giving the benefit of my experience in the East—that is, in Palestine, more strictly speaking.

An article about Palestine which I wrote for the Palestine Exploration Fund was thus appreciated in their *Quarterly Statement* for October, 1893, by Major C. R. Conder, R.E., of the Executive Committee of the Fund, who for many years had travelled and made researches in Palestine:—"The article by Mr. Philip J. Baldensperger is one of the best sets of answers returned as yet to the questions which I arranged for the Society. The replies of school-teachers and educated natives have not been satisfactory, but the present correspondent shows that he has had

the *intimate acquaintance* with the peasantry which is requisite. . . . My impression is that it is very difficult to get natives to talk on such subjects at all, and that information can only be got from residents who have had the special experience of Mr. Baldensperger. I hope he may go on . . . and give us the full benefit of his experience."

Encouraged, or rather summoned, by the above, I now try my best to describe as clearly as possible the manners and customs, religious and superstitious beliefs of woman in the East, and if I do not show her in a new light altogether, at least I am trying to root out some errors which have slipped into descriptions, and especially where the case may present analogy in comparing her with the women of the Bible, being happy if I can contribute my part to the ever-interesting study of the Holy Land.

NICE, FRANCE, *August 12th*, 1898.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.—WOMAN IN THE TOWNS.

The European or American traveller landing at any port in the East is struck by the curious way in which women are dressed. Visiting any of the towns, he meets townswomen very different from the countrywomen, and it is well here to say that, generally speaking, the population of Palestine is divided into three very distinct classes, viz.: the townspeople; the country people, or sedentary agricultural population; and the nomadic Arabs, or Bedawin. There are other nations, or tribes from other lands, who have settled in the country, but who are still considered strangers, as the Jews, the Turcomans, the Circassians, the Egyptians, and the Gipsies; these last have been in Palestine for many centuries, but have still a language of their own.

The townspeople are known as Madanié, from Madiné, the town; and el Medina, in Arabia, has its name from being the town of the Prophet, and is therefore designated by Moslems as Madinet en Nabi ("Town of the Prophet"). The difference between the habits of the Madanié and country people, or Fellahin, as they will be called in the course of my narrative, is very great, and each one talks with great contempt of the other. "He is a Madani," or "He is but a Fellah"—these sentences tell enough. The townfolk, or Madaniéh, are traders and mechanics, or are employed by Government or by townships.

The family life of the Madani himself is restricted to a mere nothing, for during day-time the man is about his business, and keeps his wife or wives strictly hidden from the looks of the outsider. The houses in towns are always built with this view of hiding the harem, or females. Very often the man has a slave, who acts as spy, and reports whatever may happen during his absence. Years ago a man of Jerusalem, who had a large harem and several slaves, had put one of his female slaves to guard the women folks. She obeyed his orders in a futile way, and was so brutally beaten that she sought refuge in our house, where she was at length discovered; and when her lord came and found her, he would have killed her from rage but for our intervention. Slavery is now abolished in Turkey—at least legally; but virtually it still exists, though, taken as a rule, the slaves are well treated, and when they have passed a number of years with a family, and all hopes of returning to their country have vanished, they become so attached that it is a punishment to dismiss them. This is always what people in favour of slavery advance—that a freed slave is helpless, and does not even care to leave his master's home. This may be quite true of slaves of both sexes who have passed, if not all, at least the greater part of their lives in the position of slavery, and who may have been well treated by their masters or mistresses. They find it very difficult to earn a living; for, it must be remembered, they were stolen from Central Africa, where they had been happy. No matter how poor or how naked they may have been in their homes, it was none of the business of the slave-dealers to go and catch them. Naturally enough, such boys or girls, taken away from their relatives, carried away hundreds of miles to the coast, and thence embarked to Asiatic ports, or even sold in African towns, are wholly at a loss. Never can such a slave, freed after having passed twenty or more years in the service of a man, wish anything better than to continue in slavery. His home may never be traced, the chances of his being recaptured on the way home are 999 in 1,000, he has learned nothing by which he can earn a living, and consequently is doomed to eternal slavery. Now it must here be said, in favour of such slavery, that marriages are contracted and new families formed exclusively on the master's purse; thus the slave is provided with whatever he or she wants—meat, drink, and clothing, and husband or wife are given; the children, too, are brought up on the master's account, and are free. The work of these slaves is easy.

they help their mistress in the cooking, carry home the things which the husband may have bought in the market, sweep the house and keep the kitchen utensils in order, bring water, hand it in clean glasses, and prepare the pipes for all the inmates, whether master, mistress, or grown-up sons.

The houses of the cities are all built with a small window above the gate, through which the inmates look to see if a caller is admissible. The flat roofs are always surrounded by high crenulated walls, through which persons on the roof can observe the surroundings, but cannot be seen from outside. These roofs are the general sitting places, and on warm evenings reception places. When a stranger approaches a house he knocks, and is not admitted except he be accompanied by a relative, either the owner of the house or some authorised man. In answer to the knock it is always asked: "Who is there?" The visitor says: "I." If his voice is known, the door is opened; if not, he is asked: "Who is 'I'?" "I, Ehmâd, father of Fatmâ." If the man's name be Ehmâd, and his only daughter Fatmâ, the slave-girl opens the door, and the grown-up women all take to some hiding place. The man now calls: "Be prepared," and, stepping in, says: "With permission." The answer: "Your permission is with you," being given, means all are hid, or at least the faces of the women. Though in Jaffa I have lived several years with the same house-owners, I never had so much as a chance peep at the lady of the house; though she sometimes gave me some information as curtly as possible, she always was wrapped up in such a manner that only words could penetrate. Though in the presence of their husbands they may talk to strangers, yet they considerably lower their natural voice; the less they know the person the less they talk to him, and then only give unavoidable answers. Should the newcomer be a guest, he may be shown into the parlour, and await the lord of the mansion, or the eunuch in very rich houses. During such a visit, when only the man can be present, the slave-girl, herself unveiled, attends to such wants as handing a pipe to smoke or the inevitable tiny cup of coffee. The conversation may be about political, religious, agricultural, or commercial events, but never does the visitor directly inquire after the housewife, though he may ask about the health of the family in general.

