

## WOMAN IN THE EAST.

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*(Continued from "Quarterly Statement," 1899, p. 160.)*

## PART II.

## CHAPTER I.—THE COUNTRYWOMAN.

THE countrywoman, or Fallaha, the feminine of Fellah, is best represented in the Bible by Abigail, the wife of the wealthy Nabal, who, like the modern Fellah woman, had her say in the household affairs. Different to the townswoman, who has a home dress, and is always met with out of doors veiled and wrapped in the long white sheet, the Fallaha has the same clothes on in or out of the house—plain blue, sometimes embroidered, with the white cotton shawl over the head, but she is never veiled. The long blue gown reaches to her feet, and is fastened by a girdle. This is generally the only clothing she has on. Her head, according to her wealth, is more or less visibly ornamented with coins, both silver and gold. Many coins are therefore to be found in the Orient with holes near the border, by which they are attached to the head-gear, which itself is plaited into the hair by strips of ribbon, and a silver chain passes under the chin, along which also coins of all dimensions are fixed; below the chin the chain is elongated, and the most valuable coin in the woman's possession terminates this and hangs upon the breast. The whole fortune of a woman is thus continually carried about with her. Above this is worn a long white cotton shawl falling back to the waist framing the face, and leaving a row of coins above the forehead visible; the ends are stuck into the chain, which holds them in place. This every-day shawl is more or less embroidered round the borders and fringed with tiny tassels. On feast days or solemn occasions the shawl is richer, and in most cases of black silk fringed with red tassels. When the woman is at work the wide sleeves are tucked up and crossed behind the head, leaving the arms bare.

Shoes are only worn when absolutely necessary, never in or about the village. Stockings are unknown.<sup>1</sup>

The Fallaha gets up at two or three in the morning and grinds the flour in her own hand-mill, without which no Fellah family can exist. Often two grind together, singing their love songs till daylight. If they have more flour than is wanted for the day, it is put in a tanned skin-bag, and hung up in a corner of the room. This grinding and singing have so grown into their habits that none of the sleepers are disturbed by it, but often should sleep overtake the grinder the husband or brother is awakened by the stoppage of the familiar sound. In most cases they have only one room, usually divided into three parts. The darkest part, where straw is kept for the winter, is furnished with big clay receptacles made by the women on the spot, to store away the wheat, barley, lentils, and so on. The other part is divided into the lower or fore-part, to lodge the animals, and the elevated or hinder-part, where the family cooks, eats, sleeps, and sits. Rebecca, as a maiden, reminds one of this Fallaha and the house arrangement, when she says to Eleazar, Genesis xxiv, 25: "We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in." The courtyard is similar to the inside, and may be considered as the summer habitation, for the room has generally no other issue than the door, rendering it intolerable during the hot summer months. A booth is generally made above the elevated part of the court, and visitors are received there; also the whole of the family doings pass outside. The same fireplace as in the inside is to be found. The Fallaha generally uses wood for the fire, the hearth being built on the floor. The room is always full of smoke and the roof black. It is no easy task, therefore, to pass a night in a Fellah house, on a carpet on the floor, with a coarse woollen cushion to lean against and listen to their tales or else tell them news.

#### CHAPTER II.—THE HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE.

This consists of one or more carpets and straw mats, to spread on the floor during the night, and when visitors come. The carpets are taken away in the day and folded, as well as the cushions and the thick woollen or cotton coverings. All the

<sup>1</sup> The dress of Bethlehem is peculiar to the Christian women of that town. The dress of Central and North Palestine differs in some respects from that of the South, and the costume of Christian women in Nazareth and the North is quite different from that of Bethlehem.—C. R. C.

family lie down in rank and file, covered by two or more coverings. All sleep in one room, till the youngsters grow up and get married, and either build a new house, or, as in most cases, the head of the family adds a new room for the newly married, who thus continue to live in the same court. The next and most indispensable article is the hand-mill already mentioned, a sieve to sift the flour, and another coarse sieve to sift the wheat.

There are also a few kitchen utensils—as earthenware pots in which to cook the food, and a wooden ladle to stir and take it out. Some have a circular board on which they make a kind of small cut vermicelli, and a roller to roll out the dough. Salt is kept in an earthenware jar. Honey and grape treacle, oil and butter may be also in store in earthenware jars for winter. The big clay receptacles are used for cereals, whilst the space below, formed by their being raised on three or four legs, is used much as we use drawers, for keeping various articles in. The top of these receptacles is almost shut, excepting for a small round hole by which the grain is put in after the harvest. The large wooden basin, or *batié*, to make the dough, and the smaller basin, or *hanabé*, very nearly complete the whole of the furniture.

