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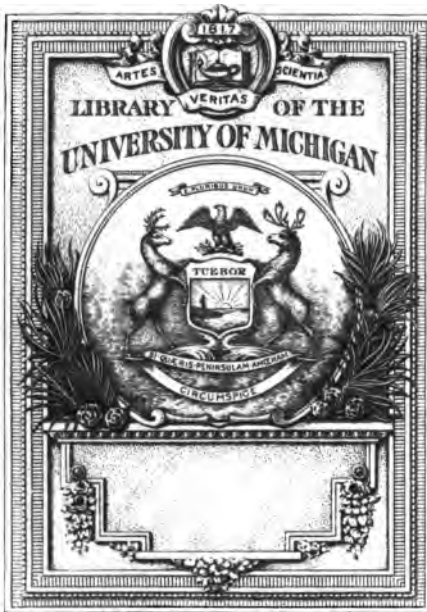
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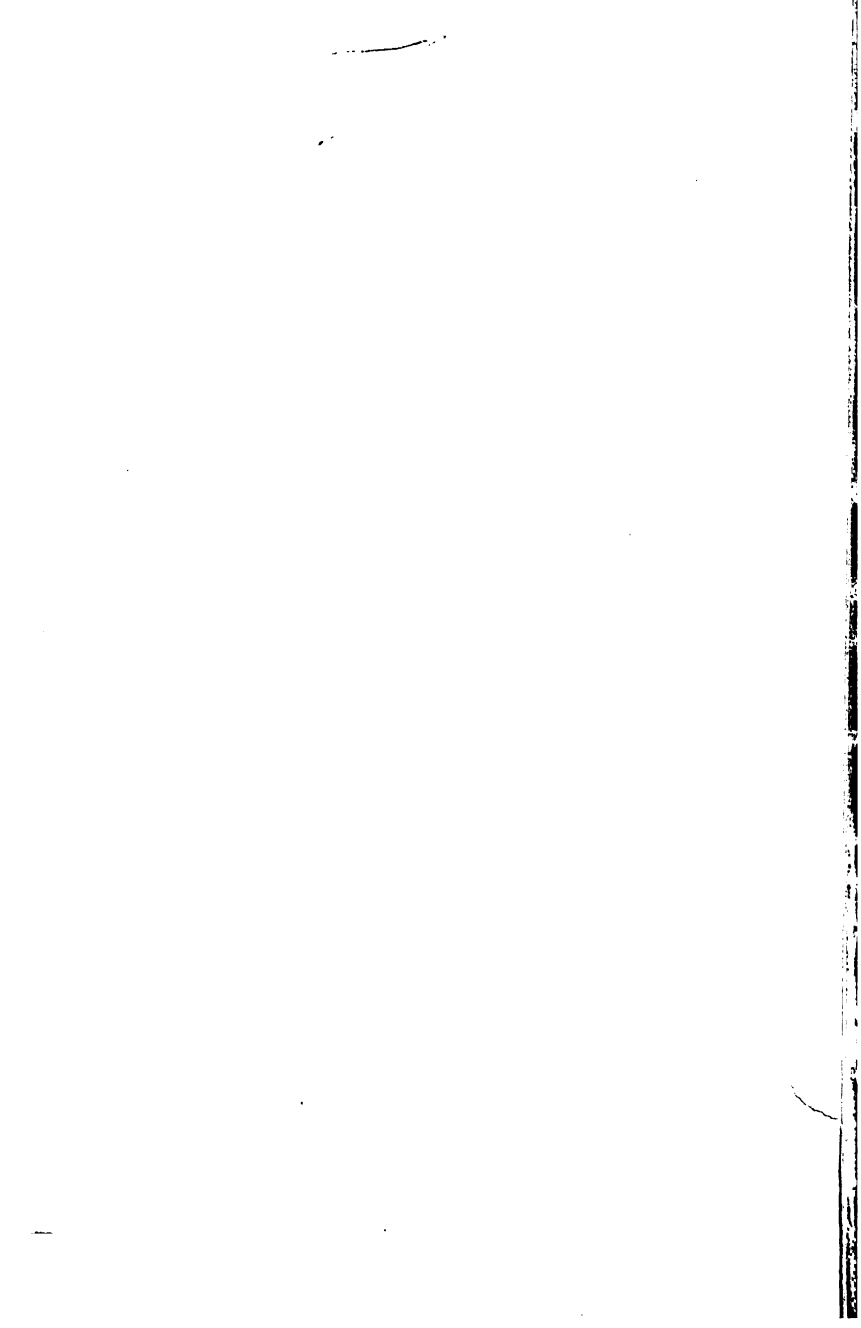
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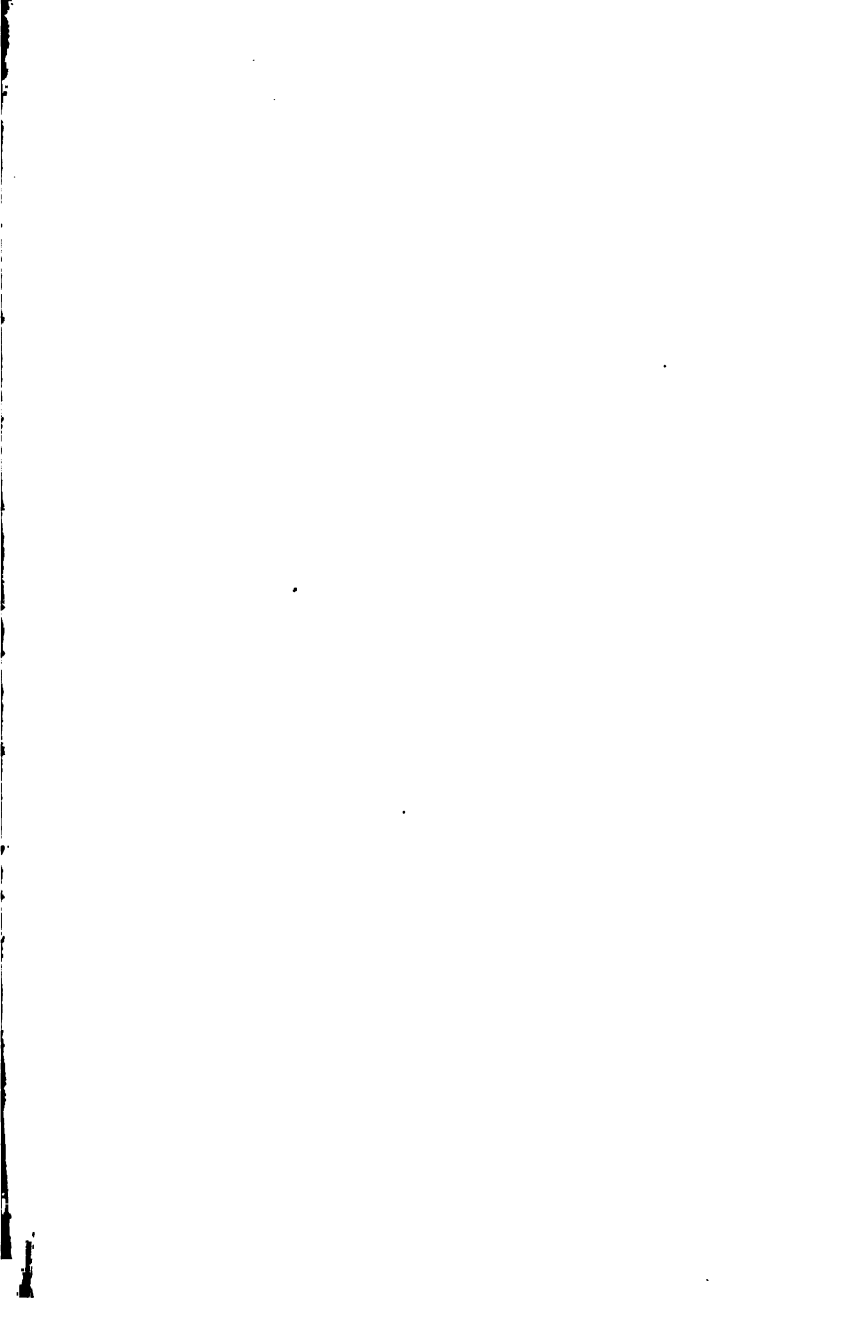
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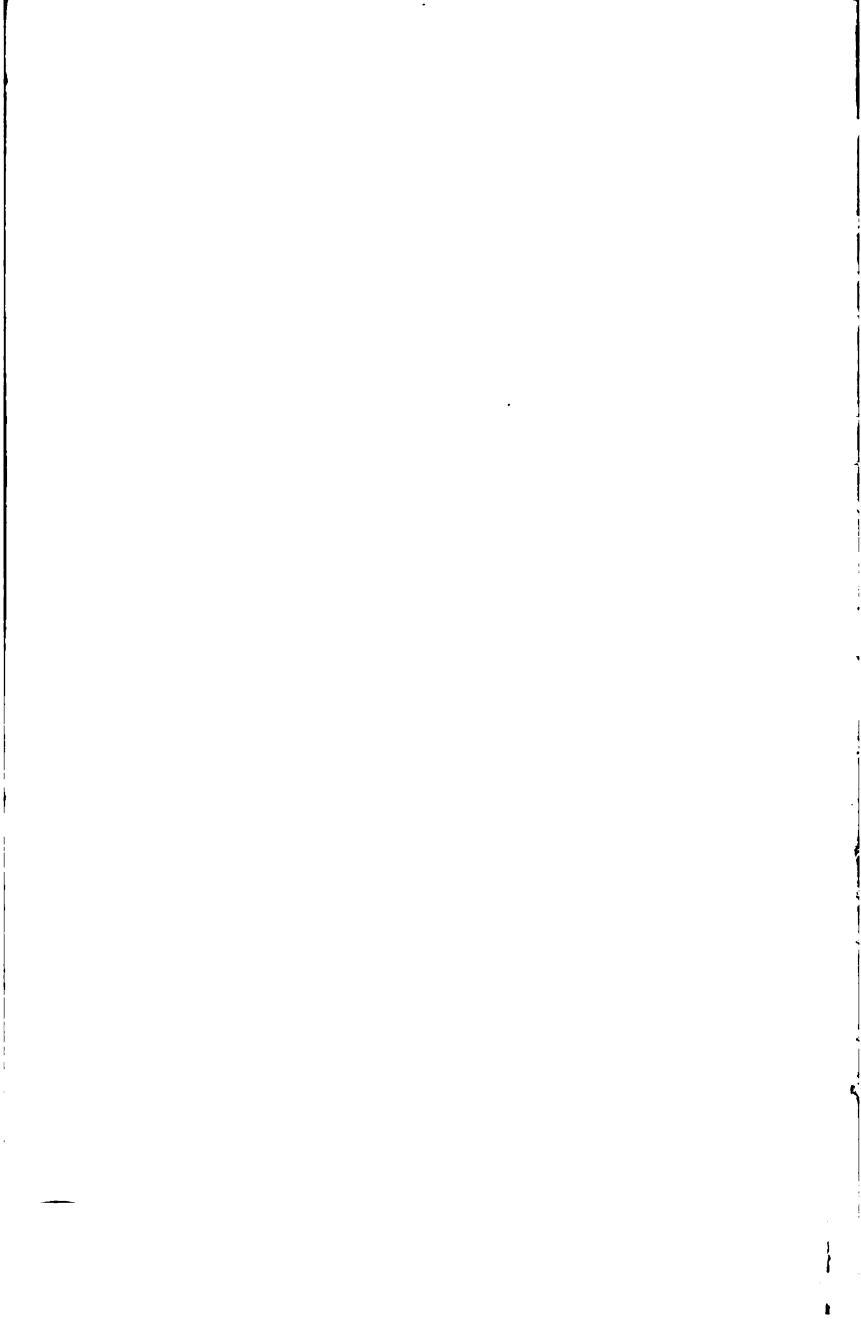
*Turkish Life*



**OUR EUROPEAN  
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**EDITED BY  
WILLIAM HARBUTT DAWSON**

**TURKISH LIFE IN TOWN AND  
COUNTRY**







BULGARIAN WOMEN OF YENIKENY, MACEDONIA



TURKISH LIFE  
IN TOWN AND  
COUNTRY

BY HELEN M. J. GARNETT

ILLUSTRATED

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
NEW YORK AND LONDON  
The Knickerbocker Press

1904



TURKISH LIFE  
IN TOWN AND  
COUNTRY *28* *28*

By LUCY M. <sup>*WY*</sup>J. <sup>*ONE*</sup>GARNETT

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TURKISH LIFE IN TOWN AND  
COUNTRY





# TURKISH LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

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## CHAPTER I

### INHABITANTS AND INSTITUTIONS

**N**O country in the world, perhaps, contains a population so heterogeneous as that of Turkey. In addition to the various peaceable immigrations of Jews and Tartars, Circassians and Gipsies, succeeding waves of invasion from East, West, North, and South have through countless centuries thrown upon its shores and frontiers hordes of conquering aliens, in their turn to be vanquished and subjected by a later arrival. And at the present day we find in Turkey, living side by side in varying degrees of amity or enmity, a dozen different races—Kurds, Circassians and Albanians, Greeks and Vlachs, Armenians and Bulgarians, and many others, all finally subjected by the Ottoman

Turks, or, as they call themselves, Osmanlis. Originally, and as late as the thirteenth century, but a mere wandering band of warriors from Central Asia, numbering some fifteen hundred families, these Ottoman Turks have for the last five hundred years, in the face of enormous difficulties, kept all these diverse subject peoples within the bond of a united Empire.

Specimens of these races and many others may be met with every day in the streets of Constantinople and the large seaports of the Levant; every provincial town of any importance includes representatives of at least half a dozen; and even villages may contain families belonging to two or three different nationalities. Largely as the Turkish element has increased since its first appearance in history, it forms but a small proportion of the population of European Turkey; in the Armenian provinces of Asia Minor it scarcely amounts to a third; and it is only in its first habitat, the province of Konieh—the ancient Iconium—and part of Broussa and of Aidin, that the mass of the population may be considered Turkish. Greeks predominate everywhere on the coasts of the *Ægean*, and in all the large towns, save in Macedonia, are found important Armenian communities. The Turks, during their five centuries of rule over these Christian nationalities of South-eastern Europe, have done little to assimilate them, and still less



have they been assimilated by them, notwithstanding the fact that all Osmanlis, save perhaps those of the peasant class, are, owing to the institution of slavery, of very mixed descent indeed. But though ethnically so mixed, a distinct national type may be readily recognised.

Pride of race is excessive in the Turks, and the habit of domination has been developed by their position as a ruling people surrounded by subject nationalities. As a nation, they display an overweening sense of their superiority to the subject races, having no interests or aspirations in common with them, never acquiring their languages, or attempting to understand their manners and customs, which they may be said to regard generally with a somewhat contemptuous toleration. The social organisation of the Osmanlis themselves is, on the other hand, distinctly opposed to the principles of aristocracy and hereditary rank. The connections even of the Imperial family do not form a noble or privileged class, as Sultan's daughters marry subjects, and the genealogy of their descendants is, in a few generations, lost sight of. The division of estates among all the children of one father, daughters as well as sons, and the Oriental propensity of the Government to confiscate accumulations of money, also prove effectual barriers to the transmission to descendants of family position and affluence.

In Macedonia there are still a considerable number of *Bey*s, or landed gentry, whose ancestors—many of them newly converted Moslems of non-Turkish origin—obtained grants of land at the conquest, which they held as military fiefs; and previous to the introduction in 1867 of the present centralising administration, the country districts of this province were ruled by local magnates, either such Turkish feudatories, or tribal chieftains, such as are still found in Albania and Kurdistan, whose loyalty to the Porte was most easily secured by allowing them entire freedom in dealing with their own vassals.

With the exception of these provincial families, in which the title of *Bey* is hereditary, and who form the landed gentry of the country, the Ottomans have never had an aristocracy properly so called. All the Moslem subjects of the Sultan, whether born freemen or emancipated slaves, are held to be on a level beneath him. And there is nothing in the social system of Turkey to prevent the poorest Osmanli attaining the highest dignity, that of Grand Vizier. On the other hand, a deposed Minister may descend to an inferior employment without either losing caste, or forfeiting any of his civil rights, or becoming ineligible for office when fortune's wheel again revolves for him. To the Oriental mind there is, consequently, nothing extraordinary in Joseph's having risen from the position of a slave

to that of Grand Vizier of the King of Egypt, or in the marriage of handsome and adventurous "widows' sons," or other heroes of fairy tales, with kings' daughters. For the Oriental possessor of wit and audacity may indeed say with Pistol, "The world's mine oyster!"

With few exceptions, family names are unknown among the Turks, a still further proof of the absence from their institutions of class divisions. Men's names are generally either Biblical or historical, and to them is often added a nickname denoting some personal peculiarity, physical or moral, such as "Bajuksis (short-legged) Ali Pasha," "Kuchuk (little) Selim Effendi," "Chapgun (scamp) Ali Bey." The only Turkish title which carries with it any definite rank and precedence is that of *Pasha*, being conferred personally by the Sultan on the man whom he "delighteth to honour." "Bey" and "Effendi" are merely conventional designations as indefinite as our "Esquire" has come to be. "Bey" is generally applied to high government officials, colonels, distinguished persons and their sons. "Effendi" has the same significance as the French *Monsieur*, and is variously applied to princes of the royal house, to Mollahs and Shekhs, to women, and even to native Christians. It is also used in conjunction with other titles, a gentleman being addressed as "Bey Effendi," or, "Pasha Effendi," and a lady

as "Hanum Effendi." *Aga* is applied to petty officers and respectable elderly Turks, and *Tchelebi* ("gentleman") to persons of the better class generally, whether Christian or Moslem. But notwithstanding this absence of hereditary rank and class distinction—perhaps because of it—every Osmanli is by nature an aristocrat, and the same dignity of bearing and courtesy of manner may be met with in the hovel of the peasant as in the *konak* of the Pasha.