When I was quite a small boy, my mother used to take us along with her when visiting our neighbours. My eldest brother is called Theophil, and my mother was therefore known in the

neighbourhood as "Im-Talecl," a corruption of Theophil and Philip combined. For the women know only Arabic, and can hardly ever read or write, and so pronunciation is exceedingly difficult to them. Nowadays schooling has made some progress, but not one in a thousand of the women has ever attended any school. There are different kinds of schools all over the towns in Palestine. There is the Mohammedan school, in which little but the reading of the Koran is taught, and which is called the "book-place" (Kuttab). Then there is the Madrasé, or college, which is intended for men students who wish to graduate, and the most widely-spread are the Scolas, or Christian schools, of every denomination. But virtually these last-named are unknown to the Mohammedan women, and even should they be known, the Turkish Government does all in its power to prevent them from going to such schools. Some writing is also taught in the Kuttab, but unless the scholars intend to graduate, this first schooling is lost altogether from want of later practice; for they have no newspapers, and no books besides the Koran, which itself can be read and heard only by such as have leisure. Whilst reading this book the Moslem always sways his body to and fro, and repeats it in a singing tone, not caring what goes on around him. As they have no chairs, they usually sit on a mat, barefooted, with the legs crossed, and the book on the lap. In general conversation, during visits with my mother, after salutations were exchanged, and they had thanked God for good health, and asked God to be kind to the children, the flower topic was one of their favourite subjects. Every woman has one flower-pot or more in some corner of the roof or window, and is ever proud to offer her female visitors some of the nicest flowers. Pinks, stocks, gilly-flowers, and geraniums are the flowers they like most, or at least these are met with more commonly. They would often ask for seeds and flowers. When they used to visit us, in less time than it takes to read this they would be roaming about our garden, and would have cut all the flowers within their reach, and even rooted up some to plant at their homes, to the great annoyance of my mother. At home only do they stick flowers in the hair (for when they are out of doors the hair is never seen), and they keep a small bunch of basil, which plant is wanting in no house, on their breasts.

The next topic of conversation was marriage—why my mother did not look for brides for her sons. We were none of us more

than ten years old ; but with them, boys and girls marry at the earliest possible age. A Turkish captain who lived over against our house, and had wives and sons and daughters and slaves, often invited us to his house. He married two of his sons at one time, aged eight and ten. During eight or ten days singing, dancing, shouting, and shooting went on ; when the boys were married, the captain sent them to school together as husbands and wives. I remember especially the boy of ten and his wife, as they passed our house day after day, beating each other and fighting till they disappeared round the corner of the road leading to the school inside the Zion Gate, and again in the afternoon on their way home.

Christian schools are rarely visited by Mohammedan children who have both parents living, or are wealthy. Orphans may now and then be found brought up in Christian orphanages, which are found more especially in Jerusalem. Day schools are eagerly set up by all Christian confessions. The Arabic Christian population differs mainly as regards religion, whilst in the everyday life, and even in slave-owning, it resembles that of Mohammedans.

In the house the woman wears large pantaloons, as is the fashion of the modern female bicyclist, but these are made of very light printed cotton and reach to the ankles ; a short dress is worn over this, and a waistcoat, often richly embroidered, with tight sleeves, whilst a handkerchief is carelessly thrown over the head, ever ready to be pulled over the face should a man appear. Always barefooted, the townswoman has wooden clogs with two supports under the soles, varying from 1 to 3 or 4 inches high, a leathern strap is nailed on above through which to pass the feet, and it is more or less ornamented with satin or silk embroidery ; the clogs themselves also, in many cases, are adorned with inlaid mother of pearl in circles, triangles, or squares symmetrically arranged. The toes of the feet and nails of the hands of the woman are stained red with henna, which the pilgrims always bring home with them from Mecca for their wives and children. The palms of the hands are also coloured brown, in symmetrical lines. The hair all over the face and body is shaved or burnt, excepting the eyelashes and the hair of the head. The place where the eyebrows have been is painted black, as well as the eyelashes. The cheeks are painted a faint red, and the hair is dyed brown. Every woman has her small bottle containing kóhl and a fine brush or style to paint the eyes. This is the

general toilet of the townswoman at home. In the afternoon two or three hours are spent out of doors, and it is here the traveller sees those white moving mummies in a great white sheet (*the Izar*) thrown over the head and body, very neatly folded, and the ends tucked into the inner girdle; the face is covered with a thick, coloured veil so that the face of a woman can never be seen, whilst she can see everything. They may be seen in groups of three or more moving slowly towards the cemeteries, where they settle down either around the grave of some departed friend or relative, or along the roadside to look at passers by, and unconcernedly to make their observations about themselves, their neighbours, or the public. Their pockets and hands are full of eatables, and whilst conversing they go on cracking hazel nuts or hickory peas, or dexterously splitting with their teeth roasted and salted pumpkin seeds (offered for sale by hawkers), and by a quick movement of the tongue the peel is ejected. The days are past when sulphur-yellow soft-tanned sheepskin boots and shoes were the only foot-gear of the townswomen. The new-fashioned European black leather boots have penetrated even into out-of-the-way places and threaten to supersede the old fashion, even in secondary Mohammedan towns such as Hebron, Gaza, Nâblus, Tyre, &c.

The family life of the woman is restricted to women's society, for the husband, be he an official or a business man, is always away from his own womenfolk. At the age of ten or twelve the girl begins to veil her face, never again to show herself freely, not even to the nearest of kin, except her brother, and in many cases even he may not see her.

There are many Protestant and Roman Catholic natives who have in many respects left the old ways, and are trying hard to follow Western ideas, at all events as regards clothing and unveiled faces; whilst the women of the Greek Church still remain a little more like their Mohammedan sisters, and even in some places are shut up behind screens in the churches so as not to be seen by the men. In Jerusalem, where Greeks from Greece abound, the natives begin to follow the manners of those whom they meet at their devotions or at other assemblies. The Arabic woman brought up in this way does not very much feel the want of liberty, for having never possessed any, as compared with Europeans, she feels content with her lot, and at the age of ten or twelve a girl is wrapped up as a

woman, and must be veiled for the rest of her life in the presence of men.¹

CHAPTER II.—POLYGAMY.

Polygamy is usual only among the wealthy Mohammedans, for the law really obliges the husband to provide for every wife a separate house, or at least separate rooms, and meals. All these expenses, and the wedding expenses besides, are very great, and the peace of the family is for ever gone on a second wife being taken.

A friend of our family, a certain Sheikh, was married to a relative of his, by whom he had two sons and a daughter. When she had no more children, he bought a white Circassian of Christian origin, who had been stolen from a Georgian district by Circassian robbers. He took her to wife, and when she had several sons she became ever more arrogant, till finally the first wife was jealous, but growing old and having no more children, she was discarded. On many occasions she bitterly complained about her new rival, and used to say:—"The father of Abed" (thus she always called her husband, her eldest son's name being Abed), "is rough with me, scolds me, even beats me sometimes. I am his first legitimate wife; I gave him two sons. I am his cousin, yet, woe to me! This slave is young and beautiful, but will never be a good wife. We have lived these many years together from our youth." Continual strife made the old man miserable, till he determined to send away one of his wives, and as a matter of course it was the first wife, who could no more give him any children, who was sent away without mercy and without feeling for her sons and daughter—sent away to her father's house, with money and stores to provide her for a time, as Hagar was sent away by Abraham with bread and water. But the separation from her beloved sons and daughter so much affected the poor woman that she died soon afterwards, cursing her rival. The Sheikh yet again married a