Water is generally brought from the fountain, or cistern, in skin bottles, which the women carry on their backs, and a rope holding this in position passes round the forehead. If, however, they have no skin bottles, known as "*kirby*," they have big earthenware jars, which they carry on their heads. In a corner of the room a still larger jar with very wide opening is found, from which everybody takes out water, generally with a tin cup. Smaller earthenware jugs, painted red on black, are their usual drink receptacles; the water is poured from the spout into the open mouth from the height of a foot or more by inclining the head backwards.

Coffee utensils are not to be found in every family, but generally a whole set belong in partnership to a part of the village. The whole set consists of a coffee-pan of iron, to which is chained a ladle to stir the coffee beans when on the fire, next comes a mortar of wood or of very hard stone, and a pestle, also of wood or stone, in which the coffee is pounded—a *coffee mill is never used*. When the coffee is pounded as fine as possible it is put into a brass coffee jug containing boiling water and boiled. When ready it is served on a brass tray, with tiny cups, holding little more than a tablespoonful.

Every woman possesses a chest, generally painted red, and with thin brass arabesques nailed all around, in which her treasures are hid. The lock has generally a ringing arrangement to warn her should any one try to open it, for, as a rule, she fears her husband most of all. It is locked with a large copper key, which hangs always round her neck, day and night. No wonder she is always vigilant, and has a continual eye on it, for it holds all her fortune, not only in valuables that she may possess, but also every piastre she may earn, which is put away into the secret drawer. If the wealth she may have on her head is too heavy to be carried about all day, it may be exchanged for a lighter head-gear, and put in the box with bracelets, necklaces, and so forth. She most jealously keeps it from her husband; especially when out on errands she fears him, for in case of need he might break open the box and take what he wants, denying having touched anything. She therefore keeps him in total ignorance of what it may contain, in order not to lead him into temptation. It is also very much in her interest to have a husband who, if not altogether poor, at least is not rich, for she well knows that the saying is too true: If a Fellah has money enough, he chooses one of three things—either to go to Mecca, which is very expensive; or else to make some disturbance, which costs a good deal; or to get married a second time, which, besides the expenses, brings her a rival.

The chest also holds her best clothes, strongly perfumed, which she only takes out on feast days.

### CHAPTER III.—MEALS.

Meals are served on the ground on a home-made straw tray, round which only the male members of the family squat if any stranger be present, who always partakes of the meal. In case of absence of strangers, the wife or daughters in many cases sit down and partake of the same meal as the others. This is generally served in a small wooden dish, and soft bread placed around, which is dipped into the food by small bits. Spoons as a rule are not used, but the food is taken with the fingers if solid enough, and by dips if too fluid. They have, however, wooden spoons, which they bring forth for distinguished visitors. On account of this method of taking the food the hands are always washed before meals. Early before daybreak the woman leaves the mill to bake the bread. In winter, when it is cold, the dough is prepared in

the evening, and the leaven put in; by daylight it is ready to be carried into the low-oven. This is heated with manure. A cone with an opening at the top is put in a small room, at the bottom of the cone are placed small stones, and a cover of clay like the cone itself is put on. The manure is lighted and left to heat for several hours—sometimes the whole night. When the dough is well leavened it is made into small loaves and laid on the heated stones, where it is baked in from ten minutes to a quarter of an hour. From these stones the bread of the Fellahin has always little pits below and corresponding elevations on the top. Bread is renewed every day, and sometimes twice a day. The Fellahin eat very much bread; it forms the most substantial part of the everyday meals. In the Lebanon the bread is generally baked on an iron tray after the dough has been spread out as thin as possible, and the fresh bread is put on the straw tray.

They have usually three meals a day, breakfast, any time between eight o'clock and noon, consisting of bread alone, or olives, oil, eggs, fruit, milk, or butter, as the man may be possessor of olive gardens, vegetables, flocks, and so on.

The dinner is more substantial, consisting, according to time of year and work, of boiled rice, broken wheat, lentils, or lentils and rice, with butter, vegetables, and so forth. Meat with the average Fellah is an exception. This is reserved for feast days.

Supper in many cases is taken instead of dinner, as in harvest time when they are too far from home, or from the hut temporarily put up, where the woman prepares for their wants. In other cases it may be very much like the breakfast.

During the fasting month of Ramadan the most substantial meal is ready by sunset. The family gathers around, and as soon as the priest calls out "God is the Greatest," every man, woman, and child put out their hands and, "naming God," stuff the food as eagerly as possible into their mouths. Meals as a rule are taken hastily and quietly; no talking, or exchanging ideas, or asking how the dish is prepared. Drinking, of course water only, is reserved to the end, and is in most cases a sign of sufficiency. Therefore, in case a stranger may ask for water during the meal it is often refused, as this means ceasing to eat. It is also customary to say "Thank God," which means as much as "I have enough." The hands are now washed outside the room. The second meal in the night of Ramadan is taken early in the morning, soon after midnight, but is a very slight meal. As the Fellahin go to their work

during daytime the nights are very quiet, save during the meal times. No running about and changing night into day as amongst the townspeople.