For administrative purposes, Turkey is divided into *vilayets*, or provinces, each of which is under the authority of a Vali or civil Governor-General appointed by the Sultan. These *vilayets* are again subdivided into three or four *sanjaks* or departments, administered by sub-governors called *mutessarifs*, and again into *cazas* and *nahiés*, or cantons and communes, the latter being aggregates of from five to ten villages under the administration of a civil official termed the Mudir, a kind of justice of the peace. The capital is not, however, included in any of these *vilayets*, but has a separate jurisdiction. The judicial organisation of the country was entirely remodelled during the last century, and the procedure of the civil code is now based partly on the Code Napoleon and partly on the usages of the ancient courts of the country. Criminal law and its procedure and also commercial law are likewise borrowed from the French judicial system, while

the mercantile law is partly that of France and partly that of Holland. The courts may be classified as the ancient and the reformed; the former, which may be called semi-religious, constitutes part of the office of the Shekh-ul-Islam, and deals chiefly with inheritance, marriage, and divorce, and other matters in which only Mohammedans are concerned; the latter are under the control of the Minister of Justice, an official of the Sublime Porte.

This imitation of French methods, which results in Turkey's having several judges in one court belonging to different nationalities and religions, is by no means such an improvement on the old method as was anticipated by those responsible for its introduction, and leads to perhaps even greater venality and injustice than existed under the old one-judge system. The methods pursued under present Hamidian tyranny have also altogether destroyed the confidence of the people in the new judicial system, the most important legal offices being filled by worthless and incompetent men whose sycophancy and subserviency have gained them the favour of the Sultan or of his satellites. This judicial organisation is supplemented by mixed councils, composed of Christians and Jews as well as of Moslems, such as Chambers of Commerce and Mercantile Marine; the Medjliss, or Municipal Council, composed of representatives of the

various communities, Christian, Moslem, and Jewish, of a city or township; and the Council of Elders, Christian or Jewish, which everywhere regulates the internal affairs of a local community without interference from the Turkish authorities, save when specially appealed to. Though the judicial administration is theoretically independent of the executive, the latter has the power to arrest offenders, if not to try and sentence them, and often makes use of it in most arbitrary fashion, sending to prison individuals against whom no specific charge is made, and who may languish there for months, or even years, unless some influential person is found to agitate the subject of their release. For despite all statutes to the contrary, Turkey is no more constitutionally governed at the present day than it was four centuries ago. And that the exercise of this arbitrary power is officially approved is evident from the fact that it is esteemed an act of Imperial clemency when the Sultan commands the release from durance of all those prisoners "against whom there is no charge"!

Further, to complicate matters, there exists, as above mentioned, in addition to the civil system of jurisprudence, the semi-religious court of the *Sheriat*, based on the *Sunna*, or Traditions, and administered by Kadis, the supreme court of appeal for which is the Shekh-ul-Islam. In the case of Moslems this



THE ENTRANCE TO THE SUBLIME PORTE

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law may be applied to all transactions, but its peculiar importance is due to the fact that all questions affecting real property, whatever be the religion or nationality of the litigants, must be decided according to its principles. The functionaries who administer this religious law belong to the higher ranks of the important body of Moslem legists termed collectively Ulema (of which the Shekh-ul-Islam is the head), who constitute the most conservative section of Moslem society. The order of the Ulema is divided into three classes, composed respectively of the Imâms and other inferior functionaries of the mosques, the Muftis, or Doctors of Law, and the Kadis and Mollahs, or Judges, the last two categories being subdivided into a number of intermediate ranks according to the special functions attached to the court of the *Sheriat*. It must, however, be borne in mind that the Ulema do not constitute a sacerdotal caste, or even an ecclesiastical body, save so far as law in Moslem countries is based on the Koran. There is, indeed, no country in Europe in which the clerical element has so little, or the legal element so great, authority. The avarice and venality of the Muftis, Mollahs, and Kadis are proverbial, and form one of the worst features of Turkish administration, few judges being free from the reproach of partiality and corruption.

The actual ministers of public worship, such

as the Imâms who pronounce the public prayers, the Hodjas, Muezzims, and others, constitute but a subordinate section of the Ulema. The Imâms, who form the nearest approach to a beneficed clergy, pass an examination, and are appointed to their office by the Shekh-ul-Islam, their chief function being to conduct public worship in the mosques. The royal mosques have several Imâms, the chief of whom has as his subordinates all the other Imâms, the Hodjas, Khatibs, Muezzims, and other ministers. An Imâm should be married, and may bequeath his office to his son, who, if unlettered, appoints a deputy to perform his duties. This lower class of the Ulema, who, like the Softas, are distinguished by a white turban bound round the fez, and by wearing the old Turkish dress, are drawn from the lower middle class of Turkish society and exercise little or no influence in their parishes. An Imâm lives rent-free in a house attached to the mosque, and receives a very small annual stipend eked out by fees for teaching in the *mekteb*, or elementary school, issuing licences, officiating at circumcisions, weddings, and funerals, and washing the dead. An Imâm must also always accompany the officers of justice on making a domiciliary visit, as no arrest can be made in a house unless the police follow this official across the threshold.

As is evident from the foregoing, there is in Islam no distinction between Church and State,

and the Shekh-ul-Islam, though the highest ecclesiastical dignitary, is at the same time but an official, appointed and dismissed by the Sultan, his importance being due rather to his legal standing as judge of the highest court of appeal than to his religious office. For though on occasions of ceremony he appears at the head of the Ulema, he has in no sense the authority of a Christian archbishop, and is, indeed, often regarded with contempt as a mere subservient tool of the Padishah, who, as he can legally issue no decree without the formal sanction of the Shekh-ul-Islam, naturally chooses for the office a man not likely to oppose his policy.

The Moslem era used by the Turks dates from the Flight (Hejira) of Mohammed from Mekka to Medina on the night of the 15th-16th July, 622 A.D. The national calendar is lunar, the year being divided into twelve months, consisting alternately of twenty-nine and thirty days, and comprising, therefore, only three hundred and fifty-four days; and as no complementary days are added to adjust this calendar in accordance with astronomical events, national anniversaries and religious festivals make, in the course of every thirty-three Turkish years, the round of the seasons. The peasantry, however, for ordinary purposes in their reckoning of time, adhere to the ancient and more convenient practice of dividing the year into two seasons, summer

and winter, the former being inaugurated by the great Nature-festival of Khidrelie, equivalent to St. George's Day, and the latter by that of Kasim, held late in the autumn. The hours of the day are still reckoned, in ancient Oriental fashion, from sunset to sunset, which is estimated with more or less exactitude. Many of the watches used in Turkey are made with two dials, one for Turkish and the other for European time, the former, to be correct, requiring daily regulation; and one may often hear the seemingly odd question asked: "At what time is noon to-day?" In Turkey, however, few people require to catch trains or steamboats; time-tables are also as often ignored as consulted; and punctuality is not a virtue cultivated by the Oriental. On the majority of Turkish railways there is but one train a day up or down the line, and intending passengers will arrive at the platform at any hour, and seated on their baggage, will wait calmly and patiently — sometimes, it may be, for the best part of a day and night — for the next train. *In-shallah* (Allah permitting) they will ultimately arrive at their destination.

With reference to the institution of polygamy, though a Mohammedan is legally entitled to marry four wives, and to be the owner of as many female slaves as he can afford to keep, an Osmanli household is by no means, as is generally believed, composed of a large number of

women, all of whom stand in wifely relations to their lord and master. As a matter of fact, at the present day, among Turks of the labouring class, one wife is the rule, and, among those of the wealthier classes, more than one is the rare exception; for besides social opinion and other considerations which make a plurality of wives undesirable, there is also the grave question of expense. A second wife means an extra suite of apartments, an extra slave, or train of slaves, according to her rank,—for each *hanum* must have her own special attendants,—and an extra allowance of pin-money, for a Turkish bride rarely brings a dowry to her husband. There is, besides, no great superabundance of women in the country, notwithstanding the influx of slaves; and every mother of a marriageable girl naturally prefers to see her daughter become a *Bash Kadin*, or first wife, as she takes rank before later-married spouses. Lack of progeny by the first consort is often the reason which induces a Turk to incur extra expense, and the risk of having his domestic peace disturbed, by taking a second wife. He might, of course, divorce the first, if so minded; but in that case he would be obliged to pay to her the sum stipulated in the settlement, and incur the odium attaching to such a course of action. Two wives, indeed, seem to be the extreme limit nowadays, and only once during my long residence in different parts of

the country had the opportunity of visiting a harem containing more than one. For though great facilities appear at first sight to be given to a man in the matter of divorce, women are, on the other hand, safeguarded from a too arbitrary exercise of this prerogative by certain wise regulations which to a great extent modify such facilities in practice. "The curse of Allah," said the Prophet, "rests on him who capriciously repudiates his wife." And besides religious and social restrictions, a serious obstacle to divorce is offered by the *Nekyah*. This is the settlement upon the wife at the betrothal of a considerable sum of money, to be paid to her in the event of such dismissal from his roof, and without the payment of which no divorce can legally take place. A wife can also claim her release, together with the payment of the dowry, for various reasons, among which are his desertion, cruelty, or refusal to maintain her in the degree of comfort to which she is entitled. If, however, the wife, without such adequate reason, and contrary to the desire of her husband, requests a divorce, she quite rightly obtains it only by foregoing her dower.

The legal rights conferred upon women by the law of Islam are superior to those generally enjoyed under Christianity. An Osmanli woman is, as a daughter, entitled on the decease of her father to inherit his property in common with

her brothers, in a proportion determined by law according to the number of his children. As a wife, she has the uncontrolled possession and disposal both of the wealth of which she was possessed before marriage, and of that which may subsequently accrue to her. She can inherit property without the intervention of trustees, and dispose of it either during her lifetime or at her death as she pleases. No doctrine of "coverture" exists for her; she can sue or be sued independently of her husband, and also sue him or be sued by him. A husband is, however, legally bound to support his wife and her slaves or servants according to her rank and his means, and to furnish her with a suitable residence. And as to the question of the custody of children, with us, much-discussed, this was settled for the Moslems at the outset by Mohammed, who decreed that a son must remain with his mother so long as he requires her care, and a daughter until she arrives at maturity. Should the mother die while any of her children are still infants, the right of custody reverts to her female relatives, the maternal grandmother having the first right, and on her death, and failing a sister of suitable age, the aunts.

Turkish women thus already possess all the legal personal and proprietary rights necessary to give them a social position equal, if not superior, to that of European women generally; and

the objection to their emancipation from harem restraints is consequently one of custom and prejudice rather than of religious law, the seclusion of women and the veiling of the face being immemorial social usages borrowed from other neighbouring Oriental races, and not institutions peculiarly Turkish, and no religious law would therefore be contravened by a change in these merely social customs. This question of the emancipation of women is, indeed, one which will, in all probability, have to be faced by the Turks in the not far distant future, and many men belonging to the enlightened "Young Turkey" party are already in favour of giving to the women of their nation the social and industrial freedom enjoyed by their Christian sisters. Serious difficulties of all kinds stand, however, in the way of this very desirable reform, and one of the most important of these is the fact that the abolition of the harem system must necessarily entail the abolition of domestic slavery, its inseparable adjunct. All kinds of restrictions, legal and customary, which now make for morality in the family relations of the Turks would, under the new conditions, be thrown aside, and the result, in the opinion of those competent to judge, would inevitably be—for a generation at least—great social laxity, if not licence. For if, as is the case, only a very small minority of Turkish women are as yet fitted by education for such new con-



ditions, the same may be said of Turkish men. And in a city like Constantinople, the centre of a great military system, suddenly to make responsible for their own maintenance thousands of ignorant women hitherto protected and maintained in private houses, and for the most part unaccustomed to any but the most desultory household duties, would be to create a social evil now happily non-existent. A change so far-reaching in its consequences could, indeed, take place without great resulting evil to the nation at large only by such preparatory organisation for the wage-employment of the emancipated as one can hardly expect to see carried out in Turkey.

Difficult of realisation as such a measure of reform is of itself, some of its advocates among the "Young Turkey" enthusiasts appear to add unnecessarily to its complications by requiring that their emancipated womenkind shall be at once placed on a level with their self-supporting sisters in the West. It seems a case of "more haste, less speed"; for the Armenian and Greek women of Turkey, many of whom are now at liberty to follow various industries and professions, enjoyed at the beginning of last century even less personal liberty than their Moslem sisters. The change has, however, come about gradually, and has been chiefly due to the spread of education during the past century among the men of these Christian nationalities. Economic

conditions also differ widely in East and West; and as there is no such surplus population of women as, for instance, in Great Britain and the United States, domestic service would afford sufficient employment for women of the lower class of the newly emancipated, while for those belonging to the educated classes there would be little necessity for their becoming bread-winners, save, perhaps, as teachers. For as it is customary for Turks to marry young, old bachelors being almost as rare as old maids, all native girls would naturally marry under the new system as they have done under the old. So long, however, as Sultan Abdul Hamid wears the sword of Othman, no "emancipation" of his women subjects can be looked for, any radical change of this nature being entirely foreign to his policy.





## CHAPTER II

### LANDS AND DWELLINGS

REAL estate in Turkey falls into three categories: freeholds (*mulk* or *memlouké*), Crown lands (*mirie*), and Church lands (*vakouf*). Freehold lands are the absolute property of their owner, and they may be held by Christians or foreigners, as well as by Osmanlis. They do not, however, form a large proportion of the area of the country, owing to the difficulties encountered in establishing safe titles, as it is no unusual thing in Turkey for title-deeds to be forged, destroyed, or otherwise interfered with. The Crown lands include the private property of the Sultan and his family, the lands set aside for the support of the administration, the forests, hill pasturages, and waste lands, together with the very considerable area originally granted as military fiefs, which reverted to the Crown on the abolition of this system of land tenure. Portions of these waste lands are allowed to be reclaimed by the peasants, who, after paying tithes on the produce for

twenty years, obtain a *tapou*, or title-deed, from the authorities constituting them legal owners. But, although nominally safeguarded by special enactments, and placed under Government supervision, this reclaiming of waste lands proves a somewhat hazardous speculation, leading not infrequently to litigation and the ruin of the squatter, owing to the corrupt practices of the Tapou-memours, or Registrars, who generally settle any disputes in favour of the claimant with the longest purse. The holders of these Crown lands also labour under the disadvantage of not being allowed to sell, transfer, or mortgage their estates without a licence from the authorities, nor may they be converted into *vakouf* property without express permission from the Sultan.

*Vakouf* lands are those dedicated to Allah — in other words, those whose revenues are applied to the support of religious establishments, mosques, and the charitable institutions generally attached to them, such as theological colleges, almshouses, baths, and also to the maintenance of aqueducts and fountains. No official report is available of the extent of these *vakouf* lands, but it is estimated at as much as two thirds of the whole area of the country. Large grants of land were made at the Conquest, not only to the mosques and their dependencies, but also to the monastic establishments of the Dervishes, who accompanied the victorious

armies into the battlefield, and private munificence has constantly added to the original endowments. For the piety, as well as the vanity, of Moslems has ever incited to the erection and endowment of mosques and beneficent institutions, in the one case as a religious duty well pleasing to Allah; in the other, as the surest method of obtaining the praise of neighbours and of posterity. Such acts of munificence were formerly frequent on the part of private individuals, though in more recent times they have been practised only by members of the Imperial family and by Grand Viziers. Church lands have also been very largely increased from a third source. As these estates and the tenants living on them enjoy special privileges, a Moslem freeholder,—or, for that matter, a Christian,—worried by tax-gatherers, will sell his land to a mosque for perhaps one tenth of its real value, retaining the right of hereditary lease, and becoming tenant at a fixed rent, a transaction by which both he and the “Dean and Chapter” are the gainers, and only the Government and its corrupt officials the losers. For the mosque receives a large interest for its trifling investment of capital, and has besides the reversion in default of direct heirs to the vendor; while the tenant on *vakouf* land pays no taxes, is safe from extortion by Government officials and persecution from private creditors.

Inheritance and partition of Crown and Church property are regulated respectively by Imperial *firmans*, or permits, and the special ordinances of ecclesiastical laws; but freehold land falls within the jurisdiction of the local courts. The laws regarding inheritance in Turkey are exceedingly complicated, and their complexity is aggravated by the admixture of the Christian and Moslem elements, and by the three different kinds of land tenure above described. The absence of any law or custom of primogeniture, and the consequent division of property among all the children, together with the high death-duties on landed property, tend to the diminution and impoverishment of Turkish estates, which are often heavily and hopelessly mortgaged. Formerly, almost every village in Turkey had its own common and forest, in which the peasant proprietors had the right to cut wood, burn charcoal, and rent the pasturage annually to the nomad herdsmen and shepherds—a great resource to the rural population, though most destructive to the forests. However, all this was changed in the organisation of what is known as the *vilayet* system, when the forests and pasturages were, quite rightly, placed under Government supervision. For though the laws regulating the new arrangement were excellent on paper, the acts of injustice and the abuses connected with their

administration have proved most prejudicial to the rural population.

One of the predominating characteristics of the Osmanlis is their instinctive appreciation of splendid sites, leafy shades, cool fountains, and wide horizons. This passion for the picturesque has led them, wherever they have settled, to choose for their abodes the most charming situations, commanding views unrivalled at once in grandeur and beauty. Besides peopling almost exclusively the seven hills on which Stamboul, like Rome, is built, the Turks have taken possession of many a fair spot on the shores of the Bosphorus and the *Ægean*. At Smyrna they inhabit the slopes of Mount Pagus below the ruined walls of the ancient citadel. At Broussa the Turkish quarter climbs the steep sides of the Bithynian Olympus; and at Salonica it commands a magnificent panorama of mountain, plain, and landlocked bay. The streets of a Turkish quarter are consequently for the most part steep, and are also exceedingly irregular, often unpaved, ankle-deep in dust in dry weather, and running torrents during rain. They are, however, cleaner than the native Christian and Jewish quarters, owing partly to the presence of the scavenger dogs, and also, no doubt, to the greater space in the courtyards and gardens for the bestowal of refuse. For in provincial towns every house, even the poorest, has its own courtyard, if not

garden, and its overshadowing mulberry, plane, or acacia tree. Each dwelling, too, is completely detached, so that a considerable space of ground is covered by a comparatively sparse population. The dwellings of the artisans and working classes generally, differ from those of the same rank belonging to other nationalities only in having latticed blinds on their streetward windows, being two-storied cottages with an outside staircase and broad landing covered by the pent of the roof.