¹ Women in the East do not regard this as a hardship at all. It is to them a question of modesty, and they look on European women as being shameless. Moslem women also regard those who are not veiled as being immoral women. The Oriental women have sufficient liberty of going out, and take pride in being escorted by servants, whom they do not regard as their gaolers. The use of the veil also distinguishes ladies from peasant women. The word *Hormeh* for a woman means "secluded," and though applied to all classes it properly refers to ladies. Peasants and Arabs use the term *niswân* ("female persons") for the women.—C. R. C.

still younger woman, but his first wife could not be replaced, and he ever regretted Im 'Abed, "the mother of 'Abed." But still his Mohammedan ideas surpassed his family ideas, for the aim of the Mohammedan's life is to leave the largest possible number of male progeny, who can repeat their formula of faith, thus securing to him a sure position in after life. Though they have very vague ideas as to what becomes of women after death, the Mohammedan who has lived a faithful and religious life is provided with many *hurriyés*, or freed women, in Heaven, and lives in a great palace which was built during the hours or minutes he has spent in prayer whilst on earth.¹

Only four legitimate wives are allowed; the man may have more women, but they are only concubines, and his slaves generally also have children by their master, who, like Ishmael of old, are always considered sons of the bondwoman. He can swear to abandon one of the four wives—a partial divorce, and may then marry another one in her place, keeping the abandoned one in his house.

CHAPTER III.—MARRIAGE.

This, of course, is always preceded by the betrothal. The fathers of bridegroom and bride agree that a certain sum is to be paid, which with the richer all goes towards jewellery and gold and silver ornaments for the girl, but with the poorer the father of the girl keeps a part. Before they agree definitively, the mother and sister of the bridegroom visit the girl, who is stripped naked, and they refuse to accept her if she be not very well formed. The dowry is now paid by the bridegroom's father, and when the whole sum and ornaments agreed upon are paid the marriage ceremony takes place. A week previous to the wedding the festivities begin in the house of the bridegroom, the women all assemble and an expert, sitting down, knocks in marked time on a small drum whilst she sings three lines, and is accompanied by all the women present with clapping of hands; at the fourth line the loud "zaghreet," or ululation, is uttered. When they can afford it they bring women singers from Egypt or Damascus, who have (at least, in Oriental ears) fine voices, and they are very proud of this, as these singers are often richly recompensed. We find

¹ Though Moslems disagree as to whether women have souls, the Koran distinctly speaks of the elect as entering Paradise with their earthly wives, but not in the same Surahs in which the Huris are noticed.—C. R. C.

in Eccles. ii, 8, Solomon mentioning amongst such things as only the wealthy can do, that "he brought him also *women singers*, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts." The most renowned of such instruments, the "kanoon," is a sort of horizontal harp, and is the favourite instrument for weddings; to play this more easily they have a harp thimble on the fingers to touch the strings. These singers also dance, distorting their bodies, and clapping with the castanets to mark the time. The bride is loaded with ornaments and jewellery, either representing her dowry or in many cases only borrowed from her relatives, to adorn her for the occasion. She does not have a white wedding dress, but many coloured dresses, all which she wears successively, even if there are a dozen; she is clad in one in her room, then led forth by the women a few paces to be admired, and when this is done she is led back, another costume is put on and, if possible, other ornaments, and again she is led out, then back again, till all the dresses are thus shown to the bridegroom. She is now led through the streets to her bridegroom's house, where the final feast is given. This final procession is generally made in the evening; the singing of the women is always the loudest, the men, however, also accompanying. The wedding supper is now given to all friends and relatives; the better classes only go to such a wedding on invitation, whilst the mass of people go without any invitation, and as in the description of a marriage in St. Matt. xxii, 10, "As many as he found, both bad and good," furnish the wedding with guests. Food of all kind is served: the inevitable "pillaw," or boiled rice with butter coloured yellow with saffron, and other dishes of meat and vegetables, and many sweet dishes, amongst which the "ma'mool" is always seen; this is made of groats, sugar, and butter. When the dough is very stiff, nuts and pistachio nuts and a little jelly are put in and a small cake formed round this; it is baked without losing its pale colour, sugar is again strewed upon it, and the piles of these cakes are distributed amongst those really invited and of better class. Besides this "ma'mool," there is the "knafié," this is served on a large copper tray, as it is always dripping with the sweet with which it is prepared. The fine-flour dough mixed with sugar or honey and butter is first passed through a sieve, the long vermicelli-like strings flow on a copper plate, slightly heated till they are stiff enough to be taken away; when a heap of such strings is ready, thin cords of it are twisted and the ends put in the centre of the copper plate. They are now coiled round this centre

in spirals till the plate, the border of which is an inch high, is full, honey is then poured on the whole, and it is sent to the oven to be baked. It would be too long to enumerate the whole series of these sweet dishes, which are neither the same in number nor in the way of making in all the towns, and often the better-class families are more prodigal than the poorer in using dearer articles; the latter often make the dough for one of these sweets with the slightest taste only of the richer ingredients entering into them. Besides the "ma'mool" and the "knafé," there is the "baclawé," the "imtabbak," the "timrié," and so on.

If the party is Christian the bride is led to the church, where the bridegroom awaits her, and the religious ceremony according to the confession is performed. The Mohammedan bride is not taken to their mosque, the religious part of the ceremony is done as quietly as possible by the kadi or judge of the place, who in Mohammedan countries is sacerdotal, and who alone may marry the couple. Only the bridegroom and the next male relative of the bride come into the room, and the judge addresses them somewhat as follows:—The two men holding each other's hands. First to the father of the bride: "Did you, Hassan, give Hamdé, the daughter of Hassan, to Khaleel to be her legal husband according to the profession of Abu Hanify?" The father of the bride, Hassan, answers: "I gave." The same question and answer are repeated a second and a third time. Then the judge addresses the bridegroom, and says: "Did you, Khaleel, accept Hamdé, the daughter of Hassan, that you may be her legal husband according to the profession of Abu Hanify?" The bridegroom answers: "I have accepted." And again a second and third time the same question and the same answer are repeated. All this is done apart from other people, for should any man or woman unfavourable to the marriage be within hearing distance they may hinder future happiness by various acts; smoking during the ceremony is believed to make all future felicity go up in smoke, strewing flour or earth on the ground is believed to throw away or even bury their happiness. These superstitions are believed in by all Mohammedans and Christians. Of these latter some few families brought up and educated in Christian schools have ceased to believe them, but should by marriage a less educated woman or man be introduced into the family, as among the Israelites of old, they again bow down to modern Baalim and Ashteroth, which have strongly taken root amongst the native inhabitants. And often even we find modern Sauls who have

passed their lives persecuting those having familiar spirits and wizards, but who come back in their old age to ask the witch at Endor what will happen on the morrow.