#### CHAPTER IV.—THE WOMEN.

During these nights the small oil lamps with which the rooms are lighted are kept burning, whilst all through the year the light is put out after the meals or evening hours, and is lit again during the morning hours, when the woman grinds. The oil is exclusively to be furnished by the woman, bought from her private earnings. These consist in eggs she may sell (the poultry always are the woman's property) or anything she may have gleaned during the harvest and sold at the next market. She may also have carried things to the market for someone else, for men never carry anything in the country. If they go to the market they either hire a woman or take their own wives or daughters, or else load animals. These earnings all belong to the woman, except it be done for her husband, when she is expected to do it for nothing, although in most cases she may put away a part for herself.

The woman, encouraged by all these small items, is often considered a stranger in the family to a certain degree. If she is energetic she can rule the house and command the husband just as well as any Occidental woman may. She is greatly venerated by her children, but is not inseparably attached to the family of her husband. She never takes his name, and for the slightest offence she can be divorced; and though in this last case she has a right to claim a certain sum of money, lands of her husband can never be given to her. The Fellah considers his property as sacred, and if not absolutely forced to sell, he is ever ready to say like Naboth to Ahab in Kings xxi, 3: "The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee." Although in many cases Occidentals have bought lands from the Fellahîn in Palestine, yet they are ever considered as temporary intruders. Even violation of the women is considered easier for them to bear than this encroachment on their lands. And thus they have always been, whatever confession or religion they belonged to, from the Canaanites of the time of Abraham, or later on, fighting the Israelites, then being converted to Judaism, fighting Greeks and Romans, and as Christians against Mohammedans, and converted to Mohammedanism fighting the

Crusaders.<sup>1</sup> And now in modern times the Canaanite of yore, transformed with very slight changes into the modern Fellah, still represents to the Bible student vividly the same type. Though the general duty of the Fellah woman consists in all that appertains to the household, including storage of wood for firing when it is to be had, or manure for the same purpose in the plains, she may often help her husband, or father, or brother in the labours of the field. This task being the chief occupation of the men, they derive their name from cultivating; Fellah means cultivator. During the ploughing season she carries the food to the field, and if no animals be present may also carry the seed for sowing, break the clods if needs be, seconding her husband in gardening if he possesses watered lands, weeding, and so forth, but only after having hastily done the most necessary work at home. So also in harvest time she has to help cutting the corn, or driving the laden animals to the threshing floor, which may be many miles away, but always doing the easier work just as women do all over the world. It has often been represented, in view of the Fellah woman's servitude and degraded position, both in illustrations and descriptions, that she is yoked alongside with an ass or cow for ploughing, but I most emphatically protest against such fables, which have been seen perhaps in some other part of the world and copied again and again by writers; and even up to this date modern writers unscrupulously have given it as a fact. I dwell on this, as I have been many years amongst the population, and have never seen or heard of a woman being yoked to the plough.<sup>2</sup> Women may sometimes lead the newly-yoked animal to teach it to go in the direction wanted, or force a stubborn horse or mule to

<sup>1</sup> *Religion*.—The Fellahin have no doubt much of the old Amorite blood in their veins. In North Syria especially they resemble the ancient pictures of Phœnicians, but the stock is mixed with other elements, Arab, Nabathean, and Aramean, through the planting of new colonies by the Assyrians, and through Arab conquest. Only a part of this population has adopted foreign faiths—Jewish or Christian—in any age, and their real beliefs are what they call “the religion of Abraham,” including very ancient superstitions. In the twelfth century the Fellahin remained Moslems, as a rule, as is particularly noted in documents of the time of the Latin Kingdom.—C. R. C.

<sup>2</sup> Though women are not yoked to the plough, yet I have seen a woman pulling at it, side by side with a donkey—in one case when the husband was evidently very poor.—C. R. C.