The abode of a middle-class family is much more spacious. It is generally surrounded on three sides by garden and courtyard, the fourth abutting on the street, over which the upper story projects about two feet. The walls are often coloured a deep red, which contrasts well with the unpainted woodwork of the windows and latticed screens that cover two thirds of the panes. Tall cypresses, mulberry trees, and acacias cast broad shadows over house and garden, and under them blossom in luxuriant confusion, little disturbed by the unmethodic mind of an Oriental gardener, the rose and jessamine, orange and pomegranate, tuberose and carnation, side by side with the leek and tomato, brinjal and melon, cabbage and pumpkin. Two rooms on the ground floor, having a separate entrance, constitute the *selamlik*, in which the husband receives his men visitors, and the rest consists of the kitchen and offices. The upper story forms



the *haremlik*, or private apartments of the family, to which no men visitors, save very near relatives, are admitted, and its furniture consists chiefly of hard divans, carpets, and cushions.

A *konak*, as the dwelling of a family of position is termed, is generally, whether in town or country, a somewhat rambling, irregularly built edifice, often forming two entirely separate establishments of *selamlık* and *haremlık*, connected by a corridor known as the *mabeyn*—an Arabic word signifying a space between two objects. Some of the older *konaks* on the banks of the Bosphorus are built entirely of wood, with the exception, perhaps, of the marble pillars of the façade, which have probably been taken from the ruins of some ancient edifice; and the overhanging upper stories, with their projections and recesses, their elegant kiosks and terraces, their bright colouring and verdant setting, present a very picturesque appearance. The lattices which guard the windows of the *haremlıks* are in many cases furnished with circular openings through which the *hanums*, themselves unseen, may gaze from their divans on the ever-changing scene—caiques, steamers, and ships of all nations borne on the swift, deep current. A towing-path only a few feet wide separates the houses from this wonderful waterway, and is here and there raised like a bridge to form a water-gate, through which the caiques reach a staircase in the base-

ment of the house. The larger division, occupied by the women, contains all the private apartments of the family; while in the other, in which the service is performed entirely by men, are the rooms used by the Effendi or Pasha for the transaction of business, the purposes of hospitality, and formal receptions. The key of the door leading to the *selamlık* is naturally kept by the Effendi, who alone has any lawful use for it; while a kind of butterfly hatch in the form of a revolving cupboard in the party-wall of the *mabeyn* serves for all verbal communication between the personnel of the two departments, and for the transmission of provisions to, and of dishes from, the harem kitchen when a meal is to be served therefrom in the *selamlık*.

The *haremlık* has besides, of course, its separate entrance through a courtyard, and its garden. Like the generality of Eastern houses, the front door opens into a large hall, which gives access to rooms on each side, and has several windows at the opposite end. One of these rooms is the *kahvé ojak*, or "coffee-hearth," where a shrivelled old woman may always be found presiding over a charcoal brazier, ready to boil coffee at a moment's notice; the others are storerooms and sleeping apartments for the inferior slaves. The kitchen, which is very spacious, is generally an outbuilding. One side of it is occupied by the great arched cooking-stove with its numerous

little grates, on which the contents of brightly burnished copper pans or earthenware vessels simmer over charcoal fires, fanned by a negro woman with a turkey's wing. A wide staircase leads from the entrance hall to the upper floor, the centre of which is generally occupied by a spacious anteroom, on which the other apartments open. In some of the older mansions the *divan-khané*, or reception-room, contains a large alcove, the floor of which is raised about a foot above the level of the rest of the apartment. A low divan furnishes its three sides, and in the most comfortable corner, which is the *hanum's* habitual seat, is a pile of flat rectangular and somewhat hard cushions, and here may also be found her hand-mirror and *chekmejé*, or jewel-box. If the *divan-khané* has not such a recess, one end and half the two adjoining sides of the room are usually occupied by a continuous sofa, and the fourth wall is furnished with a marble-topped console table, surmounted by a mirror and candelabra, and flanked on either side by shelves in niches containing rosewater sprinklers, sherbet goblets, and other objects at the same time useful and ornamental. A few common European chairs stand stiffly against the wall in every space left vacant, and one or two walnut tray-stools, or coffee-tables, inlaid with mother of pearl, are placed near the divan to hold ash-trays, matches, and other trifles.

Bedsteads are not used by the Turks. Each room contains a large cupboard, built into the wall, in which the bedding is piled during the day, and at night the slaves come in, when summoned, to make up the beds on the floor. Other bedroom requisites, in the shape of washstands, dressing-tables, and wardrobes, are dispensed with as superfluous. For every-day ablution there is a small washing-room with a hole in the floor for the water to escape through, and if the *hanum* would wash her hands and face only, a slave brings the ewer and basin, and pours the water over her hands. For special ablutions, she will go either to her own private *hammam*, or to the public baths. She "does her hair," or has it done for her, seated cross-legged in her corner of the divan; and the old walnut-wood chests and coffer in her treasure-room suffice to store her gauzes and brocades, her silks and embroideries. Here also may often be found priceless treasures in metal, porcelain, glass, and gems, which, were they displayed in the reception-rooms, would add greatly to the cheerfulness of their appearance. But such is not the practice of the Osmanlis, who retain in many of their habits the characteristics of their nomadic ancestors.

All Turkish houses are, however, constructed with a view to the summer; and winter, though in the north of Turkey especially often severe,

seems to be hardly at all provided against. The walls seem to be all windows, and the arrangements for heating are most inadequate. Very often there is but a brazier, in the form of a shallow brass or copper pan containing charcoal half buried in wood ashes, and placed either on an elegantly shaped receptacle of wrought metal, or on a heavy stand of polished wood, from two to three feet square, and about eight inches high, which occupies the centre of the room. A somewhat curious warming apparatus is the *tandour*, which, though fallen into disuse in the capital and in the European provinces, may still be seen in Asia Minor, even in the houses of Europeans. It consists of a kind of four-legged square table made of deal, having a shelf, covered with tin, a few inches from the foot, in the centre of which is placed a pan of charcoal guarded by a metal screen. Over all is thrown a large thickly wadded quilt, which the ladies,—for this is an eminently feminine luxury,—seated on two sides of the *tandour* in the angle of the divan, draw over their knees. The use of American stoves is, however, increasing every year, and the picturesqueness of many of the old *konaks* is destroyed by the hideous black stove-pipes which emerge from the windows or walls and climb up to the roofs.

Such a mansion as I have just described may be found in every provincial town, and is a fair

specimen of the average dwelling of a Turkish family of good position even in the capital and its suburbs, if they do not happen to be exceptionally wealthy, or to have been infected with the *à la Franca* mania for imitating European fashions. There are, however, in the capital and its suburbs a considerable number of new Turkish houses handsomely and solidly built, and in outward appearance not to be distinguished—except by the latticed blinds at the windows—from the dwellings of Europeans.

Native costume and native furniture, however rich and varied in colour and material, never offend a cultured Western eye when used in accordance with Oriental customs, as evidenced by the varied tints to be found in Oriental porcelains, textiles, and embroideries. But the Oriental mind generally seems to get confused in endeavouring to assimilate its own notions of magnificence and luxury to those suggested by Western upholstery and French fashions; and this bewilderment finds expression in combinations of material and colour calculated to harrow the soul of the least æsthetic. Crimson is trimmed with scarlet, and blue with violet, shabby chintz hangs side by side with the richest brocade and velvet, and a glaring German hearthrug in the worst possible taste may be found spread side by side with a priceless Persian carpet.

An indispensable adjunct of a native house of

any importance is a Turkish bath, of course on a small scale, but always consisting, like the public baths, of three apartments, one within the other. Bathing accommodation of some kind may indeed be found in every Turkish dwelling, even if it is but a tiny cabinet furnished with a drain for carrying off the water. Of the public baths, which are resorted to by all classes, several are to be found in every large town, and in the capital they are very numerous. A few—the mineral baths at Broussa, for instance, and some of the older ones at Stamboul—offer fine examples of this species of architecture, and are much resorted to by all classes. The charges made at these public baths are extremely moderate, and for the use of the poor there are numerous others attached to the mosques and other pious foundations at which they may perform their ablutions gratuitously.

Other institutions peculiar to Oriental wayfaring and commercial life are the bazaars and khans. The former term, though derived from a Turkish word signifying “to bargain,” is used by the Turks to denote market-places only, such as the Baluk Bazaar, or fish-market; the term *Tcharshi* being generally applied to streets devoted exclusively to the sale of one kind of goods; while the same term, or *Bezesten*, designates the great walled and roofed enclosures which constitute the chief emporiums of retail

trade in the East, varying in size and architectural merits with the importance of the town, of which they usually constitute the commercial centre. The most familiar examples of these are the *Mis'r Tcharshi*, or Cairene Bazaar, and the *Bezesten*, or Grand Bazaar of Stamboul. This Grand Bazaar forms, as it were, a city within a city, containing arcaded streets, tortuous and mysterious lanes and alleys, squares and fountains, all enclosed within high protecting walls, and covered by a vaulted roof, studded with hundreds of cupolas, through which penetrates a subdued light more favourable, it must be admitted, to the vendor than to the purchaser. Here, as elsewhere, each commodity has its special habitat. In one quarter are found embroideries in gold and silver, brocades and damasks, with gauzes of silk, cotton, and linen from the looms of Broussa; in another are displayed specimens of all the rugs and carpets woven in nomad tent, in village hut, and in town factory between Smyrna and Sarmarcand; while in a third the jewellers and dealers in pearls and precious stones conceal, rather than display, in diminutive shops their valuable stock-in-trade.

The khans or caravanserais, though supplying the place of inns or hostelries, have little in common with such in the European acceptance of the term, as they supply neither food nor at-





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tendance to those making use of them. The capital contains a considerable number of these edifices, and one or more may be found in every large town, while others have been erected at various points on the great highways of the interior. Not a few of these hostelries owe their origin to the munificence of the pious, this provision for the accommodation of the weary wayfarer being included in the list of "good works" required of Moslems. Among such may be mentioned the "Lady's Khan" on the road between Ioaninna and Mezzovo, buit by the widow of a famous Suleiman Pasha, together with the beautiful fountain near it, and the Khan of the Validé in Stamboul, adjoining the mosque of that name, founded by the able regent Tarkham Sultana, mother of Mohammed IV. The architecture of this latter vast caravanserai, which is considered a sort of model for such edifices, is quite conventual in character. A great arched gateway gives access to a quadrangle containing a tree-shaded fountain, and surrounded by stables and storehouses for merchandise, above which extend three superimposed cloistered galleries on which open all the cell-like apartments. These lodgings, for the use of which a very trifling charge is made, contain no furniture, as all Oriental travellers carry with them their own bedding, rugs, and utensils, and the charge made for accommodation is correspondingly small.

The further wants of the guests are easily supplied at the coffee-stall and cook-shop on the premises, or in the numerous establishments of the kind with which the neighbourhood abounds. In this and the other large khans at Stamboul, Smyrna, and Salonica may be found collected a motley throng of strangers—Moslem, Christian, and Jew, pilgrims and traders, from every part of the Ottoman Empire, with their merchandise, their donkeys and mules, horses and camels.





## CHAPTER III

### TOWN LIFE

LIFE in the capital and in the large seaport cities of Smyrna and Salonica presents certain aspects not discoverable in the towns of the interior, where the population, though mixed, is of a less cosmopolitan character, and social conditions generally are less affected by European influence. But even in these great cities the difference so far, at least, as the vast mass of the inhabitants, and especially the Turkish section of them, are concerned, is superficial and external rather than essential. For all the various nationalities, Moslem, Christian, and Jewish, of which these cosmopolitan populations are made up, live in separate quarters of the cities, and their members, after transacting business with each other during the day—honestly or otherwise, according to their several codes of commercial morality—retire at sunset into worlds totally different, and divided from one another by impassable barriers of language, religion, and tradition, national aspiration and social custom;

the life and thought of a mere fraction only of each section of the native races being in the least influenced by those of the foreigners with whom they come into daily contact. Moslem women and girls may, for instance, occasionally avail themselves of a tramcar when on an expedition, but the car itself is, in deference to Turkish prejudice, divided into harem and selamlik, the women sitting apart from the men. At Smyrna and Salonica the Turks form but a comparatively small section of the population. In the capital, however, the Osmanlis are exceedingly numerous, peopling almost the whole of Stamboul, as well as many suburbs on both sides of the Bosphorus; and, notwithstanding the heterogeneous character of its inhabitants generally, one can never here lose sight of the fact that the Turks are the ruling race, and that Constantinople is the capital of the Moslem world.

The upper classes of Osmanli society at the present day may be said to consist almost entirely of the families of Government officials and military men, as there seems to be no career open to a Turkish youth of good family but the army or the civil service, and almost every member of the *jeunesse dorée* of Stamboul who has not selected the army as his profession looks forward to a post in one of the numerous Government offices. For the Turks, generally speaking, are not active or intelligent as business men, and



TURKS IN THE CEMETERY OF EYOUB, OVERLOOKING THE GOLDEN HORN

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venture little into speculative commercial transactions. One never, for instance, hears of them as bankers or as members of companies formed for working mines, constructing railways, or any other enterprise involving risk, and requiring for its success business capacity as understood in the West. The Osmanlis, being naturally of a lethargic disposition, and finding the subject nationalities possessed of all the business qualities in which they are themselves deficient, have, ever since the Conquest, fallen into the habit of using their subjects as tools, who acted, worked, and thought for them in an irresponsible fashion; and thus they appear to have finally lost the capacity of themselves fulfilling all the functions which should naturally devolve upon a homogeneous people.

The national movements among the subject races of Turkey during the past century having inspired the Porte with a general distrust of members of these nationalities as State officials, their employment in such capacities has yearly diminished, and at the present day there are in the higher Government departments more posts filled by men of Turkish descent than ever before. The country has nominally a Civil Service entered by examination from the Government colleges, open to all Turkish subjects, and offering regular promotion. But, like many other Turkish institutions of recent date, it is merely

nominal, and all appointments are made by a process termed *hatir*, or "favour," and in all important cases by Palace favour. A few years ago a body was constituted with the title of "Commission for the Selection of Functionaries," but it has never been allowed to do more than *recommend* candidates for vacant posts, and its recommendations generally receive but scant attention. Posts in the Government service are treated as objects of commercial speculation, and the favourites at Yildiz Kiosk, whose own tenure of office is always precarious, being anxious to make hay while the sun shines, find it to their interest not only to sell them to the highest bidder, but to sell them as often as possible.

The Sublime Porte and its dependencies have perhaps larger clerical staffs than the Governments of any other country, but admittance to a department of the public service by no means implies that a young hopeful enters upon regular duties with a fixed salary and expectation of certain future promotion. Things are not managed in such prosaic fashion in Turkey. The bureau to which he is attached constitutes for him, at the outset, at least, a resort of the nature of a club, in the society of whose members he may be said to graduate socially while waiting for a salaried appointment. Here he learns to despise the costume of his forefathers and to become anxious about the fit of a frock coat cut

in the latest Paris fashion, to assume the airs of a man about town, and possibly adds to the cognomen of Ali, Achmet, or Mehmet, which has hitherto served to identify him, another appellation for future official use. The heads of the various State departments have, of course, special functions, which they perform with the assistance of such among their subordinates as they may think proper to employ. There seems, however, hardly enough work to go round, and a considerable number of the aspirants to bureaucratic employment pass their time during office hours in smoking, coffee-drinking, and gossiping.

While young men of family thus aspire to become governors, military pashas, aides-de-camp, or secretaries, those of less distinguished birth seek employment in the household of some official of high rank, taking places formerly filled by male slaves, such as coffee-maker, pipe-bearer, or boot-cleaner; and from the eagerness displayed for this kind of life springs one of Turkey's greatest misfortunes, every holder of an important office being hedged around by successive grades of parasitic underlings through whom a petitioner for justice can pass only with one key—*bakshish*. Orientals, it may here be remarked, do not look upon the offering and acceptance of *bakshish* as bribery. For under the present disorganised and corrupt administration officials

can only live by this system, to live on their salaries being next to impossible as, in the first place, they are generally inadequate, and in the second, they are always in arrear. There is consequently, even for the most honestly disposed official, no method of keeping body and soul together and rubbing along, save by supplementing the meagre remuneration of the Government by this ancient and approved method. This want of punctuality in paying salaries, or wages, is characteristic not of the Turks only, but of all Orientals generally. Domestic servants, for instance, are engaged at a yearly wage and are fed and clothed by their employers. Their wages are not, however, paid to them at any stated period, but, as a rule, are allowed to accumulate in the master's hands and are only drawn on leaving. As there are no savings banks in Turkey, this practice, when the employer is honest, has, no doubt, its advantages. But in the case of Government employees who have themselves and their families to support, it often entails great hardships, and I have personally known officials holding the rank of Pasha, with large nominal salaries, at a loss how to pay their butcher's and their baker's bills. The methods of the Turkish Paymaster-General's office are indeed peculiar. Both salaries and other claims are paid by means of *havalés*, or orders on the Imperial Treasury. After much petitioning, an

official may receive such an order for the sum due to him, or part of it. This order does not, however, bear the name of any special treasury, so the recipient takes it to a *saraf*, or professional discounter, from whom he may perhaps receive a third, or half, its value. The *saraf*, the provincial governor on whose treasury it is made payable, and the financial authorities of the province through whose hands the *havalé* must pass before final payment in full by the Treasury, make their own profit out of the remaining half, or two thirds, of the sum of which the unfortunate official is thus mulcted. Stories are, of course, rife in the country, and especially in the capital, of enormous bribes being received and vast sums appropriated by dishonest officials; but somehow no one seems to be the richer for these transactions. Exaggeration is a vice peculiarly Oriental, and even a *bakshish* running into four figures does not amount to much when perhaps two thirds of it have to be distributed among subordinates and others whose secrecy or goodwill must be bought.