Superstitions and silly beliefs are so widely spread amongst the inhabitants, and so firmly believed by all natives, no matter to what religion or confession they belong, that this forms a kind of sub-religion in which the extremes meet a kind of third opinion, in which Occidental and Oriental Christians are wholly separated, and wherein native Christians and Mohammedans wholly agree. As long as these bonds of unity have not been thoroughly destroyed, so long also will the work of civilisation and evangelisation be exceedingly difficult amongst the Christian natives and still more so amongst the Mohammedans. Christ himself often had to fight against these superstitions and traditions, as when He says in Matt. xv, 6, to the scribes and Pharisees: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of *none effect* by your tradition," or in Mark vii, 8: "Ye hold the tradition of men as the washing of pots and cups, and *many other* such like things ye do." More than a thousand years before Christ, King Saul is found trying to establish the pure religion. Centuries went by—Isaiah, Jeremiah in vain tried to abolish superstitions. And now nearly two thousand years later we meet the same beliefs still firmly held and hindering progress among the descendants, although under different denominations.

As already remarked, the Christian couple are united in the church, and here the bridegroom and bride (the latter veiled excepting among the occidentalised classes) are taken through the streets together at a very slow pace (this having become proverbial—"Slow as a bride")¹ to the bridegroom's house. Here the bride is taken in procession from her room to the bridegroom, continually changing her clothes, to display all she has before her husband, this often taking all the night through, till she is half dead in the morning.

All presents, clothes, household utensils, the never-forgotten looking-glass, and the bedding are carried on the heads of servants or porters in rear of the procession or in front to the house of the bridegroom.

The bride enters the house backwards, facing the bridegroom, a loaf of bread and jug of water are presented to her, she eats and drinks of this as a symbol of plenty for the future. A steel knife

¹ This also is a custom originating in ideas of modesty on the part of the women.—C. R. C.

is put on the threshold on which the bride steps before entering, this is intended to cut off all sorcery. At the door of the room the same ceremonies are gone through and the bride now puts her hand flat against the doorpost, whilst the bridegroom with his fist beats her on the hand as a token of her submission and of his authority. On entering the room she sits down and sups with the women, whilst the bridegroom has his supper with the men, and then bridegroom and bride again have a supper. All night through, singing, dancing, eating, and drinking are indulged in. The next day is the particular "women's feast," and the bride kisses the hand of everyone present. On receiving a gift of money the bride also kisses the hand of the giver. The feast is now ended, and everyone goes about his business. Eight or ten days later the bride is invited to her father's house, to which she will not go back unless invited, and should this invitation not be made it is considered a great offence.

CHAPTER IV.—RELIGIOUS FEELINGS.

These are confined to certain observations, such as keeping the thirty days' fast of Ramadan, during which month all adult Mohammedans are expected to fast during daylight from meat, drink, and smoking, whilst the nights are spent in all kinds of revelry; wine and strong drink are forbidden to believers, and are never used by women. As the Mohammedan year has twelve lunar months they are continually losing, so that the same date is eleven days in advance on the following year, and they lose one year in about thirty-three of ours. In consequence of this moving of the months the fast is less difficult to keep when it comes during the short and cool winter days than when it occurs during the long and hot summer days. Where they can afford it amongst the richer classes they sleep away the fasting hours, whilst the poorer working classes have to bear the burden and heat of the day while fasting. The nights are turned to day, women visit each other, and enjoy to some degree their liberty, and alas! very often this liberty degenerates into debauchery. As they are strictly shut up during eleven months of the year, necessarily they abuse their liberty.

Women do pray sometimes, but not as a rule, as Mohammedan law virtually, if not actually, forbids prayers for women, or renders them next to impossible. It must be understood that prayers amongst Mohammedans are a repetition, twice to five-

times of the same sentences, consisting of the first (opening) chapter of the Koran, to which, more or less, their own impressions may sometimes be added. As a rule, however, the believer has five prayers in twenty-four hours, which are obligatory. It is a debt every Moslem owes to God, and whoever misses them has to repeat them the next day, or afterwards; prayers of the same hours accumulate, and can only be said at the corresponding hour or hours. If one has been missed, next day it is to be repeated after the day's regular prayer. The five prayers are thus distributed during the day:—(1) The morning prayer, to be said from the first streaks of daylight till noon. (2) The midday prayer, from noon to about four o'clock. (3) The afternoon prayer, or 'Asr, from four to sunset. (4) The sunset prayer, from sunset to the disappearing of daylight. (5) The evening prayer, till midnight. At midnight some zealous persons may repeat prayers to the prophet Mohammed, but they are altogether optional. Prayers are preceded by ablutions, without which the prayer is useless. The hands and feet, face, and all issues are to be washed. With many sects women are considered so unclean that the very shadow of a woman falling on one who prays defiles the ablution, and this must be renewed. Under such circumstances, it may be easily understood how difficult it is for women to pray at all, as at certain times they are unfit even for ablution, and much more so for prayers. Thus, young girls, before the age of puberty, may begin to say prayers, but cease, not to begin again until they have passed the age of child-bearing. It is well here to say that old maids are practically unknown. During my many years' acquaintance with the Moslems of Palestine I have not met a single old maid that I can now remember. Amongst the native Christians I have known several. The place where prayers may be said is a point which helps Mohammedanism to a great extent, for they may be said in any clean place, either alone or in unison. The whole of the earth is clean.

Prayers forgotten in this life must be repeated in the next, at the gate of hell, on an elevated red hot flat iron plate, and every time the man touches the floor his forehead is burnt, and made whole again, and so on, till the whole of the missed prayers are gone through.

Before beginning the prayer the person quietly says: "I intend to pray," then spreading out the mantle, taking off his shoes, and facing Mecca (in Palestine this is to the south-east). First standing upright and lifting both hands to the sides of the

temples, then letting them fall again, then crossing them, next bowing, then standing up again; now going down on the knees, then kissing the ground, raising the body and kissing the ground again—this constitutes one “kneeling.” Every prayer consists of two to five such kneelings. In every kneeling the first opening chapter of the Koran, known as the “*fâti’ha*,” is said. A person in haste may say: “I am only going to pray two kneelings.” Or in talking: “I just had prayed two kneelings when”—so and so. These prayers, as is easily understood, are supposed to benefit the performer a good deal, no matter how bad he or she may be—although they try to be good. To illustrate this: a person may be praying, and whilst praying he may not smile or think about anything else, but between two kneelings one may interrupt his prayer and, before getting up from the knees, make such observations as seem fit, or even altogether unfit according to our civilised notions. We will suppose a woman has “intended to pray,” and given the kitchen in charge to her slave; she might interrupt her prayer at the end of one kneeling, saying: “Oh, Sa’idé (the name of the slave), look to the rice, it is steaming too fast”; then she may say her second and third kneeling, and remark that her slave does not pay attention. She may shriek out: “Cursed be your father, oh Sa’idé, wait till I have said my prayer; cursed be your grandfather and your great grandfather! I’ll teach you to obey!”—then going on to pray. The following is a translation of the obligatory prayer:—“In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate. Thanks be to God, the Lord of the universe, the merciful, the compassionate. Who reigns on the Judgment Day. We worship thee, we honour thee. Guide unto us the straight way. The way of those on whom is favour, those who are no object of wrath, nor the erring. Amen.” The path mentioned in the prayer is a supposed bridge which will be fixed on the Temple wall of Jerusalem on one side and on the top of the Mosque of Mount Olivet on the other, whilst a huge fire will fill the Valley of Jehoshaphat below. On the Judgment Day, when all men will be assembled on the Temple area, Mohammed will make them pass the bridge. All such as have said their prayers will pass to the other side, whilst such as have omitted them will fall into the fire. But Mohammed will save the Moslems after their having burned for a while.