On this point Dr. Chaplin sends the following note:—“Whilst it is no doubt exceedingly rare for a woman to be harnessed to a plough, I have myself seen *once* on the plain of Sharon a woman dragging a plough side by side with a donkey.”

walk straight, and possibly this has been confounded with yoking. At all events the Fellah woman is certainly the busiest woman of the three types, as having her household duties and sharing her husband's work in harvest, but she does not think so little of herself as the townswoman does, and certainly is esteemed by her husband a good deal more than is her sister in town. If the Fellah does not possess any corn land himself, or if the woman be a widow or orphan, she goes to glean behind the reapers, and often she gathers corn enough to last her all through the year if she is diligent, or if some modern Boaz—and the case may often present itself—allows a modern Ruth to go among the sheaves. In some wheat-producing districts, like the plain of Sharon and Philistia, the gleaners are so numerous, even surpassing the reapers in number, that often the owner has to hire a man to drive them back, which is a very arduous task. I have known such guardians of the gleaners declare that they had to lay down their functions as being too sinful, for they had to curse and to swear a good deal more than is decent in view of the blessing sent by God to all.

#### CHAPTER V.—BIRTH.

After birth the midwife is responsible for the child during forty days. Immediately after the birth the father is called in, and before the navel is cut he is to name the child, though in many places they are not particular about the time of naming. The child is rubbed all over with salt, water, and oil; tightly wrapped up so that it cannot move its limbs, and remains thus till it is seven days old. The midwife only then removes all dirty clothes or rags, and again rubs and washes and wraps together for another seven days, and so on, till the fortieth day, when the child is finally washed in warm water, soaped, put in cleaner rags, and handed over to the responsibility of the mother. The babe is then put into a rocking-cradle, which every Fellah woman possesses. Immediately after birth the news is carried to those interested. I will here only copy what I have written in the April, 1894, number of the *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund*. If it is a boy all relatives assemble in the house on the very day of the birth; a dinner is made for them by the father, and they drop money, every man according to his means, for the benefit of the boy. Of course the money is gathered and appropriated by the parents. When



it is a girl the male relatives may give small sums of money, but are not expected to do so, and the women of the neighbourhood bring torches in the evening and oil-cakes, singing the praise of the parents, and of the bride or bridegroom—as the new-born is styled; they also drop coins for the benefit of the girl, and these are put away and tacked on the child later on. Friends or distant relations also bring a sacrifice, consisting of a lamb or goat, which is killed and eaten by the offerer and his own family and all present.

The first person giving the news of a boy's birth to the father says: "Good news." "Something good, please God," says the father. "What will be my reward?" asks the news bringer. The father, having an inkling of what it may be, promises a certain sum of money, or some object that may please, as a handkerchief, cap, &c., according to his means. Either a son or daughter may be announced by calling the blessing on the bridegroom or bride: "Blessed be the bridegroom or bride." The father answers, if it is a boy: "May God bless you, or give you boys," or: "At your wedding" (rejoice); and if it is a girl he says the same, and may make an offer of the girl, saying: "Upon the choice of your hand." The other may accept, and say: "I have accepted," or decline by saying: "God bless you, Abu so and so." If the girl really is accepted, the betrothal is at once confirmed by bringing a sacrifice, over which the opening Koran chapter is read, and the terms of the marriage conditions settled; if this is not done, the acceptance is not ratified, though people of honour may not take back their word.

Often the new-delivered woman is lying in the room, stowed away in a corner, whilst all the noisy guests squat about in a circle; the room is filled with smoke, and matters of all kinds are gravely discussed, the men smoking their pipes, the women quietly listening to their wise husbands, brothers, or whatever they may be. The traditional coffee is brought forth by the master of the mansion and roasted in a pan on the wood fire in a corner of the room; as there are no chimneys, the smoke either goes out by the door or some small hole or window which the house may happen to have. The coffee beans, slightly brown, are now pounded, always by a man; most generally this honorary task is performed by the eldest male. The coffee is now boiled, and, in two or three tiny cups, is handed round to the assembly by turns, beginning at the eldest or most honoured visitor. When the first two or three have drunk they hand back the cups,

saying: "May this endure" (the coffee drinking). The master answers: "By your voice." The cups are now filled again and given to the next, and so on, till all have partaken. Sometimes the midwife receives her cup too. For as a rule they are neither timid, nor do they hold themselves bound to honour the men more than absolutely necessary. The sacrifice is prepared for the dinner, and in a separate cauldron rice is boiled and put before the assembly. All these dinners are prepared exclusively by men; the women may hand the wood for the fire, but nothing more. The women receive their portion when the men have eaten, if something is left. Notwithstanding this first feast (only for boys) distant relatives or friends bring a lamb or kid as soon as the news is known, but sometimes this may be done a whole year after. Nervousness is unknown by the Fellah woman, and she continues at work till the last moment. Although an exception, I have known a woman carry a big basket of cabbages to Bethlehem, some three miles distant from her village; on the way she was delivered of a boy, without assistance, rolled him into her huge sleeve, and continued her way to the market; having sold her cabbages, she late in the afternoon walked home with the boy in her sleeve, without being troubled in the least. The girl given away as bride may be claimed by the bridegroom as soon as all the money is paid and conditions fulfilled. This may be when the child is six or seven years old, as also it may be many more years, till she is fifteen or more; but no Fellah girl remains unmarried, no matter how ugly or even disfigured she may be. The sum paid may be less or more, but marry she will, this being the only aim in a Fellah girl's life. At the birth it is the *bride* that is blessed, so if she die young it is a bride who has died, and if she be wondered at for remaining long unmarried, no matter: "God guard her, she is a bride."