Let me now give a glance at the nominal seat of Government, at which are found the bureaus in which all these various functionaries officiate—the Sublime Porte and the Seraskierate, or Turkish War Office. The hall of the former, which corresponds to the “Salle des pas perdus” of the French Senate, or the “Lobby” of our House

of Commons, presents a curious spectacle to Western eyes, being crowded with swarms of petitioners of all races and classes. Among the motley throng circulate begging Dervishes, *cafédjis*, itinerant vendors of various wares, and perhaps a *deli*, or madman, real or feigned, whose sallies serve to pass the hours of waiting. Matted corridors, along which the humbler natives glide in shoeless feet, lead to the various bureaus, the doorways of which are screened by hanging carpets. Within, on sofas or armchairs, covered with rich stuffs rubbed to shabbiness by the constant friction of boots and shoes, are seated in all sorts of attitudes a dozen or so of clerks. In front of each is a little stand holding the Turkish inkstand, sand-sifter—in lieu of blotting-paper—*kalems*, or reed pens, ash-trays, and, several times daily, the coffee-cup. The *kyatib*, when he happens to be occupied, holds his paper in his left hand, supported on his upraised knee, while inscribing on it, with his pen held vertically, the graceful Arabic characters used by the Turks. Half the occupants of the apartment seem to have nothing to do, and sit meditatively fingering their beads by the hour, unless distracted by the appearance of callers. The office of the head of a department presents, however, a more varied aspect. There is a perpetual coming and going. The *portière* is raised a dozen times an hour, and visitors or petitioners enter

unannounced, salaam to the great man from the doorway, salaam again on approaching him, and a third time before taking a seat. Etiquette necessitates the interchange of polite phrases before the subject-matter of the visit is entered upon, thus prolonging every interview, and it is hardly to be wondered at that under such a system an army of functionaries is found necessary to transact the business of every department. At the War Office the plethora of officials is even more remarkable; at the Admiralty somewhat less so—which, considering the state of the Turkish navy, is hardly surprising; while the only department of State distinguished by any degree of order and imposing gravity is the semi-ecclesiastical one presided over by the Shekh-ul-Islam, the Ulema, who may be said to compose its official staff, still retaining the dignified appearance and manners which one naturally associates with ample turbans and patriarchal robes.

There is at the present day, owing to political friction, even less social intercourse than formerly between the Turks and their Christian subjects. Commercial and municipal affairs naturally bring members of all races into public relations with each other, and ceremonial visits are exchanged on the occasions of their national festivals between those holding official positions. In such intercourse there is, however, no mingling

of the sexes; the men call on the men, and the women on the women. The Greek communities are also very exclusive, and their women do not speak Turkish as do the generality of Armenians, whose customs and modes of thought, especially in the towns of the interior, approximate more nearly to those of the ruling race. Osmanli men, indeed, manifest little taste for the society of the native Christian women, though the generality of the better class in Stamboul eagerly avail themselves of every opportunity of making the acquaintance of European ladies. A certain class of Levantines in the capital—concession hunters, embassy dragomans, and others—endeavour for their own purposes to curry favour with Turks in official positions by introducing them to foreign ladies resident in or visiting Constantinople. Europeanised Turks also frequent the Pera cafés and hotels, and cultivate the acquaintance of foreigners generally; one motive for doing so being, no doubt, that only thus are they able to keep themselves informed of current events, home or foreign; for the Turkish Press Censor confiscates all European journals containing references to the internal affairs of Turkey, or her relations with the Powers, and prohibits the publication in the native Press of any news of practical importance to the Turkish public. And it is only, therefore, by intercourse with European acquaintances, who receive their



correspondence and newspapers through the medium of the foreign post-offices—English, French, and Austrian—that an intelligent Turk is enabled to obtain a knowledge of current political events. Of late years, however, the Sultan has manifested his disapproval of this tendency to frequent foreign society on the part of these more enlightened Osmanlis, nor do many at the present day consider it safe to make it a regular practice. The extraordinary interference by the police and the Government with individual liberty has, indeed, made Turkish life in the capital a somewhat gloomy business. The Sultan's fear of conspiracies prompts the most arbitrary and tyrannical enactments with reference to all public assemblies whatever. Race meetings are prohibited, even a cricket match cannot be held without special permission from Yildiz Kiosk, and measures are taken to procure the indefinite "postponement" of even private balls to which Turkish subjects are known to have received invitations. Government spies are everywhere—in all public offices, at railway-stations and custom-houses, in the bazaars and markets, on steamboats, in coffee-houses, and public baths. Even the hotels frequented by Europeans are not safe from these inquisitorial nuisances, and strangers whose business in Constantinople is not a matter of public knowledge may, in addition to having their every

movement watched, and their every spoken word listened to, find their wardrobes and drawers ransacked and papers abstracted in their absence from their rooms. Nor are the spies employed by the Porte by any means invariably of Turkish origin.

In such a heterogeneous population as that of Constantinople, made up of persons of all nationalities and persons of no nationality, there are always to be found individuals, from hotel servants to hotel guests, ready to do any underhand work for a consideration. Officials are spied upon by their colleagues, their subordinates, and their domestics, all of whom may be sending in, to those in whose pay they are, reports of every detail of their daily doings. It is inevitable that such informers, in their desire to show their zeal, should fabricate accusations, and the most trivial episodes be construed into acts of a suspicious nature. A spy, too, may himself be under surveillance, and his report pass through his supposed victim's hands on its way to headquarters. The highest functionaries are liable to be summoned to Yildiz Kiosk in the middle of the night, and interrogated on utterly frivolous charges by persons much inferior to themselves in rank; and any one who should venture to oppose this *régime* would probably find his fortune, and perhaps even his life, imperilled. One hears harrowing accounts from natives of



**YILDIZ KIOSK, THE SULTAN'S RESIDENCE**



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chambers of torture, midnight executions, and wholesale drownings in the Bosphorus; but, though the Sultan is evidently by no means scrupulous in his methods, some allowance must be made for Oriental exaggeration, and serious credence cannot invariably be given to such stories. It cannot, however, be denied that tragedies have certainly been perpetrated during this Turkish Reign of Terror, as witnessed to by the incident of M—— Pasha and his son. The latter, accused by one of his colleagues in the office of the Press Censor of having given a Russian journalist information regarding the state of the Sultan's health, was arrested at night, carried off to the palace, and has never since been heard of. Some days later his father was despatched to Yemen, an exile which, to a man of his age, was equivalent to a death-sentence. There does not, however, generally speaking, appear to have been any greater mortality among public men in Turkey of recent years than in other European countries, nor is there any evidence that the obituary list has been swelled by poisonings, or even that those who are suspected of liberal views are shorter-lived than other subjects. Some at least of the adventures of the suspected persons are, indeed, to judge from current stories, of an amusing rather than a tragic character. One of these may serve as a specimen. A certain A—— Bey, a Foreign Office secretary, was

one day summoned to appear before the Chief of Police, who charged him with having on the preceding day held in a café a seditious conversation with an Italian, and required him to repeat what had passed between them. A—Bey refused, upon which the Minister repeated to him word for word what had been said—nothing certainly calculated to shake a throne or upset a Ministry. But the Stamboul Effendi insisted that Murad Effendi—the ex-Sultan—had also been mentioned, and made use of threats, promises, and entreaties to extract a confession to this effect. This proving ineffectual, A—Bey was finally despatched under escort to the palace, locked up in an apartment there, and subjected daily to fresh interrogations. Finally, it was hinted by his inquisitor-general, R—Pasha, that a confession would be rewarded by his being nominated *attaché* to the Ottoman Embassy in London. “Excellency,” exclaimed the budding diplomatist, “to obtain that much-coveted post, I am capable of lying to any extent!” a reply which so tickled the Pasha that A—Bey on the following day obtained his liberty, together with a purse of twenty liras from the Sultan by way of solatium for his week’s detention—during which he had, however, been accommodated in a luxurious apartment, and well supplied with dainty dishes and exquisite tobacco. Murad Effendi, imprisoned

in his palace of Tcheragan, appears to be the Sultan's greatest bugbear. For a Turk to mention his name is accounted a criminal offence, and any European venturing to do so in public finds himself thereafter under unpleasant police surveillance.

The greatest evil—because the most far-reaching in its effects on the nation generally—of the present system is that it naturally puts an end to all freedom in social life, to all liberty of speech, all originality and initiative in practical matters, and all political and intellectual activity. It is as if an Imperial edict had gone forth to this effect: "Thou shalt not do anything," for a man may not rebuild his burnt-down house, or give an entertainment to celebrate his son's wedding, according to time-honoured custom, without his intentions being brought to the notice of the authorities; nor may an Osmanli of any importance leave the capital for business or pleasure, unless he receives an *Irade* from the Sultan authorising him to do so, and such permission is not easily obtained. When taking tea not long ago at the Stamboul residence of General A—— Pasha, who, in his capacity of aide-de-camp to the Sultan, has often been the bearer of his Imperial master's congratulations and presents to the various crowned heads of Europe, one of the guests, M—— Bey, a handsome and well-educated young Turk, earnestly begged his Excellency

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to nominate him as his private secretary on the occasion of his next visit to England. "There is nothing," he said, "I so much desire as to visit Europe, and especially Great Britain, and I despair of ever being allowed to go, Pasha Effendi, unless you thus take me under your friendly wing." The Pasha, I may mention, occupies his leisure hours with landscape painting, for which he displays no little talent, and his reception-room has quite the appearance of a studio with its large flower-decorated and balconied window, its canvases on easels, and the sketches and framed pictures from his own brush which cover every inch of the walls not occupied by signed portraits—photographs and prints of members of all the royal families of Europe, of which his Excellency is much prouder than of his own contributions to art. The end wall of his dining-room, which is furnished in European style, is painted in semblance of an orange grove, in the midst of which is the little ablutionary fountain and basin usually seen in the houses of Mohammedans.

The above details of social life refer more particularly to the capital, Smyrna, and Salonica, and also, to a certain extent, to the ancient capital, Adrianople, which, since its connection by rail with Western and Central Europe, now presents many features in common with the large seaport cities. In the towns of the interior, however,



Turkish influences predominate, and the manners, customs, and even the languages of the non-Turkish element are considerably affected by those of the ruling race. The same administrative evils, however, exist, though on a smaller scale. The Konak, or Government House, forms the centre of municipal life, and not only the Governor, but even the inferior officials, have been nominated from the capital. For no provincial administrator is allowed to choose his own subordinates, and several spies are sure to be selected to form part of his *entourage*. The Konak is generally a many-windowed, barrack-like edifice, coloured red or yellow without, whitewashed within, and approached by a courtyard, at the gate of which a couple of stalwart Asiatic soldiers sit on rush-bottomed stools. The internal arrangements are those of most Oriental houses—a wide central hall or corridor on which all the rooms open, the upper floor, or floors, being precisely similar. Over the doorways are inscribed the names of the various departments as, Secretary, Treasurer, Keeper of Papers, and in the lobby may always be found during office hours a heterogeneous collection of litigants, witnesses, petitioners, and loafers, varying in race according to province, and clad in garments denoting every degree of Eastern civilisation, from sheepskin jacket to frock coat.

The majority of these frequenters of the Konak

may be divided into two classes: those who desire to gain some unfair advantage over the others, and those who seek to avert or obtain redress for some act of injustice or spoliation. Here will be a group of Turkish peasants, ragged but dignified, discussing the justice of a sentence just announced, adverse to their village, and in favour of the *beylikdji*, or tax-farmer, whose demands they have appealed against. Leaving the office of the Tapou-memour, or Registrar, is a burly, well-to-do Bulgarian peasant, who, by dint of persistent bribery, has just gotten the title-deeds to some land he has added to his farm. Outside the door of another office wait a party of Wallachian flock masters, who have a triangular dispute with the forest inspectors and the inhabitants of a village, both parties claiming rights over some neighbouring pasturages, which the shepherds have been in the habit of renting from the former. In the background are also probably a number of Greeks and Jews, whose commercial interests have come into conflict, and among the throng will probably be a Circassian horse-dealer or two, an Albanian swash-buckler in attendance on his chief, together with the usual riff-raff of witnesses, official hangers-on, servants, soldiers, and *çaptiehs*. Upstairs, in a large, scantily furnished room, the Governor holds his court, squatted, if an "old-fashioned" Turk, in a corner of the divan which furnishes

three sides of the apartment. Seated with him on either hand are a number of individuals, some in turbans and flowing robes, others in the conventional garb, members of the Medjliss, or Municipal Council, local magnates, officials, and others, their rank being easily ascertainable by their proximity to the great man and the degree of ease in the posture they assume. The Jewish doctor sits at a distance on the extreme edge of the divan, with his hands on his stomach, speaking only when spoken to, and then with a deferential salaam. The Greek dragoman occupies an uncomfortable corner of his rush-seated chair near the door, and salaams obsequiously, rising every time the Vali opens his lips; and he is served by the barefooted attendants only with coffee, though cigarettes or *tchibouks* are handed to the Kadi and other magnates seated on the great man's right and left.

There are in the provinces at the present day no Christians holding the highest official posts, and only a few who are Mudirs—as the governors of small boroughs are termed—and the Moavins, or Christian Vice-Governors, who first came into being about a quarter of a century ago, and whose numbers were greatly increased in 1896, are mere dummies. For the Porte generally displays great ingenuity in depriving of all practical effect the “reforms” wrung from it by European pressure. In the first place, care is

taken that the Moavin appointed to a particular district is not only destitute of all local influence, but that he is also a man who must of necessity be obnoxious on religious and racial grounds to the Christian inhabitants, a Greek being, for instance, installed in a Bulgarian district, an Armenian in a Greek, and a Levantine Roman Catholic in an Armenian centre. Being a "Vice"-Governor, he has also naturally no duties to perform when the Vali or Mutessarif is at his post; and in the Governor's absence it is generally discovered that, according to ancient precedent, the next in rank must take his place. Rank, in official circles, being an extremely subtle and altogether incomprehensible entity, that of the Moavin is naturally discovered to be of quite an inferior order, and the acting Governorship will be bestowed on the Defterdar, or Accountant-General. For the Turks are in the habit of occasionally reminding their Christian subjects, by actions if not by words, that though they may be superior to them in intellectual or business capacity, they are still but infidel dogs in their eyes. And as a native Christian official cannot faithfully serve the Turkish Government without being disloyal to the traditions and aspirations of his people, the Osmanlis are not, perhaps, without some justification for regarding such officials with distrust and contempt. And so little, as a matter of

fact, are functionaries holding the position of Moavin in the habit of asserting themselves, that their timidity and servility have gained for them in the country the sobriquet of *Evoetdjis*, or "Yes"-men.

An opportunity was afforded me some years ago of studying at fairly close quarters an official of this type, a Greek of Constantinople, who had been sent as Moavin to an important town in Macedonia. Soon after his arrival, political disturbances on the Greek frontier were anticipated, and this traitor to his nation showed greater anxiety than his Turkish colleagues to discover sympathisers with the movement among the leading Greek families of the city. The Governor-General at that time was a certain N—— Pasha, whose chief qualification for his exalted post was the fact that he happened to be the Sultan's foster-brother, his Circassian mother, a woman notorious for her capacity for intrigue, having for many years exercised great influence in the Imperial harem. Conspicuous among the circle of sycophants by whom the Pasha, a man of no particular ability, was surrounded was a renegade French adventurer, who at every utterance of the great man would obsequiously ejaculate, "*Prophète!*" The Vice-Governor, who generally accompanied the Vali as one of his suite when making ceremonial calls on foreigners, simply grovelled before him, and

obtained as the reward of his servility certain privileges of precedence in the Council Chamber, including a seat on the divan in close proximity to the Pasha; and the degree of estimation in which this dignitary was held was forcibly illustrated by a little incident which came under my notice. When calling one day on an English lady, her little boy happened to be present in the drawing-room, and the Pasha held out his hand for the child to kiss, according to Turkish custom. Perfectly aware of what was expected of him, the boy coloured, hesitated a few seconds, then with an amusing audacity put his hand into that of the visitor and bowed. When the Vali had taken his departure, the lady asked her son why he had not kissed the Pasha's hand. "I would not disgrace myself by kissing the hand of *that* Pasha!" was the little man's dignified reply.

The state of affairs at the Konak became at length something of a scandal, and even more scandalous was the conduct of the Pasha's harem, though he had but one wife, a Circassian and an ex-Seraili, whom the Bey's wives refused to visit. As the political situation at the same time called for the appointment of a military rather than a civil Governor-General, N—— Pasha was transferred to another post, and in his place arrived D—— Pasha—a man of high military rank and renown, and in some respects,

at least, a Turk of the old school—and took possession of the Konak. All the officials naturally hastened to salute him, and among the rest the Moavin, who, having made before him his *temend*, and uttered the most fulsomely flattering phrases of which he was master, proceeded to seat himself in his accustomed place. Seeing his intention, D— Pasha turned his keen eyes on his subordinate, and, without a word, pointed to the extreme end of the divan, which remained thenceforward the distance of the crestfallen Moavin from the place of honour.

The population of country towns is made up of local Beys and other magnates, owners of landed property, urban and agricultural, shopkeepers, artisans, and labourers, and the officers and soldiers of the garrison. The life of the townsfolk is, on the whole, exceedingly monotonous, and varied only by the festivities attending family ceremonies and the recurrence of the annual religious festivals.