Taken as a whole, the women are very careless in observing the prayers, should they even be fit after a given age to pray. Having passed their best age without praying, it is rare that they

begin to pray later on. The Arabic townswoman I have always compared with Lot's wife, or Michal, Saul's daughter, on an average. As exceptions there may be modern Miriams or Deborahs, two other types of townswomen. Though on every occasion of public rejoicing or sorrow a leader like Miriam of old is always present, singing before the women, and all others answer her—especially at funerals, or as mourners—yet such "fore singers" are supposed to be very wicked, and hell is their sure recompense, as wailing is forbidden by law. Miriam, the townswoman brought up in Egypt, very often in contact with the royal palace, shows her disdain to Zipporah the Bedawin woman, Moses' wife. This latter, brought up in tents in the wilderness, was certainly very different to Miriam, and they were never on good terms. Therefore Miriam was punished for having spoken against Moses because of his Ethiopian wife. The modern townswoman, with the same disdain, will speak against the Bedawin woman, for in fact they differ wholly from each other both in looks and dress and character.

CHAPTER V.—SUPERSTITIONS.

Superstitions—as with all ignorant people, though possessing a certain degree of civilisation—are with women certainly stronger than religion, or, at all events, more firmly believed. Timid as is the nature of women in general, their timidity is here so exaggerated that no woman will step into a dark room even in her own house, but will always be accompanied and carry a light.

Evil spirits and all kinds of ghosts fill the Arabian world, whether Christian or Moslem, in and out of houses, in the country or in the town, on land or on water. Yet some places are naturally more haunted than others. Thus, cemeteries are especially alive with invisible beings, appearing and disappearing at will on Thursday evenings. Friday being the sacred day of the Mohammedans, the ghosts also assemble on the eve, for prayer or for mischief. It is therefore better to avoid cemeteries on Thursday evenings. Moslem ghosts appear frequently, and especially to Moslems, though sometimes also to native Christians, but baptism is a protection against the ghosts. Occidentals never see any, because they do not believe in them, therefore they do not appear; this is what I was assured to be a fact, because I said I had never met, nor seen, nor heard any.

There are five or six very distinct classes of ghosts, whilst the

chief class, and at the same time the most numerous (believed to number as many as there are human beings, if not more) live immediately underground, and are known as the Jân or Jinn—the generic name of all ghosts—though there are Jân species, who have different names and functions among the general mass of Jân. The Jân eat, drink, have their governors and Mohammedan laws, but have no food of their own; they have to provide for this from human beings. They are supposed to be ever lurking about dry food or cooking places. And if a woman touch any bread, or flour, or butter, or whatever it may be, and omit to call on the name of the Lord, the Jân immediately seize their portion of the food which they carry away unseen into their underground dwellings. Therefore, no woman will do anything, not so much as step out of a room, without saying: "In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate," and never will they talk about these ghosts save in a very respectful way, naming God at each other sentence, and they think it better to avoid talking of them at all, for the Jân listen to all that is said and see whatever is done and will take their vengeance. At certain moments they have power to kill persons should the human transgression as to the Jân be too great. They may also take human beings to be judged at their courts of justice, but I was assured that in the Jân's court there is no bribery—this only was to show *en passant* how corrupt the courts are on earth. There are men, women, and children amongst the Jân, and on some occasions they even intermarry with human beings.¹

Whilst in Palestine I had a servant who did his work very well, and I wanted him to keep my bees in an isolated place several miles from Ramleh, in Philistia. After having refused altogether he informed me that a female Jân was in love with him, and so very jealous that she would make herself visible, at least to him, but only when he was quite alone. She struck him if he only smiled at any woman, but if she met him alone she would strike him half dead to the ground, so that he was sometimes stunned for several hours, in consequence of which he never

¹ The common term *majnûn*, used of persons who do anything foolish, does not mean "mad" but "bewitched," or possessed by the Jân. The Jân are divided into two classes, the one being Moslem, the other Kufâr or Pagan. The latter are the most malevolent. The Jân are born like human beings, but their bodies are of air or fire, not of flesh. The five classes of ghosts or spirits answer to our ideas of (1) demons (bad and good), (2) goblins, (3) ghosts, (4) gnomes guarding treasure, (5) doubles.—C. R. C.

went out alone, not even by day, as even then she appeared and scolded him for the merest trifles. It, however, transpired afterwards that this man was an epileptic. Yet again a male Jân may be in love with human women. Another man in my service had beaten his wife so brutally that she fell on the hearth. Of course, the Jân in love with her had a chance to take hold of her spirit as she had come down suddenly to his abode without calling "the merciful." This Jân told her at once to follow him to Egypt, where they could live openly together, whilst in the "Holy Land" this was not allowed to them. He had almost persuaded her to flee, when the priests became aware of it, and by praying and incensing they cut off the communication. The poor woman had been robbed of her senses when falling, and, her mind being ever full of the Jân, in her insanity talked of nothing but of the Jân, and a secret wish was also felt to leave her husband. When she became well again she left this off, but her Jân lover was only waiting for another occasion.

A second kind of ghost is the bad spirit called "Kird," more of a country devil or goblin.

Then comes the "Mared," a very tall spirit, appearing chiefly in towns, and in places where people have been killed, at first during the first year, then only periodically to remind the world where the spot is. Mohammedans drive big iron or wooden pegs into such a place to prevent these ghosts appearing, whilst Christians make a cross. This Mared is the terror of the townswomen, and not one but has had some adventure with him. For sometimes he not only appears but talks, calls, mocks, cries, or laughs. He is generally white.

Next is the "Rassad," or treasure-keeper, hovering over hidden treasures, and appearing when necessary to drive away the treasure-seekers or put them out of the track. It has the faculty of changing into all kinds of living things—into a single animal, or even into a number, as a hen and her chickens, or a red and a white filly. Sometimes this spirit attacks, sometimes only frightens away human beings.

The Kariné is a female spirit accompanying every woman, and has just the same number of children as the human woman, to whom she is attached. If the woman's character be good this spirit is also good and kind, if the woman be quarrelsome or anyhow of bad disposition the Kariné is so too, and even chastises the human children. King Solomon, who had power over the Jân, asked this spirit one day what her business was. She told

him: "Everything contrary to the happiness of conjugal life." She even gave the King directions how to charm her away. Such charms can be bought from dream-explainers, soothsayers, and the like.