Mohammedan tradition says (for Moslems, too, believe in all the patriarchs and holy men of our Bible, but believe them to have been Mobammedans):—The prophet Noah had a daughter; a sheikh came and brought his blessing, and Noah answered: "Upon the choice of your hand," and the sheikh accepted. A second sheikh came and did the same, and a third sheikh came and did the same, and Noah, without reflection, promised his daughter to three different sheikhs. When the daughter was of age, the first sheikh came and married her. Then the second sheikh came, and Noah remembered his promise, and in his distress he turned his she-ass into a girl and gave

her in marriage. The third sheikh came, and Noah turned his bitch into a girl and gave her in marriage. After some time sheikh number two came and asked Noah why he had such a stubborn, stupid daughter, whom he has to beat continually, and who eats barley and grass like an ass. So Noah confessed his fault, and told him how he had dealt rashly when he promised his daughter without remembering his first promise. A few days afterwards sheikh number three came and complained to Noah: "How have you brought up your daughter? She is noisy, almost barking at me when I say anything; is fidgety, and, what is still worse, will eat raw meat, and even turn aside to eat carcasses." In great confusion Noah had to apologise for his hasty and careless promise, and owned that, being held by his promise, he had to change his bitch into woman. But up to this day three kinds of women may be distinguished: those with patches on their knees (which, be it said in passing, as regards the cause attributed, is very rare), who are descendants of the human daughter, the patches being there in consequence of the number of prayers said; those with patches on the back, from the stripes they receive: these are descendants of the she-ass daughter; and those with patches on the breast, from continual rubbing and scratching dog-fashion: they are descendants of the bitch daughter.

#### CHAPTER VI.—MARRIAGE.

Marriage is always preceded by the betrothal, which, as already stated, may be concluded at the birth. A price is fixed between the father of the bride and the father of the bridegroom; the mother, as a rule, has no word in the choice, but she influences her husband, and may even show tender feelings to her future son-in-law. In fact, when the betrothal is concluded, the bridegrooms are seen very much with the future mothers-in-law, herein wholly differing from the secluded townswomen. I have even observed to some degree wooing, though indirectly, and in many cases it has led to nothing, as it hardly ever depends on the inclination of the young people. Again, a boy or a girl may be in love with someone, but no further notice is taken if some nearer of kin be fit to marry. Cousins have the first right to each other; sometimes they may pay less than should they be strangers, but in most cases the sum is as large, and in this case is spent again amongst the members of the family, the father always assuming to himself the lion's share. The price may vary from a

thousand to many thousands of piastres (a dollar is about thirty piastres), so something near forty dollars is very much the lowest price for a girl, but in this case she must be a cousin. In all other cases not less than a hundred dollars is the price first paid. The betrothal is concluded by paying a certain amount and making a sacrifice of a lamb or goat, and reading the opening chapter of the Koran. As often as the bridegroom's father can do it, he pays a sum to the bride's father till the whole amount is paid. Ten or more years may thus pass in paying small sums; various causes—failure, poverty—may hinder anything being paid for many years, and as long as the last piastre remains unpaid the betrothal continues.

Such relatives as may lawfully marry are, as above stated, preferred to any stranger, no matter how wealthy he may be. These are considered unlawful:—The mother, sister, aunt (only father's sister), brother's or sister's daughter, wife's sister (the wife being alive and still the wife, for in a divorce case he may take the sister); neither may a man marry a mother and daughter at the same time. For the woman it is the same as for the other sex, except that she can never have two husbands.

When all the money which the father has to receive is paid, the bride receives a part from her father, but as little as possible. The bridegroom has to bring bracelets of silver, rings, ear or nose rings, always according to his wealth; the number is optional; a bride may receive four or more bracelets, a dozen or more rings—generally very cheap silver rings with a square stone, red, brown, or blue. Besides these ornaments, clothes, consisting of a many-coloured silk gown, silken girdle, and head cloth. Often he has to buy one for the mother or sister. Many male relatives also claim their portions, usually in the form of a silken gown. This custom we find repeatedly mentioned in the Bible history. Joseph gave changes of garments to his brethren; Gehazi, servant of Elisha, ran after Naaman the Syrian, after his being healed from leprosy, to beg for garments; and at a wedding we find Samson, in Judges xiv, 12-20, promising changes of garments if they guess his riddle.