The public baths constitute in the towns the chief meeting-place for both sexes, the men's baths being open in the evening as well as in the daytime. With Moslems personal cleanliness certainly comes next to godliness, being enjoined by the Holy Law, and to their regular and careful ablutions—and also, no doubt, to their habitual temperance—may probably be traced the comparative freedom of the Turks

from many of the ailments which afflict their Christian and Jewish neighbours. Coffee and tobacco are in the Western mind indissolubly associated with the typical Turk, and these luxuries, despite the fulminations hurled against them in former days by stern and ascetic moralists, have become not only the indispensable adjuncts of civility and hospitality, but almost the necessaries of existence for the inhabitants of Turkey generally, of all ranks and creeds. The patient shopkeeper in the bazaar will courteously invite you to partake of a fragrant cup while you turn over and inspect his wares at your leisure; and during the course of every business transaction, and every social or official interview, coffee and cigarettes seem to be indispensable; and so much coffee and so many cigarettes must of necessity be partaken of in the course of a day that, but for the special method of preparation, they would certainly have most injurious consequences. Coffee-houses are consequently to be met with everywhere, in crowded streets, by suburban roadsides, on boat-piers, and in market-places, wherever, in a word, men resort for business or relaxation.

There is, perhaps, hardly a town in Turkey which does not possess in its immediate neighbourhood one or more picturesque spots, to which its inhabitants resort on feast-days and holidays. Many such exist in the neigh-





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bourhood of the capital: the Sweet Waters of Europe and Asia, Merdevenkeui, and numerous others on the shores of the Bosphorus; and when want of leisure, or piastres, make these inaccessible, the Turk betakes himself contentedly to the nearest cemetery, where, seated on a fallen turbaned tombstone under the shade of a cypress, he enjoys with his fellows the amenities of conversation, flavoured with a cup of coffee and *narghilé* supplied from the little café, sure to be found at hand. Turks of the lower class resort to the *kafené* in the early morning for a cheering cup and *narghilé* before betaking themselves to their daily avocations, and repair to them again at intervals during the day as opportunity may offer. Most unpretentious, and by no means very inviting in appearance, are these *kafenés*, and few can boast of any arrangements for the comfort of those who frequent them. The best are furnished only with mats, rugs, and cushions, placed on a raised platform surrounding the interior. Many are mere wooden shanties with an awning or vine-covered trellis, in front of or under which the contemplative Orientals sit contentedly on rush-bottomed stools, a cup in one hand, and a stem of *narghilé* or *tchibouk* in the other.

Coffee-houses generally in the East, in default of clubs or "Institutes," form the chief centres of union and conversation for the middle and

lower classes. Here those who can read impart to their unlettered neighbours the news of the day, — or at least as much of it as has been approved by the Press Censor, — and here, too, in the absence of precise information with reference to current events, the wildest theories are started, discussed, and circulated. Hither also resort the wandering musicians and story-tellers, picturesque figures in the immemorial costume of their profession which, with its repertory of songs and stories, is handed down from generation to generation. The hours passed in these popular resorts are also beguiled with various sedentary games, such as draughts, dominoes, and backgammon. Cards are seldom resorted to, games of hazard being forbidden to Moslems. Nor can gambling be said to be at all a popular vice in the country, the stakes played for by Christians seldom rising above the price of a glass of *raki*, or a *rahat-loukoum*. Dancing, it may here be remarked, though a favourite recreation, not only of all the Christian nationalities, but also of the Albanians, Kurds, and other races professing the creed of Islam, is not indulged in by the Turks personally, who consider such exercises beneath their dignity, and prefer to see slaves and Gipsy women dance for their amusement.

Of the manly sports at which the ancient Osmanlis, from Sultans downwards, were once

so expert, archery, wielding the mace, tennis, quoits, wrestling, and throwing the *djereed*, only the last two are to be witnessed at the present day. Wrestling is a popular pastime with all nationalities and creeds, and Turk, Greek, and Bulgarian, Armenian, Kurd, and Gipsy freely enter the lists against each other, continuing the contest for hours, untiringly watched by a large crowd of undemonstrative but deeply interested and critical spectators. The game of *djereed* is more exciting, and, I believe, peculiar to Asia Minor, the land *par excellence* of legendary champions and "deeds of derring-do" celebrated in ballad and story — at least I have never seen or heard of it in European Turkey. It is played on horseback, and affords opportunities for the display of all those tricks of horsemanship on which Osmanli youths pride themselves. A number of players, perhaps twenty on each side, armed with long, heavy sticks, take up positions about fifty yards from each other on some open space, preferably near some rising ground from which the game can be watched without danger to the spectators. One of the horsemen dashes forward and hurls his *djereed* at an opponent, who endeavours to intercept him before he can return to his place. It is then the turn of the other side. Sometimes a player mounted on an exceptionally swift horse will, instead of returning to his place, create a

diversion by riding off to a distance after making his throw, when several of the other side pursue him and endeavour to overtake him. A player who has got rid of all his sticks is at liberty to appropriate any found lying on the ground, which he does without dismounting, often dexterously bending down and snatching up a *djereed* as his steed gallops past it. The rules of the game are strictly observed, and no unfairness or unnecessary roughness is permitted. The sticks, which should not be aimed at the head of an opponent, may be dodged by any of the expedients at the command of expert horsemen, some appearing to leave their saddles when ducking to avoid a flying *djereed*. As is inevitable in a game of this description, there are frequent mishaps and collisions, and horses and men struggle together on the ground in dangerous confusion.

In a country so destitute of good roads and streets as Turkey, locomotion is naturally performed chiefly on horse-, mule-, and donkey-back. At various points in Constantinople, Smyrna, and other towns, one may see a number of these animals, furnished with saddlery more or less Orientally ornate in character, waiting for hire. This method of locomotion is also, especially in the interior, much resorted to by Turkish women, who, seated astride on the high carpet- or pack-saddles, with their white-

stockinged, yellow-slippered feet thrust into roomy shovel-stirrups, look like animated bundles of bedding. In addition to being splendid horse-men, the Turks seem also to possess great skill as drivers. Many of the streets in Constantinople and the suburbs are exceedingly steep, and the roadways are generally ill-paved, full of holes, and slope towards the gutter in the centre. But up or down the worst paved and steepest of these thoroughfares the native Jehu will not hesitate to drive his brakeless fly and pair, nor will he allow his fares to alight and walk while the willing horses are struggling, mostly on their haunches, down what appears to those behind them a declivity the foot of which can hardly be reached without mishap. "Carriage exercise" is, indeed, in Constantinople, too frequently the most active exercise imaginable.

An important and interesting feature of urban industrial life in Turkey is presented by the *Esnafs*, or guilds, in which members of the various trades, crafts, and callings are enrolled, irrespective of race and religion, for their mutual protection and support. Though many once-flourishing industries disappeared, and others lost their former importance, on the abandonment of the ancient Oriental splendour of Court and official dress and equipment, and the adoption of Western military uniforms and weapons of warfare which have distinguished

the nineteenth century, these trade-guilds are still very numerous, and especially at Constantinople, where representatives of all the various crafts and callings practised in the Empire are to be found, having one or more *Lonjas* (lodges or clubs) in every quarter of the city and suburbs. Each *Esnaf* is presided over by several officers called respectively, according to their rank, *Shekhs*, *Naibs*, *Oustas*, and *Kiayas*, or presidents, vice-presidents, superintendents, and inspectors, who are annually elected by the members from among its own master-craftsmen, these officers being formally recognised by the Government, which holds them responsible for the good behaviour of their fellow-guildsmen. Some *Esnafs* possess considerable revenues, and a few enjoy peculiar privileges granted by royal charter in bygone centuries in return for services rendered at some important crisis. Among these are the shoemakers, who, it is said, have special officers empowered to judge and punish all offenders belonging to their fraternity without the interposition of the legal authorities, this extraordinary privilege having been conferred upon them in the sixteenth century by Suleiman II., the Magnificent.

The *tchiraks*, or apprentices to the various trades, are, when proficient, recommended by the master under whom they have served their time to admission to the guild of their craft, into



which they are formally admitted on engaging to observe its rules and paying the customary fee. Some guilds are composed entirely of Moslems, as certain callings are exclusively in the hands of the ruling race, others entirely of Christians. Many, however, include adherents of both creeds, and, as members of the same *Esnaf*, Christians and Moslems, allied by an *esprit de corps* and by trade interests, pull together much better and evince mutually a greater liberality of feeling than is generally displayed in the social relations of Turks and Christians. Once a year each *Esnaf* gives a picnic, usually on the feast of its patron saint, the expenses of which are defrayed either by subscription or from the common fund. To the substantial and even sumptuous repast provided on such occasions are invited not only friends of members of the guild, irrespective of creed, but also any strangers who may happen to pass the spot chosen for the festivities; and they are hospitably entertained by the revellers. The amusements indulged in after the conclusion of the midday repast include a variety of juggling and acrobatic performances, wrestling matches, and for the Christians and Albanians their national dances; during the execution of which their Turkish fellow-craftsmen, seated on rush-bottomed stools, in front of a rustic coffee-house, one hand occupied with the beads of their rosary, and the other

with a long-stemmed *tchibouk*, or bubbling *narghilé*, enjoy their *kaif* in more passive fashion. Disputes are of rare occurrence at these *al fresco* gatherings, and the greatest harmony prevails. "Strict, stern, stony decorum" is, according to a recent traveller in Turkey, "the keynote to all Turkish *fêtes*." And certainly a total absence of anything approaching to vulgarity or rowdyism is noticeable in Oriental merry-makings generally, whatever the class of those who participate in them.

Every *Esnaf* has its own special traditional laws and usages, which are not less binding than its *kanoun*, or written constitution; and the social customs and mode of life of their members afford in many instances curious and interesting illustrations of native manners among the labouring classes. Of these the boatmen may be instanced—naturally a very numerous body in so water-girt a city as Constantinople. The ranks of this *Esnaf* are largely recruited among the Christian and Moslem youths, who come in great numbers from Asia Minor to seek their fortune in the capital. Half a dozen or more of these *bekiars*, or "bachelors," as they are termed, live in common in some humble lodging, paying a fixed sum per day or per week to an old man who acts as their steward and cook, as well as their counsellor and arbiter in the disputes that may be expected to arise occasionally in such

a mixed household. Their relations with the master-*kaikdji*, to whom they serve a long apprenticeship, are also of quite a filial character. The boatmen attached to the service of the royal palaces, a splendidly muscular set of fellows, with shaven polls, are attired only in short, full white Turkish breeches, and shirts of Broussa gauze, which, worn open in front, leave their broad, brawny chests exposed to the weather. A crew of about a dozen propel the State *kaihs*—lightly built, double-prowed crafts, some twenty feet long and three to four feet wide—at a splendid pace from one shore of the Bosphorus to the other, a mode of traversing this wonderful waterway which may be enjoyed by Europeans who have obtained the *firman*, or permission, requisite for visiting the Imperial palaces.

Many other callings the exercise of which requires muscle rather than skill — that, for instance, of the *hamal*, or porter — are organised on similar lines. And having after some half-dozen years of combined toil and thrift amassed a little capital, the majority of these Savoyards of the East return to their native villages in Anatolia to turn it to account in other pursuits.

Another important industrial community peculiar to Constantinople is that of the *Sakas*, who supply the inhabitants with drinking-water from the more famous fountains in the vicinity of the capital, some of which are at a considerable

distance. The water is carried in great leathern "jacks," on the backs either of horses or of men, according to the distance from which it is brought to the houses of customers. Another class of *Sakas* are employed by pious persons to carry water into much-frequented thoroughfares for the benefit of the thirsty public, who are invited to drink it "in remembrance of the martyrs of Kerbela," or "To the health of Hasan and Hosian" (the said martyrs). Others, again, offer the welcome draught with the words, "We give thee to drink of Kevser!" (the River of Life in Moslem legend). These *Sakas* often, in hot weather, cover up the receptacle in which they carry the water with green leaves and branches, and some have an arrangement of pipes and taps by means of which it can be drawn off with ease into glasses fitted into a kind of tray strapped round the waist.

The distribution of water being accounted by Mohammedans as one of the most important among the "good works" which form such an integral part of their religion, the *Sakas*, Christian as well as Moslem, enjoy a high degree of popular consideration, their persons being regarded as in a manner sacred, and any offence offered to a member of this fraternity is looked upon as an insult to the whole *mahallah*, or quarter in which he resides. Previous to the suppression of the Janissaries in 1826, the office

of President of this *Esnaf* in the capital was usually held by the colonel commanding the water-carriers of that redoubtable corps.

Though in all probability the Turks found the majority of these guilds already long established among the Greek, Venetian, Genoese, and other Christian nationalities inhabiting Constantinople and the other great cities of the Levant, they assign to them an Oriental and probably much more ancient origin than can be historically verified. The merchants, for instance, maintain that their *Esnaf* was incorporated in the lifetime of the Prophet, who himself followed the calling of a trader, and thus became the patron of merchants. For, as with the guilds of Western Europe, every trade has its own patron saint, the majority of them being the prophets and holy men who figure alike in the Old Testament and the Koran, each of whom, according to Moslem tradition, invented or excelled in the craft or calling placed under his protection. Thus Adam, besides being the patron of the tailors' guild, is also that of the bakers'; and among other patron saints of *Esnafs*, Abraham, as the builder of the holy Kaaba at Mekka, is the protector of the builders, Cain of the sextons, and also of all those who shed blood in their callings, Enoch of the scribes, Noah of the shipbuilders, David of armourers and smiths generally, Joseph of the watch and clock-makers, and the Seven

Sleepers of Ephesus—who are included by the Moslems in the roll of holy men—watch, somewhat paradoxically, together with Jonah, over the sailors, especially those who navigate the Black Sea. The more eminent among the “Companions of the Prophet” also afford their protection to numerous guilds,—Selman, one of the two to whom the Prophet promised a greeting in Paradise, being the patron of the barbers, as it was his privilege to shave the servant of Allah.

Equally characteristic of industrial life in Turkey are the strict specialisation of each particular branch of commerce and industry and the absence of the middleman in the generality of transactions connected with supplying the necessaries of life. Save in the European quarters of the capital, there are as yet no great “stores” or general shops in which goods of every kind are collected; and the native requiring a pair of shoes goes to the working shoemaker for them, and a housewife in want of a new saucepan, kettle, or coffee-pot sends her husband or servant to the street of the *bakirdjiler*, or coppersmiths, where amid the deafening tap-tap of a hundred hammers on the resounding metal he makes his selection, and, the requisite amount of chaffering accomplished and the “last price” paid, carries off the purchase. For in Turkey, it may be mentioned, it is not customary for tradesmen to send

goods home, nor—save, perhaps, in the case of sweetmeats—even to wrap their wares in paper. The Oriental deposits his purchase in a handkerchief, bundle-wrap, or basket, according to its nature, and if he or she can afford to be proud, a servant accompanies to carry it home. Cumbrous or weighty articles are usually carried by *hamals*, whose sturdy legs seem capable of supporting anything that can be fastened on their back-pads—from a cask of oil or wine to a wardrobe. Nowhere else in the world, perhaps, is itinerant trade carried on to the extent noticeable in Constantinople, where almost every article of food is hawked or exposed for sale in the public thoroughfares. Even the courtyards of the mosques are invaded by the “thousands of people who gain a living by selling all sorts of things”—vendors of fruits, drinks, sweets, and small wares, who set up their stalls, or tripods and circular trays, under the shade of large white umbrella-shaped awnings. To this facility for carrying on petty commerce may, no doubt, be attributed in some degree the absence of a pauper class, for any man with a shilling of capital seems able to turn a sufficiency of honest pennies daily to provide himself and his family with the necessaries of life. The stock-in-trade of an itinerant *cafédji* consists of but a few cups and glasses, a brazier, and one or two tiny coffee *ibriks*; and half a dozen such may apparently,

without any unfriendly rivalry, eke out a living on some favourite lounging-place in a frequented part of the city. After visiting recently the beautiful Bayazidieh Mosque in Stamboul, my friends and I took our seats on some rush-bottomed stools at its northern entrance, and called for coffee to a Turk standing half a dozen yards away, whose cotton handkerchief, tucked apron-wise into his girdle, denoted his calling. He, however, courteously informed us that his domain did not extend to the steps of the mosque. A second *caféđji*, who then came up, also smilingly explained that only the stools on the opposite side of the doorway belonged to him.

Another noteworthy characteristic of Turkish town life is its extreme sobriety and consequent orderliness. Notwithstanding the mixture of races and the scarcity of policemen, street brawls or disturbances of any kind are of rare occurrence, and Greeks, Jews, or foreign sailors are usually responsible for them; foot-passengers make way for each other in the narrow streets with extreme good nature, and mutual compliments; the heavily laden *hamal* or the driver of cart or carriage utters continually his warning cry of "Varda!" and there is little of the coarseness and vulgar brutality common in Western cities. The conditions of public safety, however, vary greatly, according to locality. In Asiatic Smyrna, for instance, and also, to a certain



extent, in Constantinople, foreign ladies may with perfect safety traverse the streets, or travel in the Bosphorus steamers; but in European Salonica, even under normal conditions, no lady ventures abroad, save perhaps in one or two streets of the Frank quarter, without the escort of a gentleman or manservant; the Albanians and other lawless elements from the Macedonian "hinterland" constituting one source of danger, and the long-horned draught-buffaloes and files of Jew-driven pack-animals, with their unwieldy burdens, another. By night the public safety is in many localities entrusted to the *bektchi*—a counterpart of our own obsolete watchman, who, lantern in hand, goes his round between sunset and sunrise, giving to evil-doers chivalrous warning of his approach by striking his iron-shod staff at intervals on the pavement. Burglary, however, seems to be a crime almost unknown in Turkey, for during my long residence in the country I cannot recall a single instance of a crime of such a character. Every one out-of-doors after sunset is, however, required to carry a lighted lantern, and any individual encountering a police patrol or passing a guard-house without this token of his honesty of purpose, will hardly avoid getting into difficulties.