Charms are very much believed in, and to find a more extensive market they are rarely good for two evils. Every charm is written, enveloped, burned, and so forth in a different way.

Besides good and evil spirits, men or women also may have a very bad influence on others. Especially the "Evil Eye" is very much feared. Now it is very remarkable with all these superstitions and beliefs the "name of God" is used only before the evil comes, never when the evil has effectually taken hold. On approaching a child or pet animal they will invariably say: "I surround you with God," or "God's name be upon you," "May the evil be out," and like expressions, before asking the name or health of the child. But should the effect of the Evil Eye in some way or other have done any harm, then charms alone are sought after. With a child as soon as it feels sick, whether from bad food or a cold, this is first attributed to the Evil Eye. The next thing is to find out the person who did the mischief, and, if possible, to get a piece of rag or any bit of clothing belonging to that person which is then burned below the child, and the fumes in many cases are considered salutary. Should the evil, however, be of a more obstinate nature experts are brought and they have many methods. One of the more simple methods is to take a piece of alum, salt, incense, and a piece of tamarisk wood, or palm of Palm Sunday, and to put all these ingredients in a pan on the fire, and take the child round it seven times. A cracking of the alum or salt indicates that the effect of the Evil Eye is broken. The Arabs also think "prevention is better than cure," and therefore to avoid the Evil Eye all kinds of charms are put round the necks and heads of children. Blue beads especially are often seen hanging around the head, or as a final bead in a necklace. Animals also have always a blue bead, or bone, or tortoise shell around the neck. Blue eyes are very rare amongst Arabs and are considered bad, therefore blue beads to attract the Evil Eye. But the effect of the Evil Eye is not confined to children, anybody may be brought to suffer from it. Written charms are sewed in a triangular leather bag, and either sewed into the head gear or worn round the neck, but generally in some invisible place lest the charm may be lost.

CHAPTER VI.—SICKNESS.

The nursing of the sick is practically unknown. Fatalism opposes human interference, everything is from God, and especially disease. So they are either altogether left to themselves or wrongly nursed. The sick person is given whatever may please him or her, and as doctors may not visit the women the task is a very difficult one, though in the large towns—Jerusalem, Beyrout, or Jaffa—where the Mission Medical Department has worked for nearly half a century, they have at length won some confidence, but still as a doctor must feel the pulse or see the tongue in many cases this is forbidden by the husband of Mohammedans. Christians have more confidence in European doctors. In spite of all precautions many will not take the medicines prescribed for them, or if the medicine has to be taken three or four times, and at the first time of taking, the cure be not almost immediate, it is thrown away, and perhaps ignorance or incapacity of the doctor is pretended. Koran verses are considered more efficacious in most cases, and they will sometimes only go to a doctor when almost all hope is gone. The native doctors practise blood-letting and give laxatives. They have no idea of holding to one remedy but will try a dozen on the same day, as the visitors may bring new knowledge. The sick room is continually full of noisy visitors who discuss the state of the sick person, every one knowing best what to do; so it is not unusual to find four or more groups, each one discussing a remedy, and wholly despising the other, whilst the patient, or at least the family, may accept them all, and try them in turns, at the same time assuring the patient that so and so tried it and she was healed, so and so refused and died, and so forth.

When a visitor comes to the sick the first thing he says is: "Your health," or "May evil be away," and the sick person will answer: "God spare you and let your children live." Then the person may say: "God's name on you," "Since when are you in bed," and so forth. Coffee is given to the visitors, and anything talked about except the sickness. The room of the sick is filled with smoke from the different pipes, and the nerves of the sick are thus put to a test. Never does it happen, as with Occidentals, that the sick person is kept quiet, for the more visits the more honour. Since the American College in Beyrout has created a medical

department, in which natives are brought up as medical men, the land at large has benefited a good deal. Yet, taken as a rule, the Western doctor is preferred in serious cases, and as the medical art has been introduced into the country by Occidentals this is easily understood.

Contagious diseases are not more carefully avoided by the mass of visitors than others; as everything that happens is due to destiny, and everything was written from the beginning, no precautions can help. Some years ago I lived with my wife and two girls of five and seven in Ramleh, and during the hot summer months we had taken up quarters in the Greek convent, where we had plenty of room, a fine view on the town, good air, and no intruders, only a few monks to keep the empty convent, which is more of an hostelry for the thousands of Greek pilgrims who pass by in winter. We took all we wanted from the market near, excepting water and fresh milk, which was brought to us every day. The small-pox was raging in the town, and many victims were buried daily. Many people vaccinated their children by help of quacks, or women who only dipped their lancet into the boils and so vaccinated the children, many refusing to give their children for taking the lymph, others taking them to native doctors, and so forth. The interpreter's family at the convent was also taken with the prevailing epidemic, and we did all in our power to explain to him that it was very dangerous to receive him in our rooms, as he might bring the small-pox to our children, who were neither vaccinated nor had they had the sickness. Then the milkwoman came lamenting the death of her daughter, and when we found that she had died by the small-pox my wife explained to her the danger of taking the milk, as all the family, their hands, clothes, &c., were necessarily infected, and that it was safer that she should stop bringing the milk for some time. Finally the woman left our house, after having been very disagreeable, and accusing us of want of trust in God. "Don't you know," she said, "that if it is God's will, you will have the small-pox, wherever you may be, and if it is not, He will preserve you, no matter in what close contact you are with the sick themselves?" There was no way of assuring her that, though we in some degree partook of her belief, yet we thought it right to avoid danger, and that God had given us sense enough to do so. A Christian boy of about twelve had also died, and was carried uncovered into the church just below our convent, so, finding the risk was too great, we left Ramleh for a few weeks, as we could combine work and pleasure.

and avoid a dangerous centre. When I came back some time after I was hailed as a deserter, a coward, and so forth, though it must be remembered I had nothing to do with visiting the sick or nursing. The whole population—Christian and Mohammedan—had thought we should remain and brave the epidemic, though it was none of our business so to do. It must not be concluded that they do not avoid it through courage or resignation to God's will, but rather from want of energy and want of thought, perhaps also want of means. I would not have left had I not had another house in Jaffa which, meanwhile, was empty. Cholera, plague, and the like are treated in the same negligent way. The government indeed does establish quarantine as soon as an epidemic is said to be raging in some neighbouring country or province, but this is most often only a means of making money.

Bites of venomous serpents, scorpions, or the like, are treated by serpent-charmers, and in case such are not to be had immediately, any *mollah* may be of use, chanting Koran passages, or putting such verses written on paper on the wounds. What keeps the people to this belief is the crafty way in which those charmers keep them in ignorance as to the venomous or harmless kinds of serpents. Surgery, just as in Western countries, is more of a real science, and many cases of radical cure I have known, which, given the very elementary instruments they possess, may be called very good. Broken arms, legs, fingers, and so forth, limbs that can be well adjusted and bandaged all round, are very quick to heal; whilst ribs, or such-like bones, or musket-ball wounds, are not easily healed. Scrofulous diseases are common, but scald-heads are the most common and detested. This is believed to be produced by a gecko, which is found in all houses in towns, or by bats dropping their excrements as they flutter about in the evenings.