Eight days before the wedding, usually from the first quarter to full moon, invitations are sent round verbally, and the festivities begin. Coffee is made and handed round, water-pipes or *narghilehs* are handed to the smokers, the assembly gathering, if possible, on the flat housetop, the women on one side and the men on the other, each having their songs and dances separate.

The opening songs are begun by the women. One generally sings four lines, slightly touching her mouth and taking the hand away whilst singing; then the ululation follows, and another woman says what she knows, always in the same four lines and in the same tune:—

*Four times repeated, with different words.*



The ululation, so characteristic of Orientals, can be given in something like the above notes; it is, in fact, one long note, with the tongue intervening whilst the sound proceeds. This is invariably the same by Townswomen, among Fellahas and Bedaween, and the most remarkable feature is that the words are alike, that is, they are not adapted to country or town, but more generally to the Bedaween life, and prove that the Arabs of Palestine at least were always influenced by the conquerors of Arabia, who came as Bedaween warriors. Many, if not all, of their songs are mingled with love and war, and weapons.

The men, in a melancholy way, have their all-in-a-row dance, which continues many hours during the night. Five men or more dance or simply lean backwards and forwards, right and left, without losing contact with each other. A leader facing them with a sword, pistol, or club, or only a handkerchief in his hand, sings before them whatever he may please; half of the dancers accompany him in the first line, and half in the second line. Every third note is accompanied by a clap, in which all



FIRST PART.



## SECOND PART.

join at once, the leader reproving and encouraging them all the time. He also shows them how to lean, when to bow, and they follow his movements as minutely as possible. After having repeated the same words six or more times, the leader passes to a new verse; now hardly bowing, now almost reaching the ground. When he does this, he produces guttural tones, *kh-kh-kh*—the same that are used to make a camel kneel down. The women, as seen above, have a merrier tone and livelier dance. One or two dance in the middle of a circle, the whole of the dancers whirling round, now jumping with both feet at once and clapping hands, now joining each other's hands and whirling round. The singer in the middle, armed with a naked sword or pistol or handkerchief, which she swings above her head as she sings a line, the others repeating after her, something as follows:—

We are the fair girls like opening roses,  
 He is favoured by his God who gathers and smells,  
 He is blind and lame who dark ones chooses,  
 Take a white one, thus your joy always tells.

Oh goodly thy rings sound, and thou wilt be mine,  
 The whiteness of thy breasts as snow doth shine,  
 The horses are saddled, the men armed with the sword,  
 The daughter of the liberal is asked for the Son of the Lord.

Such and other songs continue, with occasional firing of guns and drinking of coffee, every evening till the wedding day. The girls take a good deal of liberty, and sing the praises of those they may happen to love, and though it is only here that courting is somewhat carried on, platonic-love marriages are the exception. A girl may be asked by her mother or father if such and such a person would be to her taste, but not as a rule. Flirting, too, may be noticed, but the men are so strict about the reputation of their daughters or wives, that not even the legitimate bridegroom may be allowed to be alone with his bride, and should any serious consequences ensue, death alone can expiate. Girls more often are punished than men, as nothing can prove his guilt if the man deny.

When a woman or girl is proved to have had illegitimate intercourse with any man she is secretly condemned to death by the family council, and the sentence is executed as soon and as quietly as possible; in the first place not to scare the woman, and in the second place to be ready for any denial if the government should try to intervene. Several women whom I know of had failed, and the punishment had been accomplished so secretly that it was not for several months afterwards that I was aware of what had happened. A married woman whose husband was in the army for several years was warned by her brother-in-law that she had to die. It is stated that she calmly awaited her death. Taken to a far-away cave in the mountains, she was simply shot and thrown into the deep recesses of that cave; whilst the executioner, who, as was stated, was the guilty person himself, coolly came and announced the death to the two minor children. The elder daughter, who had been brought up in a German mission school, went back to her native village able to read and write German and Arabic and make different kinds of needlework, but very soon became as ignorant as if she had never spent seven or eight years in school. Again she was reclaimed by French sisters, became a Roman Catholic for two years, and then returned once more to her village to be married to her cousin as a Mohammedan. Neither the Protestant nor the Roman Catholic education had impressed anything on her mind. She was neither a good Christian nor a good Mohammedan, unfit for both town and country. When I last heard of her, she was a servant-girl in Jerusalem, having left her husband in the country. Although it cannot be said that all are of this kind, yet in some way the education of the schools and orphanages is adapted, as it were, neither to the manners and customs nor to the difference in religion. For a girl brought up almost as an European, to be sent back amongst her ignorant and poor relatives, with nothing but her education and clothes, altogether different to those of her own people, can have no good effect, and the time, trouble, and expense thus spent are a loss.