To the habitual temperance of the industrial classes of Turkey, and more especially of those professing the creed of Islam, may, no doubt, to

a great extent be attributed the absence of that acute poverty which disgraces the great cities of the West, and the absence, also, of a criminal class among Moslems. Charitable foundations, such as almshouses, refectories, and hospitals, are attached to many of the larger mosques, and also to some of the Dervish monasteries, from which the needy are never turned away empty-handed. The usefulness of many of these charities has, unfortunately, of late years, greatly diminished, owing to the misapplication of the revenues with which they were endowed by their pious founders.





## CHAPTER IV

### HAREM LIFE

FROM the foregoing description of the homes of Osmanlis of all classes, it should, I think, be apparent that the harem, far from being, as is so often supposed, a "detestable prison," is the most cheerful and commodious division of an Osmanli's house. The term, indeed, simply means a sacred enclosure, being applied in this sense to all the sanctuaries of Islam, and the *haremlik* is consequently the *sanctum sanctorum*, the place safe from all intrusion, into which not even the master may enter if a pair of galoshes at the door of the reception-room announces that his wife has guests. The only persons of the masculine sex, besides the master, who are permitted to enter the *haremlik* are his sons, his wife's father, and her brothers. In large cities members of the "advanced" class of society may also permit the visits of their own brothers and more distant relations, and even introduce to their wives and daughters their more intimate men friends. But in old-fashioned families, such as form the great bulk of the population, no male

relative of the master is allowed access to the harem after attaining his twelfth or thirteenth year, if outside the prohibited degrees of consanguinity, a restriction often productive of much distress to young people—cousins, for instance—thus inexorably deprived of any future social intercourse, unless a marriage between them should subsequently be arranged.

As with Oriental nations generally, the mother occupies the most honourable position among a man's female relatives. Osmanli women are perhaps the most indulgent mothers to be found anywhere, especially to their sons, who naturally in their early youth take advantage of their devotion and make slaves of them. Arrived, however, at years of discretion, a young Osmanli, realising the Prophet's words that "Paradise is under the feet of the mother," becomes in his turn her devoted slave. Debarred from social intercourse with all who are not closely connected with him by ties of blood, a man's mother and sisters are consequently his only women friends, and to this fact may perhaps be traced the strong affection which exists between mother and son, brother and sister. The harem has indeed been termed, and perhaps not untruly, "the sanctuary of conjugal happiness." For the wife and daughters, having no interests outside the house, use their utmost efforts to make themselves agreeable to their male relatives.

The relations between the various members of a Turkish household, and the way in which the younger show respect towards their elders, appear somewhat curious to Europeans. If a man's mother reside permanently under his roof, which is not unusual, his wife's position in the house is but secondary, and she is required to defer to her mother-in-law's opinion in all things. Hand-kissing being the usual mode of respectful greeting, the wife kisses her mother-in-law's hand — as also that of her husband — on the occasion of any family event, and also on special days, such as the opening of the Bairam festival. The wife may not seat herself at table before her husband's mother, nor be the first to help herself to the dishes, nor may she smoke a cigarette in the presence of the "First Lady" unless the latter invites her to do so. It no doubt often happens that a good deal of friction exists between two women occupying these relative positions; but these prescribed rules must be all the same observed, and the young *hanum* probably consoles herself with the reflection that at some future date their observance may be to her own advantage. In all matters of Osmanli family, and also generally of social, etiquette, precedence depends on age. If, for example, a married Turk has a sister residing in his harem with his wife, the elder of the two would enjoy precedence of the other; and similarly, if he has three children,

the eldest and the youngest boys, and the second a girl, she must defer to her elder brother, while the younger boy, spoilt and indulged though he may be, must give way to her in anything that affects their common interests. Nor do the youthful members of a family presume to sit cross-legged before their elders.

Domestic slavery has always existed among the Turks, as among other Oriental and Mediterranean nations, but in a milder form and with brighter hopes for the bondsmen and -women than the history of servitude among other races usually exhibits. The Turkish law protects the slave from arbitrary cruelty and excessive chastisement; the Koran, too, inculcates the duty of treating servants with generosity, and extols the merit of rewarding a faithful slave with freedom; while the general kindness of the Osmanli character—when not excited by war or religious fanaticism—constitutes a still more effectual safeguard against oppression. The institution of slavery, as it now exists in Turkey, is, however, to a great extent in direct contravention of the law of Islam, which only recognises as legitimate property non-Moslems who have fallen as captives of war into the power of the “True Believers”; for the vast majority of the female slaves brought into Turkey at the present day are drawn from the Circassian race who profess the creed of Islam, and their purchase and sale



STAMBOUL

STREET IN A TURKISH QUARTER OF STAMBOUL

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are, in consequence, illegal acts which could hardly be justified by the legists of the Ottoman Empire. The Turks, however, get over this difficulty by asking no questions concerning the origin of the women and children presented for sale by the dealers, and absolve their consciences by remarking, "Theirs be the sin!"

Although the Porte, in deference to European opinion, has closed the public slave-market at Constantinople, and formally prohibited the slave-trade, no material change, so far at least as slave-women are concerned, has in reality taken place in this respect. Male slaves are, for various reasons, certainly far less numerous now than formerly; paid menials have almost entirely replaced them for the service of the *selamlık*. But for the service of the harem, as at present constituted, female slaves are indispensable, it being contrary to Moslem notions of propriety for a free woman to appear unveiled before any man not a near relative. In the case of a slave, however, who is for the time being the absolute property of her master or mistress, no such restriction exists. Since the abolition of the public slave-market, the private trade in slaves has become much more general and widely spread than formerly. This traffic is carried on to a great extent by women of rank, some of whom are themselves emancipated slaves; and the profits they realise are said to be very considerable,

especially when their operations are on a large scale. On the arrival in the capital of a fresh batch of children, a broker is despatched by the consignees to the houses of these women dealers, who, if they desire to add to their stock-in-trade, either drive to the establishment of the slave merchants, or have the girls brought to their own houses for inspection. Children of from six to ten years of age are most sought after by these connoisseurs, who pay large prices for them in the expectation of receiving perhaps ten times that amount when the girls are about seventeen. The selection made, and the bargain concluded, the child is placed under the care of a *kalfa*, or head-servant, who carefully trains and educates her for the position she will probably be called upon in after years to fill. The slaves thus purchased as a speculation are taught to play on the lute and tambourine, to sing, dance, and embroider, besides being by degrees initiated into the mysteries of Ottoman etiquette and deportment, and also of enhancing by art the charms bestowed upon them by nature. Some of the lighter duties of the household may also, as the girls grow up, fall to their share. One elderly *hanum* of my acquaintance had trained a considerable number of slave-girls, all of whom she had disposed of to advantage, no fewer than fourteen having entered the Imperial household. When I first met this lady she had just acquired

half a dozen fresh *protégées* from six to eight years of age, who generally accompanied her when she went out driving or to pay visits. Various fancy names had been bestowed on these children by their patroness, such as "Amour," and "Bulbul"; some were dressed as boys in miniature uniforms, and the rest in garments supposed to be European. They all, however, seemed to be very happy and full of life and fun, while their manner to the *hanum*, half obsequious and half saucy, was very amusing to observe.

It is customary for the nation to present annually to the Sultan, on the occasion of the feast of Kandil Ghedjessi, a beautiful slave for the Imperial harem, and previous to this date the establishments in which these commodities may be found are visited by the dames with whom the choice rests. The Validé Sultana, or her deputy, the superintendent of the harem, is also on the lookout for select beauties to replenish the personnel of the palace, and Pashas and great ladies frequently seek to propitiate their sovereign with such gifts. The Sultan on his side will also occasionally bestow a star from this galaxy of beauty on some Minister or other functionary whom he desires specially to honour; and the happy recipient, to show his appreciation of this mark of royal favour, will, of course, enfranchise and marry the lady.

Great humility of manner is required from

slaves in the presence of visitors, when etiquette requires them to stand before their mistress in a posture of most profound respect, and to address her with expressions of exaggerated deference. In private, however, they are allowed considerable freedom, both of speech and action. In the matter of food, a slave fares as well as her owners; and, whatever her faults and shortcomings, she may not be sent adrift into the world, her owner being responsible for her maintenance; while at the end of seven years' servitude she is entitled to her freedom, and generally obtains with it a trousseau, as well as a husband; for to establish well the women who have for some years formed part of their household is a question of *amour propre* with Turkish women, who naturally like to have their generosity extolled by their neighbours. In the case of people in an official position, the husband chosen for a favourite slave is generally some favourite employee of the Effendi, a subordinate official being, on his side, only too glad to enter into an arrangement which brings him into closer relations with the family of his superior.

Occasionally, of course, slaves may fall into bad hands and be resold before the expiration of the stipulated seven years, in order that their owner may not lose his or her purchase-money; or they may become the property of persons of violent temper, or cruel disposition. That such

cases are not, however, of very frequent occurrence, is evident from the small number of slaves who are driven to seek the protection of the law, or that of the consuls of foreign nations. Speaking generally, indeed, female slaves in Turkey have very little to complain of. The good fortune of those gifted with personal attractions is, as a matter of fact, assured from the outset, for many Turks prefer, for various reasons, to take as wives women who have been brought up as slaves. Marriage with a free woman is a costly matter for a bridegroom and his parents, owing to the lavish expenditure in presents and entertainments demanded by custom on such occasions. All Turks marry young; and, consequently, if a father cannot afford to wed his son to a maiden of his own rank, he purchases for him a slave-girl, who has been brought up in some great lady's harem, and no expense is incurred beyond the purchase-money. A slave, having no position of her own, may also be expected to be submissive and obedient to and anxious to please her lord and master and his parents, and to display no troublesome pretensions and caprices. Another great advantage in such a marriage is that the wife has no interfering relatives to take her part against her husband. A free woman, on the contrary, is by no means always disposed to have, according to her own expression, "neither mouth nor tongue." She

is fully aware of her rights, and inclined to assert them; and the moral support afforded by her family gives her an assurance which the husband often finds extremely inconvenient. Should a slave bear a child to her master she cannot be resold, but has a right to remain and bring up her child in its father's house. Her offspring is considered legitimate, and inherits the father's property in equal shares with the children of his free wife, should he have one. In all probability her owner will set her free and marry her, in which case she assumes the social position, and is invested with all the rights and privileges of a free-born Osmanli woman.

Such good fortune apart, however, the lot of the slave-girl in Turkey is in many respects preferable to that of the majority of domestic servants in the West. Her duties are at no time arduous, be she housemaid, nursemaid, or lady's-maid, and leave her plenty of leisure to dream of the day when she, too, may be a *hanum*, with slaves to wait upon her—a castle in the air which, as we have seen, has every chance of taking solid form should Nature have endowed her with personal charms. When the ladies of the family go out walking, driving, shopping, picnicking, or to the public baths, a number of the slaves also share the treat. It is, no doubt, greatly owing to this custom of including some of the slaves in every party of

pleasure or excursion abroad, that misconceptions arise in the minds of foreigners as to the general practice of polygamy. A lady with slaves to dispose of naturally dresses and otherwise "gets them up" well, and drives them out in order to advertise them; and carriages filled with Turkish *hanums*—or what appear to the inexperienced tourist as such—are by him put down as filled with the wives or *odalisks* of one Pasha, while they are in reality the private property of his wife. I remember, indeed, in the early days of my residence in Turkey, being myself considerably puzzled as to the status of the half-dozen richly dressed young women who arrived with a Pasha's lady to pay a call,—or, rather, a three-hours' visitation,—and who, according to Turkish custom, on arriving, divested themselves of their outdoor gear.

It is considered by Moslems a pious and meritorious act to free a slave, and Osmanli men and women frequently in their wills, or on their death-beds, bequeath their liberty to the slaves of the household. A male slave on his manumission at once becomes, so far as civil rights are concerned, the equal of his former master, and may aspire to the highest office or dignity in the State; while a female slave, on being set free, whether married to a native Osmanli or to a freed man of her own class, acquires the title of *hanum* and all the other privileges of a free-born woman.

It is also a very common practice for childless couples and widows to enfranchise and adopt as their heirs slave-children, both boys and girls, whom they have purchased, and to whom they have taken a fancy. I was some years ago in the habit of meeting a lady, a Circassian by birth, who, brought to Constantinople as a mere infant, had herself been purchased and adopted by a lady of high rank. When left in middle age a childless widow, she in her turn enfranchised and adopted two little Circassian girls, whom she brought up and for whom she found husbands.

In former times the female slaves who peopled the harems of Turkey belonged to a great variety of races and nationalities, European as well as Asiatic; but at the present day the Circassian race furnishes the great majority, the rest of the white slaves being Yezidis from Kurdistan, or Georgians; though, since the Russian occupation of that former happy hunting-ground of the slave-dealer, this traffic has only been carried on clandestinely. A considerable number of negroes and Abyssinians are also annually smuggled into the country from Africa. Quite recently I met on board a Mediterranean steamer the wife of a Turkish governor, who, apparently ignoring the cession so many years ago of Cyprus to Great Britain, announced her intention of proceeding to that island for the purpose of replen-



ishing her household—its position having no doubt been in former days found convenient as a central market for the human cargoes shipped from Africa, Syria, and Southern Asia Minor.

The demand for slaves for the service of Turkish households is practically perennial, seeing that, instead of forming a separate class or caste in the country, the vast majority of bondsmen and -women in the course of a few years obtain their liberty and become merged in the free Ottoman nation. The large number of Africans of both sexes introduced for centuries past into Turkey, and also eventually manumitted, might lead one to expect to find a considerable coloured element in the population. This, however, is not the case. The climate appears to be unfavourable to the propagation of the coloured races, and the few negro or mulatto children who come into the world die, as a rule, in infancy.

Daily life in a Turkish harem is no doubt, as a rule, somewhat monotonous, and in some ways the liberty of a Turkish lady is certainly more restricted than that of European women generally; but in her own home she is as absolutely mistress of her time as of her property; and to judge by the number of Turkish women one meets in the streets, on the steamers plying between Galata and the many suburbs on the Bosphorus, and, on holidays, at the various pleasure resorts, she is also allowed a great deal of

out-of-door liberty. The *hanum*, as may be supposed, begins her day with the indispensable cup of coffee and the cigarette. She may then take her bath, or what on ordinary occasions does duty for one. The young ladies wash at the hours of *abtest*—the ablution that precedes the five daily prayers—the slaves when they can find time. The *hanum* then waits upon her husband, brings his coffee and *tchibouk*, his pelisse and slippers. If he is an official he will now look at his morning's letters, bestowing at intervals a few words on his wife, who addresses him as *Effendi* ("Sir"), and always with great deference—not, however, greater than was customary among people of quality in England some generations ago. The children will then appear in their nightgear, and, after kissing their father's hand, receive from their mother a few coppers to buy their breakfast, which is generally provided in this irregular way, and consists chiefly of fancy bread, with the addition of fruit in summer and cheese or sweets in winter.

The day's occupation begins as soon as the *Effendi* has left the *haremlik*. If this should include any special household work, such as washing, ironing, or the making of cake or preserves, the women, especially in the provinces, no matter how high their rank, or how numerous their slaves, will personally supervise or even take part in it; for Turkish women generally, having so

few interests outside the home, are naturally very domesticated, and no accomplishments are so much appreciated in the average marriageable maiden as the domestic arts of cooking, laundry- and needlework. Much time is also devoted to embroidering the scarfs, towels, sheets, quilts, and other articles destined to figure in the trousseau of a Turkish girl and bedeck her nuptial chamber.

Although the domestic economy of the natives of Turkey generally is of a somewhat hand-to-mouth character, so far as meat, vegetables, and fruits are concerned, it is not customary for women, whether Christian or Moslem, to frequent the shops in which fresh provisions are sold, and the family marketing for the wealthy is usually performed by a man-servant, and among the poorer by the men and children of the family. Accounts are settled daily between the *ayvas*, as the purveyor is termed, and the mistress, through the revolving cupboard or at the kitchen door, behind which the lady sits with a muslin veil thrown over her head — a transaction which to a bystander generally appears to call for elevated voices and language more forcible than polite. Like all Orientals, the Turks indulge in but two meals a day — the *karvalto*, which corresponds to the French *déjeuner*, and may be eaten at any time between eleven and one o'clock, and the *yemek*, or dinner, usually partaken of at sunset,

though punctuality is by no means a feature of an Osmanli household. Harem hospitality generally takes the form of luncheon-parties, as, save during Ramazan, no women, and few men, go abroad after sunset, and dinner is the only meal which a Turk eats in the bosom of his family. This meal is always, among the well-to-do, preceded by *mezze*, or *hors d'œuvre*,—consisting of pistachio nuts, salted fish-roe, radishes, cucumbers, olives, and similar entreés, often flanked with a decanter of *raki*, the native spirit, unless the *Effendi* is a strait-laced and strict Moslem of the old school,—which are partaken of, weather permitting, in the garden or on the verandah, family discussion often postponing the evening meal indefinitely. A Turkish dinner comprises a great many courses, sometimes ten or twelve, a number of which will be of vegetables often stuffed with rice, minced meat and seasoning, and cooked in oil. The meat is generally, to an English palate, overdone and badly served, except perhaps the lamb roasted whole and stuffed with rice, pine kernels, and currants, and the *kebab*—small pieces of meat broiled on skewers and served with a kind of batter-pudding. The last course before the sweets is invariably either the native *pilaf*, or macaroni, with tomato-sauce and grated cheese. No liquids are partaken of at table, but fruit, such as watermelon, is often eaten between the

courses. The sweets are numerous and varied, and include many delicious fruit compotes.