Born cripples and deformed children are certainly an exception, and at all events a good deal less common than in the West, for various reasons. I may perhaps venture to suggest that a great, if not principal, cause is the total absence of stays, an article unknown to Oriental women. Civilisation alone will introduce this useless article into Arabian towns, and be in future a cause of producing more deformed children. Another reason may be that all women are married, and have consequently no illegitimate children whom they may have tried to discard. Again, the more children the happier the family; no regret is felt as to numbers, and full development is allowed. Cripples still may be born, but

from want of careful nursing, voluntarily or involuntarily, they seldom grow old, and mostly die as infants.

Ophthalmia is perhaps the disease most generally spread and doing the greatest mischief. Certain towns suffer a good deal more than others for various reasons. Jerusalem is more than 2,400 feet above the level of the sea, and though periodically eye diseases may prevail, and may also make many victims, yet this is nothing in comparison with Ramleh and Lydda. I may safely say that in neither of the last-named towns is there to be found a single family altogether free from eye disease of some kind or other. Hundreds of families I have seen in which every one perhaps had a different degree of the disease. Out of a hundred boys in a mission school, at least ninety-five had sore eyes of some sort, being either blind altogether or blind of one eye, or chronically dim-sighted, and so forth. This alarming state has been attributed to the terrible heat in summer—as Lydda is often termed “small hell”; others look for the cause in the sands which abound, and are driven into the eyes by the wind; yet again, many attribute it to the universal filthiness, for water is not always to be had, especially when the people go out of the town to live in the vineyards through the summer, and they are glad to have even the necessary water for food and drink. Some believe it due to the masses of cactus hedges which grow all around the gardens, and which are filled with minute thorns (especially when the fruit ripens), which are very easily blown by the wind, and thus carried into the eyes. I am inclined to think that this cause may be one, combined with others, which produces this disastrous calamity. Hospitals are increasing in all towns, but Jerusalem alone possesses a special Ophthalmic Hospital.

Red beads dangling about the diseased eyes are considered very salutary, and are seen very often hanging about the women and children. Years ago all Occidentals were supposed to be doctors, and no sooner did they pay a visit than they were asked for some kind of medicine. My mother, visiting the neighbours, was often also called the doctress, “Hakimé,” and always carried with her some remedies. Amongst these the most demanded were always the eye-drops—*kutra*.

Thirty years ago we went to Hebron to look over the place. Hotels were unknown in that town then, so we dwelt for several days in the garden of a Mohammedan below a huge nut-tree. Several of the family, as usual, had sore eyes, and the “*lapis infernalis*,” which was never wanting on such tours, was dropped

into the eyes after our having thoroughly washed them. Many years afterwards the woman, who had meanwhile become a widow, came regularly to visit my mother in Jerusalem, never forgetting to ask for the salutary eye-drops.

Another hideous town disease, though the patients come mostly from the country, is leprosy. Any traveller in the East remembers to have seen the rows of lepers sitting by the road outside the gates of the towns, stretching out their fingerless hands, and with a hoarse voice asking God's blessing and long life to the passers-by, in return for which wish they always receive coins. These people live in separate houses, which the municipalities put at their disposal, and in these all lepers are obliged to reside. Jerusalem is also the only town with a hospital for lepers; though they cannot be cured, they are better cared for, are taken away from mendicancy, and are taught to pass their time in such work or distraction as is fit for them. The disease is incurable as mentioned, but happily for the nurses, if thorough cleanliness is observed, it is not contagious; but it is hereditary. Children are free from leprosy till the age of twelve, and in many instances the disease may even leap one generation to appear again in the next. The leprosy now found in Palestine is not the disease so often mentioned in the Bible. Moses' hand was leprous and "*as snow*," and Miriam became a leper as *white as snow*. The modern leprosy is different, and is only contagious if the matter from a leper be brought into the blood or into the wound of another. As already observed, lepers gather always around the towns, and as was the custom thousands of years ago, sit at the city gates and wait till the passers-by give them whatever they may happen to have.

CHAPTER VII.—BEGGARS.

Beggars of both sexes are met with in all towns, and, to a certain degree, are even liked, for charity is one of the precepts of Moslem law. It is a good thing to accomplish this duty by giving to the mendicants. There are also different classes—those who sit down by the roadside or such as go round to the houses. This class always knock at the door, and in a wailing tone say: "May God increase your wealth, my lady; God preserve to you your children. May God never show you misery; may He give you riches," &c. If the lady of the house be disposed to give anything, she will either throw down a coin or send a piece

of bread, or whatever cooked food she may happen to have. If she can dispose of nothing or may not feel inclined to give anything, she will call back: "May God give you!" whereupon, as a rule, the beggar retires and tries the next gate. With Occidentals they do not give way so easily, but continue to worry till they receive something. Mendicants of this class in the East, as everywhere else, are occasionally thieves or robbers, and often are very wealthy. The blind beggars, as a rule, are more liberally treated. But another class of holy men and beggars combined includes such as only beg in order to have something to eat and to be clothed. These are less troublesome; for, although they will sit down at the gate and sing in long and monotonous tunes either chapters of the Koran or stories in rhyme of the patriarchs, prophets, and saints, yet they are easily sent away by telling them "the Lord will provide." Many of this last-named class only beg as much as they need for the day, in many instances giving a portion away to a fellow-beggar who may not have had enough.

CHAPTER VIII.—CONCLUDING REMARKS.

All women in towns go to the public baths once a month—at least, if they can afford to pay, but this happens less often with the poorer classes. Friends and relations gather together and go to the bath as a kind of festival. In the house they do not, as a rule, wash themselves very often; want of water may be the cause in some towns, where the rain-water, as in Jerusalem, is the only supply. This is gathered in cisterns during the winter, and can never be used liberally. It is partly due, perhaps, to laziness, or even a slight kind of hydrophobia or fear of the water. Be it said here, to the credit of missionary work in general, that cleanliness and free intercourse with the women-folks are also rapidly opening a way to civilisation, though still only among the Christian population. Obedience of boys to their mothers is little regarded; many think it very manly if their sons disobey and even beat their mothers, being, alas! very often strongly supported by the fathers.