The wedding day finally arrives. All the women have put on their best clothes and gather in the house of the bride, hands and nails dyed red with henna, their eyes painted black with *kohl*. The bride is attired in her best, laden with all her ornaments, consisting chiefly of silver bracelets, silver rings, the chain for the head-gear, and the head-gear laden with her entire fortune; over her clothing a red silk gown is thrown, and a thick

veil covers her face according to the great division to which they belong—the red veil for the Kése, and a red and white veil for the Yeméni. This division originated in Arabia among the northern and southern tribes, and is now carried on traditionally. Over her head is a crown with four upright black ostrich feathers. The veil being impenetrable, she is led out of the house and put on a camel, loaded with the bedding she receives from her father's house; it kneels down to receive the bride. The bedding she thus receives consists of one or more thick bed coverings made of common print in very bright colours, filled with wool and quilted together, several wool cushions, and a thick woollen carpet. The camel is now led towards the house of the bridegroom by some male relative, followed by all relatives and those invited—first the men, talking about any matter, then the women singing. They always take the longest way possible towards her bridegroom, and if some open space be found about the village, all such as have horses go there, galloping round the bride, firing above her as often as possible. A group of young men gather round a musician having a double-barrelled flute, the Neié, playing monotonous airs, whilst the men clap their hands at regular intervals, and closely follow the bride. If the bride is destined to a neighbouring village, the men of both sides are well armed, and ready to fight before giving over the bride; more or less bloody battles often occur, for everyone claims a share from the bridegroom, and if he be not as well armed as his adversaries, for they consider each other as such, he is obliged to pay according to weakness or wealth.<sup>1</sup>

The uncles, cousins, brothers, come first to claim either a red silk gown or a sum of money; next come the youths, who want a lamb or goat, known as the "Lads' sacrifice"; and finally the leader of the camel carrying the bride, who, too, receives a dollar or two. When the procession has arrived at its destination, the camel is made to kneel down, and the sword which the bride held in her hand is now taken away and handed to the bridegroom awaiting at the house door. A jug of water is now placed on her head and she tries to enter without letting her bridegroom

<sup>1</sup> *Marrying Out*.—That the peasantry mostly marry within the village is proved by the likeness to one another of the majority in one village, and the distinction between the types of neighbouring villages. The fight for the bride, if marrying out into another village, would be considered by scholars as survival of "marriage by capture"; but this theory is much overdone, and the moneyed interests explain the contest sufficiently.—C. R. C.



touch the jug, whilst he tries to throw it down with the sword. The jug represents complete submission, and her avoiding the breaking is a foreboding of her avoiding to obey blindly. She now steps into the house without touching the lintel and calling on the "Name of God" to prevent the Jân living there taking hold of her. Whatever she may have received or what she may own is carried by women in the procession and put into the house. The veil is now taken off her face, and her face is embellished with gold and silver paper stuck all over it. The sleeves of the bride and bridegroom are now tied together, whilst one sleeve of the bride is spread out across her like a sack.<sup>1</sup> The invited all pass and congratulate the new pair, at the same time pressing a coin to the forehead of the bride, and letting it go to fall into the sleeve below, saying: "This is in token of friendship to you or to so and so." The female relatives' keen eyes always detect the value of the coin thus dropped and sing the praises of the giver.

Whilst this is going on the men assemble and put up a shooting mark at a distance of from 60 to 100 paces; he who hits the mark is lauded in songs of praise by the women.

The religious part of the ceremony has passed unperceived to the uninitiated. During the procession, whilst some were galloping, firing, or disputing their portion, the mollah and bridegroom and nearest male relative of the bride have gone aside, so far away from indiscreet ears that nothing may be heard. In a low voice the mollah asks the bridegroom if he accepts so and so to be his female, and then, turning to the male representative of the bride, asks if she accepts so and so to be her male; when both have assented, they lay their hands in each other's, and the mollah says the opening chapter of the Koran and the two are legitimate man and wife. This mysterious sort of wedding is meant to avoid sorcerers or such as may be supposed to have a bad influence or do any mischief. The folding of hands is avoided by everybody, as it may hold fast future happiness; should a knot be tied fast during the ceremony, unless the person who tied the knot undoes it no felicity can exist between the couple. There are supposed to be different ways to remove the difficulty, invented, it is useless to say, by cupidity, for it always costs something to find out the real source of the mischief.