When dinner has been announced, the hostess leads the way into the dining-room. Servants approach and pour water over the hands from quaintly shaped brass jugs; others hold basins to catch it as it falls, for Orientals never wash save in running water; others offer embroidered towels, which are retained for use as napkins during the meal. With European furniture, European customs have been largely adopted by the *élite* of Constantinople society; but the Turks generally still take their meals seated on the floor round the low circular tray-stand, on which the above-mentioned dishes are placed in succession, helping themselves with their fingers without the intervention of plates, forks, or spoons, save for the soup. About half a dozen persons sit, as a rule, round each tray, and if the guests are numerous two or more trays are served. The hostess, if she be of higher rank than her guests, is the first to dip her spoon into the soup-tureen, otherwise, with a graceful salaam and the words: "*Bouyourn Effendi*," she politely invites the lady entitled to precedence to begin.

The way in which coffee is served is one of the prettiest of old Turkish customs. A number of slaves enter the room and stand in a row at the lower end with arms crossed on their breasts—the usual attitude of respect. A *kalfa*, or

head-servant, carries in the coffee service on a tray draped with a napkin handsomely embroidered at either end, and takes up her station in the centre of the apartment. One by one the attendants advance, each pours out a cup of the carefully prepared beverage, places it in a silver holder, and hands it to a guest, and then retires to a distance until she is required to take the empty cup.

If the lady has a son of marriageable age, the selection of a suitable bride for him will afford her considerable occupation. For, bachelorhood being held in light esteem among Moslems, the state of matrimony is correspondingly honoured, and early marriages are the rule. Should no maiden among her acquaintance appear to possess all the qualifications she requires in a daughter-in-law, the *hanum* looks farther afield. From her friends, or from one of the numerous old women who make a living by hawking articles of dress, jewellery, cosmetics, and perfumes, from harem to harem—a class who perform all the “back-stair” intrigue of the East—she will soon procure a list of eligible maidens, and, accompanied by one or two relatives and a professional matchmaker, set out on a tour of inspection. Personal introductions are quite unnecessary under such circumstances; the ladies are at once admitted by the portress and conducted up-stairs to an anteroom, where, while being divested of their outdoor gear by

another waiting-maid, they announce the object of their visit. Informed of this, the lady of the house hastens to receive her visitors with all honour in the drawing-room, while her eldest daughter proceeds to dress and adorn herself with the utmost care in order to make a favourable impression on the "viewers." The two mothers meanwhile, studiously avoiding the subject at issue, exchange conventional compliments, until the *portière* is raised and the maiden enters the room, becoming at once "the cynosure of all eyes." She approaches to kiss in turn the hands of all the guests, and then serves them with coffee from the tray with which a slave has followed her into the room. After waiting to remove the empty cups, she salaams low, and disappears. "*Mashallah!*" the visitors — whatever their private opinion may be — are required by custom to exclaim: "What a beauty! Your daughter, *Hanum Effendi*, is like a full moon. What splendid hair she has, and what eyes!" And the chief "viewer" proceeds to expatiate on the excellent qualities and prospects of her son, states the amount of dower he is prepared to settle on his bride, and the sum to be paid to her parents; makes inquiries as to the girl's age and fortune, if any; and finally departs, saying: "If it is their *Kismet*, they may become better acquainted." After some half-dozen girls have been thus inspected, the mother returns home

to describe them to her husband and son. The selection made, intermediaries are despatched to the family of the fortunate maiden to settle the preliminaries, and if no hitch occurs the customary presents are exchanged and the betrothal concluded.

In a middle-class harem containing several marriageable daughters, these exciting episodes, no doubt, happen somewhat frequently, and considerably vary the monotony of life until all the olive-branches are satisfactorily "married and settled." And it may be here remarked that, notwithstanding all the social and religious conventionalities which, as we have seen, surround the lives of Osmanli girls, love occasionally surmounts the barriers of harem restraint, and romance ends happily in marriage. It is said that an old maid does not exist in Turkish society, so rarely is it that a husband cannot be found for a girl of marriageable age; for the plain or deformed daughter of a wealthy man will be bestowed on some needy youth, to the furtherance of whose ambitious schemes the patronage of her father is necessary, and many Pashas of high rank, and even Grand Viziers, have owed their success in life to the influence and interest possessed by their wives.

Wedding and other family festivals, promenading, driving, shopping, and going to the public *hammam*, or Turkish bath, are the chief out-of-



door amusements of Mohammedan women. For all these, except the last, the *Effendi's* permission must be obtained. If he is inclined to be jealous or strait-laced, he may object to his family being seen much out of doors; but as a rule leave is freely granted. If a drive is projected, the children and the slaves all clamour to be taken. The former may be bribed with money or sweets to remain at home; but it is not always without tears and quarrels that it is settled who among the latter shall accompany their mistresses. A Mohammedan gentleman, be it observed, never, under any circumstances, goes abroad in company with the women of his household. Little girls under twelve years of age, dressed for the most part in a travesty of European costume, may often be seen walking, driving, or paying calls with their fathers or brothers, and are also allowed free access to the *selamlık*. But, the veil once donned, a girl enters the ranks of womanhood, and is thenceforward amenable to the law of *namekhrām* and subject to all the restrictions of the harem. The reason of this separation of the sexes out-of-doors is sufficiently obvious; for a father or brother could not frequent the public promenades in company with his womenkind without bringing them directly under the notice of his men acquaintances, and thus infringing the fundamental principle of the harem system.

In the houses of a few high dignitaries of the old school, as well as in the Imperial palaces, negro eunuchs still act as intermediaries between the outer world and the ladies of the harem, whom they accompany whenever they go abroad, walking or driving. In the house they also take charge of the children of both sexes, and superintend the conduct of the female slaves of every grade from *odalisk* to scullery-maid.

Going to the *hammam* is made an occasion of great ceremony. The bath is the Turkish lady's club, where she meets her friends, is introduced to new acquaintances, and hears all the news of the day. Here the *hanums* also congregate for the ceremonial ablution connected with the celebration of weddings and other family events, accompanied by their daughters, infant sons, and slaves, all of whom participate in the ablutionary process. A complete outfit of fine garments for each lady is carried to the *hammam* by a slave, tied up in a *boktcha*, or bundle-wrap — the primitive and universal portmanteau — made generally of brocaded silk, and often embroidered with pearls and gold thread. These garments are donned after the bath, together with all the finest jewels, for the admiration, and perhaps envy, of the other ladies they are sure to meet at that social centre. Other slaves carry rugs, towels, brass basins, and a score of other mysterious articles considered necessary for this im-

portant function, besides fruits and refreshments of all kinds. And here the ladies remain for the best part of the day, eating, drinking, singing, and frolicking in the intervals of the various operations they undergo of repeated soapings, rinsings, rubbings, applications of crushed laurel-berries to the hair to render it black and glossy, or of henna to impart an auburn tint, of the latter also to the finger- and toe-nails to stain them of an orange colour, and other mysteries of the toilette impossible to describe.

The behaviour of a party of Turkish women when abroad depends naturally upon the character of the *Bash Kadin*. If this lady belongs to the well-bred and dignified class of *hanums*, they will proceed quietly and decorously to their destination, whether this be the bazaars, the suburbs, or the harem of a friend, and, their object accomplished, return home in a few hours. But should the *hanum* be of a gay and frolicsome disposition, or have passed part of her life in the Imperial Serai, the behaviour of her party will be strikingly different. The occupants of the carriages divert themselves by exchanging pleasantries with the coachmen and attendants—if these are sufficiently young and handsome—and make salaams and remarks to the passers-by. Arrived at the European shops, they flirt with the shopkeepers and their assistants, wander about and inspect the goods, asking the most

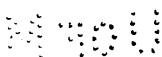
absurd questions concerning the use of articles not familiar to them. Still greater, however, is the abandon when a picnic or long drive into the country is the object of the day's outing. Osmanli women are passionately fond of the open air; and the number of charming resorts within easy reach of the capital, added to the most magnificent climate in the world, offer every facility for the indulgence of this taste. Every provincial city and town possesses likewise in its vicinity a choice of delightful situations where the eye can drink its fill of beauty from verdant earth, azure sky, or sunlit sea; and it is almost impossible to visit any of these spots without finding there a group of Osmanli women "taking their *kaif*." Among the resorts most affected by the inhabitants of the capital are the Sweet Waters of Europe, the Sweet Waters of Asia, the Sultan's Valley, and the Vale of Lindens. When on their way to this or some other suburban promenade, the gaiety and fun indulged in by these lively *hanums* and their attendants baffle description. Their provocative behaviour towards Christians and others with whom they come in contact is, no doubt, largely prompted by the knowledge of their immunity from insult, for they are perfectly aware that no one would dare to take advantage of it, and that the only punishment to which the levity of their conduct lays them open is the stern rebuke of a

grave and reverend *Hodja*. Arrived at their destination, the *hanums* and their slaves abandon themselves to unrestrained enjoyment. Seated cross-legged on the carpets which they have brought with them, they pass the time in eating fruits, sweets, cakes, and other dainties, sipping coffee, and smoking cigarettes, varying these pursuits with singing and dancing. Or they roam over the green meadows, romping and racing with shouts of merry laughter and joking indescribable. As soon, however, as the shadows begin to lengthen, they prepare to depart; for they set out early in order to have a long day, and are careful to arrive home before sunset in order to receive their *Effendi* on his arrival.

It is a remarkable fact that the more secluded the domestic life of a people the greater is the publicity given to ceremonies connected with family events, and the observances of the Osmanlis form no exception to this rule. Births, circumcisions, weddings, and funerals are all celebrated with elaborate ceremonial, religious and secular, in which the neighbourhood is to a great extent invited to participate. The festivities connected with such events constitute, indeed, the chief recreations of Osmanli women. On the third day after the birth of her firstborn, a mother holds a formal reception, for which invitations, accompanied by bottles of sherbet, are

carried round to friends by old women, whose profession is that of *Musdadjis*, or "bringers of tidings." Open house is also kept on this day, and all visitors, whether invited or not, are hospitably received, with this distinction, that the bidden guests are regaled with luncheon, and the unbidden with light refreshments only. Musicians are in attendance to receive and accompany up-stairs the most distinguished guests, who arrive in parties preceded by servants carrying baskets of sweets prettily decorated with flowers, and tied up with gauze and ribbons. If the father of the child holds any official post, it is customary for his fellow-employees to send, with the baskets of sweets, more or less valuable presents. After divesting themselves of their veils and cloaks in the anteroom, the visitors are ushered with great ceremony into the state bed-chamber.

"*Mashallah!* Long-lived and happy may it be!" is the salutation of the matrons to the happy mother, who kisses their hands in acknowledgment of their good wishes. Little or no notice is taken of the baby personally, as the mother and her near relatives are best pleased when it is altogether ignored and spared the risk of the evil eye being cast upon it. If, however, feminine curiosity and interest in babies are too strong to allow of the infant's being entirely overlooked, the *hanums*, after pretending to spit



at it, conceal their admiration under some such disparaging remarks as "Nasty, ugly little thing!" to show that they bear no malice. For in Turkey, as in many other countries, it is never safe to speak admiringly of either persons or things, any future accident or misfortune being certain to be attributed to the ill-feeling or malice underlying the honeyed words of commendation. On the eighth day, the mother goes to the public baths, the *Ebé Kadin*, or midwife, and a number of friends being invited to join in the ablutions and partake of luncheon or other refreshments. The company assemble at the house and proceed thither in procession to the *hammam*, the baby being carried in front by the *Ebé Kadin*. When all the mysterious processes usual on such occasions have been satisfactorily completed, the lady is wrapped in her *havlu*, or burnous of Turkish towelling, the fringed borders of which are worked in gold thread, and she proceeds to kiss the hands of all the elderly ladies present, who acknowledge the salute with the words, "May it be to your health!" Refreshments are offered at intervals during all these ceremonies, which take up the greater part of the day.

The ceremonies attending circumcision, described in Chapter VII., also involve much receiving and paying of visits by the ladies of the harem. But the event which most greatly rejoices the hearts of Osmanli women of all classes

is a wedding-*dughun*. Much greater space than is at my disposal would be necessary to describe the elaborate details of the six-days' ceremonial in the harems respectively of the bride's and bridegroom's parents, which immemorial custom makes obligatory on such occasions—the Monday carrying in state of the bride's plenishing to her new home, and the adornment with it of the nuptial chamber; the Tuesday procession to the public baths; the Wednesday visit of the bridegroom's mother and ceremony of the *Kena*, or dyeing of the bride's finger- and toe-nails; the Thursday procession of the bride to the abode of the bridegroom, preceded by music, and accompanied by a great concourse of ladies in carriages and men on horseback: and the two succeeding days of festivity, during which the newly wedded *hanum*, decked in her bridal array, receives the crowd of friends and acquaintances who flock to the house to offer their congratulations.

With regard to dress it is difficult to say what is not worn indoors at the present day by Osmanli women of the wealthier classes, as so many have, unfortunately, either wholly or in part, exchanged their own picturesque costume for what they believe to be Parisian fashions, the result being for the most part both ludicrous and lamentable. Such costumes are, however, as a rule, donned only for visiting or receptions, and loose wrappers are the order of the day for home





THE FRIDAY CEREMONY OF THE SELAMLIK. STATE PROCESSION OF THE  
SULTAN TO THE MOSQUE



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wear, especially in hot weather, when stockings are also often dispensed with. The lower ranks of slaves, who perform the more menial duties, are always unshod indoors, and wear for the most part but one simple cotton garment, which they tuck up into the girdle while at work, leaving their legs exposed almost to the knee. Their hair, however, they are most careful to cover from masculine gaze; and when—as must happen in a small household in which men-servants are not kept—their duties take them into the *selamlık*, their heads are further enveloped in veils of white muslin. In the interior of Asia Minor, the outdoor disguise of a Moslem woman is much more complete than in the capital and the European provinces, the upper part of her face being entirely concealed by a screen made of black horse-hair, and the lower part, together with the rest of her head, being swathed in folds of white calico. The silk *feridje* and semi-transparent *yashmak*, traditionally associated with harem ladies, is now seldom seen in the capital save in a closed brougham, its use having been almost entirely abandoned for street wear in favour of the *tchit-tcharf*, a garment which can perhaps be best described as two silken skirts of unequal length, open in front, the upper and shorter being thrown over the head and held or secured under the chin. A square piece of dark-coloured silk or muslin, attached to this with pins, hangs

over and completely conceals the face. This, however, can be thrown back at pleasure, leaving the features of the wearer completely exposed to view. And it is observable that half the women one meets in the streets of the capital without hesitation avail themselves of this facility.





## CHAPTER V

### COUNTRY LIFE

IN Asia Minor a considerable proportion of agricultural land is held by peasant and other small proprietors, Turkish for the most part, but in some localities Armenian, and also Greek. In Macedonia landed property is more unequally divided than in other parts of the Empire, great areas being united in large estates owned by native Beys, or by absentee landlords, who reside permanently in the towns, and who are represented by a *soubashi*, or agent. For in Turkey country life offers, generally speaking, few attractions to either Turks or Christians, and the prevalence of brigandage and general insecurity render town life imperative for all save those whose livelihood is drawn directly from the soil, and who have, consequently, no choice of domicile. The dimensions, and also the degree of elegance and comfort, of the mansions on these estates vary considerably according to the means and habits of the owner. Some of the more ancient are simple but spacious erections

in the style of the old Konaks in Stamboul, while others are in the form of solidly built quadrangular towers, several stories high, with windows in the upper floors, defended by massive iron bars and strong shutters—domestic fortresses which have frequently been called upon to withstand the attacks of brigands and other assailants. A high wall of masonry, roofed with tiles, encloses the garden, orchard, and farmyard, the first of which, even on a *tchiftlik* of the better class, presents an ill-kept, if luxuriant, aspect, while the last abounds with reeking dunghills and mud pools, amid which fowls, ducks, geese, and dogs hold high revel.

When a landed proprietor pays a long summer visit to his estate, accompanied by his family, the bedding, carpets, and household necessaries generally, are brought from town, and it is astonishing to see with how little luggage a Turkish family travels and makes itself comfortable on such occasions. Each person will have a *boktcha*, or bundle-wrap—the primitive portmanteau before mentioned—containing his or her wearing apparel; while the articles for general use will comprise a few lamps and candlesticks, a couple of brass jugs and basins, which in the morning and at mealtime make the round of the household, some copper cooking-vessels, a coffee service, and a few pieces of glass and crockery. The ladies and their attendants travel



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in some districts in a fashion similar to the *cacolet* of the Basque provinces. A kind of pannier-seat is attached to either side of the saddle of a mule or horse, and the fair occupants are screened from the rays of the sun and the gaze of the vulgar by semi-circular tilts or awnings, which sway, balloon-like, with the motion of the steed as he staggers along under the weight of his double burden. Travelling is, indeed, in Turkey, no very pleasant matter. The roads are generally in a deplorable state—knee-deep in dust in summer, and in winter full of treacherous holes. Bridges are few and far between, and, as a rule, out of repair, and fording, though easy enough in the dry season, offers considerable danger after rain.

The way in which an absentee proprietor spends his time when on an occasional visit to his estate naturally depends upon his pecuniary means and personal tastes. A sportsman will occasionally have a battue, or coursing party, or go out with his sons, guests, and servants for a day's expedition in quest of more distant game—deer and boar on the hills, or snipe and quail in the marshlands. His duties as landlord are confined to regulating accounts with his agent, hearing and deciding cases between that functionary and the tenants, giving instructions for future farming operations, and, lastly, realising the profits. As to improving the soil, introducing

modern and labour-saving machinery, building model cottages, and otherwise ameliorating the moral and material condition of his tenants—these are things that do not enter into the philosophy of a Turkish landed proprietor.