The meals are prepared by the women, but only the husband and other males eat together, leaving the women and children to follow. Boys and small girls do, however, very often eat with their fathers. The most common or national dish is the "Máhshey," consisting of rice and hashed meat, rolled together in vine leaves,

or hollowed vegetable marrows, into which the meat and rice are stuffed. Sour grapes are often squeezed on the leaves when rolled to hold them faster together. The marrow is also often cooked in sour milk; to both dishes butter is added, and then cooked for an hour or two. Excepting for the better classes, who have a kitchen, most of the people have only portable clay-stoves, on which the charcoal fire is set, and, after burning for some time on the terrace, is brought into the room or the "Liwan"—an open porch, generally as spacious as a room, where in the warm summer months the family pass most of the time cooking, sewing, receiving visits, sitting down in the evenings, and sleeping in the night. The bedding consists of a carpet spread on the mat on the floor of the sitting-room, and in some cases a thin mattress; a pillow and a very thick cotton or wool stuffed quilt finishes the whole bed. Sheets are unknown, and undressing for going to bed consists only in losing the girdle and taking off thick furs or overcoats and over-trousers for the men. The nights again, in many cases at least, are not consecrated altogether to sleep, but passed in sleeping a few hours, then getting up, perhaps to smoke a cigarette or drink water, and sleeping again, and as they are only half undressed this is greatly facilitated. In spite of these irregular nights they are all early risers, but go also early to bed.

In the small town of Ramleh, where we generally passed one or two summer months, we lived in close contact with both Christian and Mohammedan families. An old Moslem midwife lived in the courtyard below us; she had with her a married son who knew how to read and write, and was considered a consecrated clerk, gaining his living by writing charms for the sick, and reading or chanting at the houses; also his wife, a young woman of twenty, with a baby and two children of eight and ten of her own. Early in the morning the old woman was up and prepared coffee for herself, then she began waking the girl of eight, using the same words day after day, so one day I wrote down literally what she said, and give it as nearly as it can be interpreted, the child's name being 'Ghanimeh:—" 'Ghanimeh, the time is past. I believe sleep is sweet in your eyes; get up. (Louder.) By the Almighty God, get up. I'll curse the father of your father. By God, cursed be the heart of thy father; get up! (After half a minute, still louder.) Get up, blood spout out of your throat, get up Oh, Lord, give patience Madame 'Ghanimeh (and in angry, ringing tones) 'Ghanimeh—'Ghanimeh—get up! (After another pause.) Eh! eh! eh! Blood spout out of

thy throat—will you get up?” and so forth. At length the girl so aroused sat up, but had nothing to do but listen to the cursing of her mother, who now went on to awake the brother with fresh compliments, such as: “Your father was a learned man; when will you get up to go to school? Do you want to sleep away like an animal? Arise, before I call the pestilence to scatter you all.” Happily this is an exception; yet the rising in the morning is supposed to be very salutary, and, as a rule, no jokes are allowed in the early morning hours.¹ All kinds of exclamations are heard—mostly addressed to God. “Oh, bountiful!” “Oh, merciful!” and so on; or if anything is asked in the morning, they generally refuse to answer, saying: “Oh, giver, Oh, opener—let us see ourselves or our Lord’s face on this morning.” With the same words, or something like them, beggars are sent away in the morning. The people, as a rule, are very grave in the morning, whilst the evenings are spent in all kinds of amusements, such as giving each other riddles, generally in rhymes, or social games, or telling stories of kings and princes, riches, and wonderful tales of the thousand and one nights, fables, and so forth. As a rule, most of the above applies to Mohammedans; yet I have tried to point out where the difference is marked. Christian women are less shy of Occidentals, and in many instances are quite sociable, yet come back to their old habits when alone.

On a visit one day in a small town we were invited by a native Christian to sleep in his house for that night. My wife and I had to share the only room with the man and his wife and a ten-year-old boy. After supper and a couple of hours of chatting, we all went to bed. For us they had prepared an improvised bed on the long sofa, whilst they lay down on the floor, as was their custom. What about rest? Fleas abounded; and the door was being opened and shut so often that I at length inquired what might have happened. But nothing unusual seemed to be the matter. So I tried to sleep. “Um-Elias,” called out the man, “where are the matches?” Then the woman, handing over the matches, tries to sleep again. After perhaps half an hour another call for the glass, as he is thirsty and wants a drink of water. Again this is granted. Then again half an hour’s sleep, and another loud call to the wife to see if the boy wants anything,

¹ The sleeper is wakened cautiously, and at first with fair words and in a low voice, not from any idea of the bad effect of a shock, but because the soul is believed to have left the body during sleep, and must be gently invited back, or otherwise it might not return and the sleeper would die.—C. R. C.

or whether he is covered up, though the boy may be fast asleep, and so on, till morning at length ended this restless night.

If any of my Oriental friends should come across these lines I must ask their indulgence if they think that any of the above generalities are not applicable to themselves; it does by no means follow that if there are exceptions to the rule, the statements which I give, and which may be displeasing to some, are in any way incorrect.

Woman in the *harem* is, relatively speaking, perhaps happier than the Occidental lady can imagine her to be, for her manner of living in seclusion, strictly separated from men, gives her another conception of happiness and freedom, for which in one sense they do not even care, wholly ignoring any other condition of life. But even the Christian woman in Palestine, though the only wife, is practically secluded from masculine society, except her husband's, and in most cases she is treated as an inferior being. Whether Mohammedan or Christian, townswoman or Fellaha, a flogging is always in reserve for her, and few women can actually boast of "not having received any at all," however rare it may be with some. Sitting together in a family circle and enjoying family conversation is altogether out of their knowledge and customs.

A man will generally say in talking of his wife to another man: "With apologies to yourself, it is only my secluded one." Many speak of "the mother of so and so," naming the eldest son.

Rarely has a man full and entire confidence in his wife, as for the merest trifle she will swear "by God," or "by her father's life," or "by her eyes" that what she says is exact. The Gospel teaching, originally pronounced in Palestine, "Let your words be yea, yea—and nay, nay," is wholly unknown to Orientals.

New songs originate either in Cairo or in Beyrout, and are taught by travellers going the round of all Egypt and Syria. Some years ago a song thus appeared, and was soon heard in all towns, sung by great and small. Though it has many verses, I still retain a few, and try to give the tune as near as I can remember:—

INDIAN MUSLIN.

Baft-u-Hindî

Baftu Hindi, baftu hindu Shash ha - reer ya banât



tukhud - u li shash il gha - li min sue-ket Ha-dra-bad,



wefta - hu li ya sa - bey - a laj - la - bat laj - la - bat.

1.

Indian muslin! Indian muslin!
Silken muslin, O ye maids!
None there is, equal to this muslin!
Open here, at once, your gates.

2.

And she opened, and she told me,
Come, light of my eyes, and rest,
Everything is waiting for thee,
Ostrich feathers of the best.

3.

Nothing is, but he has seen it.
To the coffee of Beyrout.
Farideh's singing, he has heard it,
And Rogetta play the lute.

4.

Tell me, O you fairy maiden,
Why you turn your face from me?
Well, the Turks have stole you from me,
Left me wailing quite alone.

5.

Listen, ye who are so joyous,
I will warn you yet once more:
Harm in opium drink is lurking,
Therefore keep your spirit pure.

(*To be continued.*)