Meanwhile some men are busy killing and cooking the lambs

<sup>1</sup> *Tying Clothes*.—The custom of tying the clothes of bride and bridegroom together is very ancient, and found all over the world. The symbolism is clear.—C. R. C.

or goats—they have no special butchers, but every good and liberal man must be a butcher by experience. The meat is cut up into small pieces and put in water in large kettles and set on the fire; other cauldrons with rice are set on, the women's only work being to hand wood and bake the bread. The cooking takes from two to three hours. When it is ready the rice is piled upon the wooden dish or dishes according to the number of the guests, and pieces of meat put on the rice. Six to twelve men now squat round each dish, and having called "on the Name of God," with their hands roll huge balls of rice and shove them into their mouths as fast as possible. In many places the feast-giver distributes the pieces of meat to the guests, beginning with the hip-bone, and handing it over to the most esteemed guest, the next hip-bone to the second, then the breast, the thigh, the leg, and shoulder, and lastly the forearm, which must be broken and with an additional piece of meat handed to someone. If this forearm is given unbroken it is considered a great offence, and susceptible guests may leave the feast. So also care must be taken as to who is ranked first, and therefore in many cases to get out of the dilemma the feast-giver does not distribute any pieces but leaves the distribution to the guests themselves. It is considered as the worst offence to give the last rib with the cartilage adhering to it. The guests never gnaw the meat, but tear it off and eat it, and hand the remainder to someone belonging to the house, as it is not considered polite to eat all.

But during all this part of the feast the women are almost ignored, and only receive the remaining food. The head, feet, and interior parts are never put before the guests, but are always put away by the feast-giver's family, and eaten in the family circle next day. When a man has eaten enough, he says "Thank God"! and asks for water, which is only handed to him after he has been begged to continue eating. When he has drunk, he again says "Thank God"! and anyone present, sometimes all present, everyone in turn, tells him: "Be it wholesome"; and to each one he answers: "May God give you relish"! or something to that effect. Soap is now handed round, and a boy pours water on each one's hands; towels are unknown, each one wipes his hands, as it pleases him, on his mantle or handkerchief. After this coffee again is handed round and the guests disperse, each one thanking the owner of the house by saying: "Thanks to thee, house-owner," or "Thanks to the father of Ehmah," or as the eldest son may happen to be called; whilst

the feast-giver, apologising for the nothingness of his feast, says: "Two healths and strength to your body, this is but one of my duties"; the guest again says: "May God give you plenty of boys," and so on.

On the days preceding the wedding a bard is often invited, and through long hours of the night, sometimes till morning, he sings to his one-string fiddle romances of war and love, and receives four or more dollars for such a night's entertainment. Riddles as at Samson's wedding are put forth, whilst the tobacco bag is handed to the smokers. The new-married couple are now left to themselves, but sometimes the female relatives of the bride remain a few days in charge of the bride's property and see if everything goes on square and fair, especially if the bride be from another village. The bride will not take off her shoes till the bridegroom has bought this favour, by paying a dollar or more.

In case of a widow's marriage, many ceremonies due only to maidens are omitted. A widow is not taken on camel-back, nor is she veiled; dancing should also be omitted, out of respect for the deceased husband; the dowry is generally less, and the festivities very short. In many cases a simple family invitation, a few hours' chanting by the women, and all is done.

Second marriages are frequent, and if the bride be a maiden, the wedding ceremonies are the same as if she was the first wife. As all over the world, the women never agree for many days; the different wives are generally adversaries, as Peninnah and Hannah, Elkanah's wives, were (1 Sam. i, 6). Therefore, two persons who agree very badly are called "like second wives"; the name they have for the wives to each other is most near to the expression "antagonist." Yet again another proverb says: "It is written on Heaven's gate, never a mother-in-law loves her daughter-in-law."

Mohammed provided for the peace of the family, where two wives exist, by keeping each one in a separate house; where the man is wealthy enough to do so, the rule is followed, but in many cases it is impossible, and as a result such a house is cursed with eternal strife. The really wise therefore abstain from second marriages. The causes why second marriages occur are very numerous, amongst which can be named barrenness of one woman, or if she has only daughters, and so forth. Yet here the Fellah woman can influence her husband, either by paying him all possible attention and behaving towards him in a really loving way, or else, if this be not efficacious, by threatening to abandon

his house. This threat may be effectual for ever, or at least for a time.

If the husband is not strongly influenced by his own male relatives, or if his wife has got him so far under her control, he will at times be consoled by the belief that it is thus God's will; for should God want to give him sons he might have such without resorting to a second marriage, and thus avoid the expenses and the strife which he himself also fears. Also, he risks having girls again, and therefore the greater number of Fellahîn have only one wife, and are generally happy thus.

*(To be continued.)*

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