In the mean time, the Bey's womenkind contrive to amuse themselves in their own fashion during their annual *villeggiatura*. Turkish women, as I have already said, are passionately fond of the open air, and when in the country spend a great part of every day in roaming freely about in the most *négligé* of costumes, picnicking, singing, and amusing themselves according to their wont. Included in the "house-party" are generally a number of relatives, who lend their help in preparing the stores of winter provisions carried back to town by the family. These comprise tomato-sauce and pickles of various kinds, a kind of molasses made from grape-juice, macaroni pastes for soups and other dishes, fruit syrups for sherbet, and the great variety of elegant and carefully prepared sweets which are served to harem visitors on great occasions; for the *kiler*, as the storeroom for provisions is called, is a very important department of every Oriental household. Here, besides the above-mentioned confections, oil, honey, wine, and other liquids are stored for the winter in great jars of red earthenware, which recall those in which the Forty Thieves were hidden, or in

quaintly shaped flasks flanked by sacks of rice, flour, nuts, and dried fruits of all kinds for winter consumption.

These large estates belonging to absentee landlords are cultivated to a great extent on what is called in France the *métayer* system, the landlord providing the seed-corn in the first instance, while the peasant, who also finds his own yoke of oxen or buffaloes, performs all the labour. When the harvest has been reaped, the seed for the next season set aside, and the tithe deducted, the remainder of the produce is shared with the proprietor. If equitably carried out, this arrangement is by no means an unfavourable one for the *yeradji*, as the peasants working under this system are called. In Turkey, however, "might" is but too often "right," and the tiller of the soil frequently gets but an inadequate return for his labour. When the grain has been cut, it may not be removed from the field until the tithe-collector has been pleased to come and inspect the crop, no matter what weather may threaten, or what depredations be committed by the immense flocks of birds that are robbing the peasant of his profit. The computation of shares is also too often very unfairly made. A certain number of sheaves—forty, perhaps, of the finest and heaviest—are threshed separately, and the seed for the next year, the tithes, and the landlord's share are deducted according to

this standard, which leaves the *yeradji* an unfairly small portion of the produce. The *soubashi*, or bailiff, is also entitled to receive six measures each of barley and wheat for every head of cattle possessed by the peasant. And among other burdens which press hardly upon him are the payment of taxes, the frequent quartering in his cottage—especially if near a high-road—of *çaptiehs* and soldiers, and the obligation of performing statute labour whenever called upon, often with disastrous results to farm-labour and damage to carts and implements. It is hardly surprising that the *yeradji*, under all these unfavourable conditions, is generally more or less in debt to his landlord, who on his side has frequently embarrassments enough of his own. When one of these agricultural estates changes hands, any *yeradji* who may be in debt to the landlord is transferred with it in a sort of serfdom, terminable only on his paying up his arrears. Farm accounts are still generally kept by means of *chetolas*, notched sticks, a primitive method of computation which offers great facilities for the commission, wittingly or unwittingly, of errors. And if, on the one hand, the superabundance of rigidly observed feast days—183 in the year!—proves a hindrance to the Christian *yeradji's* freeing himself from debt, the unscrupulous manner in which the proprietor or his agent reckons accounts constitutes a further

obstacle to the breaking of the chain which binds him to the soil.

There are, however, in many parts of Turkey, as already remarked, a considerable number of so-called "head villages," or "free villages," the lands adjoining which are owned and tilled by peasant proprietors. Though perhaps in some districts less flourishing now than formerly, owing to changes in the forest regulations and to the exactions of local officials, the inhabitants of these villages live under far more favourable conditions than the *yeradjis*, and are in some cases, notwithstanding the extortions of the tithe- and tax-collector, comparatively wealthy and prosperous. But the taxes on agricultural produce are so heavy in themselves, and so iniquitously increased by the extortions of the local officials, that a farmer or vine-grower, finding the dues required of him out of all proportion to the value of the produce, will often destroy a standing crop or leave a great portion of his land untilled. The small agriculturist in Turkey is, indeed, perhaps the most highly taxed individual in the world. The taxes may be demanded at any time during the year, and perhaps more than once. The Imperial taxes are also for the most part farmed, and all the expenses of their collection, to say nothing of the tax-farmer's profit, are added to the burden of the agriculturist. Very frequently, too,—though this is quite illegal,—the

collecting is done by soldiers or *zaptiehs*, men whose pay, small as it is, is months in arrear, and who consequently have to "fend for themselves." As to the assessment, the system pursued is a masterpiece of simplicity. The question is not how much such and such a village ought to pay, according to the number of men it may contain, but how much it *can* pay, rich villages being called upon to make up the deficit of those in less prosperous circumstances. This point settled by the powers that be, the village council of landowners responsible for the payment of the lump sum meet to apportion to each householder of the community his share of the common burden. Seated cross-legged on a mat or on rush-bottomed stools under a leafy plane tree, or in the shadow of the mosque or church, the village fathers and their scribes, in coarse, baggy breeches, coloured shirts, and ample waist-shawls, discuss the financial position of their neighbours, and allot to each what they consider his rightful portion of the tax. The council is, however, collectively responsible for the taxes due from each householder, and bound to make up all deficits.

Notwithstanding the great fertility of soil and the climatic conditions, which allow of the cultivation of the products of both the Old and the New World, and a coast-line of eleven hundred miles, agriculture is in Turkey in a most back-

ward state. The explanation of this is hardly to be found in any peculiarity of the Ottoman character, which, though warlike and pastoral, is also agricultural—but in a variety of causes, the chief of which consists in the forms of land tenure, other contributing causes being the want of scientific knowledge, want of hands and capital, and want of means of communication. There are no great waterways as in Russia; railways as yet are only in their infancy; and “the ship of the desert” still swings his slow way into Smyrna over the Caravan Bridge with great bales of produce from the interior, raw cotton and wool, vallonina, jute, hemp, hides, and cereals. Large tracts of land, too, remain uncultivated, or have fallen out of cultivation, the quantity of corn being, it is computed, but a tenth of what the country might yield. To take one example—out of a tract of land, six hundred miles square, lying north of the town of Karaman in Asia Minor, fifty square miles only are cultivated.

Throughout Turkey generally, agriculture is carried on by native farmers in most primitive fashion, and with the aid of instruments the most archaic. No regular system of rotation of crops is observed by the peasant farmers, though on large estates the ordinary rule for rich lands is two crops of wheat to one of oats, then fallow one or more years, when wheat, followed by sesame, is again sown. In Macedonia, where arable

land abounds, it is allowed to be fallow more frequently. The only dressing the fields owned by natives receive is the treading of the sheep in spring and autumn; but the soil is naturally so fertile, and the crops ripen so early, especially in the southern provinces, that a bad harvest is of rare occurrence. The ground is broken to-day, as it was two thousand years ago, by the clumsy, one-handled, wooden Pelasgian plough drawn by a yoke or team of buffaloes; and in some places the grain is merely scattered over the stubble and ploughed in. Threshing is done in equally primitive fashion. The unbound sheaves are laid on the threshing-floor of beaten earth, and over them is driven round and round a team of three or four ponies who draw after them a heavy piece of wood studded with flints on which stands the driver, generally a young girl. This process, besides threshing the corn, breaks the straw into short lengths ready for cattle feeding. The grain is then winnowed by being thrown up in the air with wooden shovels.

The cereals chiefly raised are wheat and barley, maize, rye and oats, sesame and canary seed, and in some districts rice. Grapes are also grown wherever the soil and climate are suitable, and the numerous vineyards, large and small, afford employment for the greater part of the year to a large section of the rural population. A considerable proportion of the produce



is consumed on the spot or sent to market in the towns and cities, the rest being converted into "Sultana" raisins for exportation, or made into excellent wine, of which there are several varieties, the most esteemed being the red Niausta (from the town of that name in Macedonia), a kind of sherry produced near Smyrna, and the sweet "Samian" of which Byron sang, made in the Ægean island of Samos.

Silk culture, too, as a village industry, is carried on to a considerable extent both in European and Asiatic Turkey. When operations are on a large scale, the silkworm nurseries are often, for greater convenience, located in the mulberry plantations, which not infrequently extend over several acres. This profitable industry of rearing and feeding the silkworms begins in spring, as soon as the trees are in leaf, and lasts for about two months. The work connected with it, tedious and laborious as it is, is generally undertaken by the women. Tobacco also is extensively grown in Macedonia, Thrace, and elsewhere, and its cultivation and manufacture afford employment to both peasants and townfolk, especially in the neighbourhood of Drama and Cavalla, where Moslems and Christians of both sexes may be seen squatting side by side in the factories of the tobacco merchants, native and foreign, where the leaves of the fragrant weed are dried, sorted, and otherwise manipulated before being packed in

bales for exportation. For poverty is a more potent factor than even racial and religious prejudice, and the harvesting of any important product—such as tobacco, grapes, olives—brings together a heterogeneous crowd of labourers having nothing in common but dire necessity.

The villages of the *yeradjis* on these large estates present for the most part a pitiably poverty-stricken appearance, composed as they are of hovels built of mud and wattle. On the plains generally, indeed, the houses of the peasantry are constructed of these materials, and it is only in the hill districts that stone-built cottages are met with, whether their inhabitants are Greeks, Bulgarians, or Turkish. In the better class of cottages, however, the mud walls are white-washed within and without, the windows are glazed, and the roof is covered with tiles instead of reed-thatch, while the interior may consist of three good-sized apartments,—living-room, bedroom, and storeroom. The earthen floor is beaten hard and covered with coarse native matting and home-woven rugs, a few stools, a quaint walnut-wood coffer or two, and a low divan constituting all the furniture.

On the ill-paved and often mud-pooled marketplace, which usually occupies the centre of Turkish villages and small towns, the peasants collect from the neighbouring country with their sheep and cattle, and their carts and beasts of burden

laden with produce of all kinds for sale or barter, Bulgarian weavers with rolls of cloth, Gipsies with sieves, coarse baskets, and other articles for domestic use. Surrounding the square are the *bakai's*, or chandler's shop, the butcher's stall, and, of course, the shanty which does duty as a café, at which the market-folk refresh themselves in frugal fashion and hear the news of the countryside, perhaps also some faint echo of political events culled from a stray journal at least a month old. Close by, in a Turkish village, stands the little whitewashed mosque with its cypress-shadowed cemetery. At one end of the green is the threshing-floor, generally of beaten earth, but sometimes paved, used by all the villagers in turn, and on feast-days by the youths for their wrestling matches; and at the other, the village well, round which the maidens collect towards sunset with their large red earthen water-jars, unchanged in shape since the days of Helen and Andromache.

Every village in Turkey, both Moslem and Christian, is presided over by a *Kodja-bashi*—headman, or mayor—who settles petty disputes, and is held responsible by the authorities for the good behaviour of his parishioners. It is also his business, as inns are non-existent save in large towns, to provide lodging for travellers and officials who may wish to spend the night at his village, and to arrange for the accommodation

of troops or *çaptihs* passing through on their way from one town to another. The office of Kodja-bashi naturally entails considerable responsibility upon its holder, and, under the social and political conditions which obtain in Turkey, is frequently one of no little difficulty. It has, however, no doubt, its compensations, and places its possessor in a Christian village in a position superior to that of the *papa*, as the parish priest is termed, whose emoluments are almost entirely derived from the fees paid by his flock—generally in kind—for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and “liturgies,” and superior to that of the peasant class to which he by birth belongs.

The Imâm of a Turkish village occupies a position somewhat superior to that of a Christian *papa*, having probably received a fair education, according to Turkish ideas, in the Medresseh of a provincial town, and his mosque possesses an endowment bequeathed by some pious departed Moslem. Generally, however, he has to combine in his own person all the offices assigned in a town mosque to half a dozen different functionaries. Five times daily he ascends his little minaret to call the faithful to the performance of their customary prayers; and his duty it also is to wash and prepare for burial the bodies of his male parishioners, when “the Cupbearer of the Sphere” shall have bidden them to partake of the joys of the Moslem paradise. But whether



THE GYPSY SMITH'S DAUGHTERS.



satisfied or not with his condition, he has little prospect of changing or ameliorating it. I remember once hearing a story of an ambitious *hodja* of a village in Asia Minor, who, having some ability as a preacher, hit upon the following expedient for attaining a wider sphere of action than fortune had apparently assigned him. Travelling to Constantinople, where he was quite unknown, he represented himself as a Christian monk, who, convinced of the superior merits of the religion of Mohammed, desired to be received into the fold of the True Believers. The remarkably rapid progress made by this convert in knowledge of the Koran and Moslem theology generally simply astounded his reverend instructors. Before long he had passed all the usual examinations and taken a high degree, and his reputation for learning and eloquence as a preacher soon obtained for him the post of Mollah in the town near which stood the humble *mesdjid* he had previously served.

Whatever may be the opinion of European travellers and residents in Turkey as to the character of its townspeople, all who have ever come into personal contact with the Turkish peasantry have been unanimous in praise of their simple honesty and sobriety, their passive contentment and dignified resignation to the will of Allah and their Padishah, and their passionate attachment to the land which has been bought

by the blood of their forefathers. Physically, a Turkish peasant is well-built, healthy, and, owing no doubt to his habitual abstemiousness, possesses remarkable powers of endurance. With him days and seasons succeed each other in a dull round of laborious and frugal monotony, for, unlike his Christian neighbours, he has no weekly dance, no frequently recurring village feast, and but little music to vary the uniformity of his life. His cup of coffee, taken before the labours of the day begin and at their close, and his poor *tchibouk* at intervals, constitute for him all the luxuries of life. His cottage, often a mere mud hovel, though clean, is comfortless enough, cold in winter and hot in summer, and contains little in the way of furniture beyond a scanty supply of bedding and a few rugs, stools, and cooking utensils. Turkish villages, indeed, throughout the Empire wear a much more impoverished and much less animated aspect than do those of their Christian neighbours. For a Turkish peasant's wife and daughters take a less active part, as a rule, in field and farm work than do the Christian women, and are never seen, like them, spinning, knitting, and sewing at their cottage doors. Moslems and Christians certainly suffer alike from the arbitrary exactions of their common enemy, the tax-gatherer. But the Turkish peasantry, besides lacking the active aid of their women folk, are in addition terribly handicapped by the





**TURKISH PEASANTS AND DRAUGHT OXEN, ASIA MINOR**



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conscription, from which the Christian population of Turkey has been exempt since the discontinuance, in 1675, of the Tribute of Children for the Janissary Corps, paying in lieu thereof the *kharatch*, or poll-tax, a comparatively light imposition. For the abolition of the feudal system, and also of the Janissary Corps, at the beginning of the last century, and the placing of the army on a European footing, created a demand for soldiers from the peasant class unknown in previous centuries; while the method pursued in levying conscripts often results in acts of grave injustice to this submissive and loyal section of the population. The agricultural communities consequently labour under the permanent disadvantage of being deprived of the co-operation of a considerable proportion of their younger and more energetic members; and when, in time of war, the majority of the able-bodied are, as reservists, also called away, the situation becomes one of real hardship. The old men, the raw boys, and the women—unused to labour and consequently incapable of coping with it—struggle on for a time as best they can, often finding themselves at length compelled to abandon their holdings and take refuge in some neighbouring town or larger village. Their little homesteads thus deserted soon fall into ruin, and their untilled fields are added to the vast waste lands of the Empire. However, there is grave reason to fear that the

larger villages will, in time, share the fate of the hamlets, unless a sound administration speedily succeeds to the present anarchy, and introduces such radical changes as will permanently ameliorate the condition of the peasantry, who constitute morally and physically the backbone of the nation.

I have said that a bad harvest is of rare occurrence in Turkey; but there are, of course, exceptions, and every dozen years or so there is more or less of a drought, when the crops in the great open plains perish for want of moisture, and the cattle die by hundreds unless driven off in time and sold much under their value to those living in more fortunate localities. At such times it is customary for both Moslems and Christians to invoke the aid of the celestial powers by special ceremonies, as in former days the pagan rain-god was propitiated in the same localities in times of drought. With the Turks all the children attending the *mektebs*, or parish schools, march in procession, headed by their *hodjas*, through the streets of the towns to the open plain, where, after spreading their carpets, they offer up prayers, interspersed with many prostrations. After continuing this religious exercise for nearly an hour, the children fall into rank again, wailing, as they trail slowly back to the town, a monotonous and weirdly melancholy chant. In Macedonia a procession of Christian

children visit all the wells and springs of the neighbourhood. At their head walks a girl called the Perperia—generally a Gipsy, by the way—adorned with flowers, who at every halting-place is drenched with water by her companions, who sing a Greek invocation beginning:

“ Perperia, all fresh bedewed,  
Freshen all the neighbourhood.  
By the woods, on the highway,  
As thou goest to God now pray:  
Oh, my God, upon the plain  
Send Thou us a still small rain,  
That the fields may fruitful be,  
Vines grape-laden we may see,” etc.





## CHAPTER VI

### LIFE AT YILDIZ KIOSK

THE vast assemblage of buildings still retaining the name of the modest villa which Sultan Abdul Hamid, soon after his accession, chose as his abode in preference to any of the palaces on the shores of the Bosphorus, is surrounded on every side by extensive wooded grounds, forming a sort of park enclosed within high walls, flanked at intervals by ugly yellow barracks, in which are quartered the troops, Arabian, Albanian, and Turkish, chosen to watch over the safety of the mighty Padishah. Beyond these, again, the hills and valleys are occupied by blockhouses and sentry-boxes, while along the shore of the Bosphorus stretches the long frontage of the palace of Tcheragan, in which the ex-Sultan, poor mad Murad Effendi, has for twenty-seven years lived the solitary existence of a strictly guarded captive, unapproachable by any save those attached to his immediate service and devoted to the interests of the reigning Sultan. In common with the rest of the royal

palaces, Yildiz Kiosk is practically, like the abodes of private individuals, divided into *haremlik* and *selamlık*, connected by the *mabeyn*. Here the buildings at the top of the hill, in which the officials in waiting and a host of functionaries and their attendants have their quarters, constitute the *selamlık*; the palatial edifice containing the Sultan's private apartments forms the *mabeyn*, and is generally so termed; while the ladies of the harem are accommodated in a mansion connected with it by a long corridor, and agreeably situated in the Imperial demesne, surrounded by delightful flower-gardens, artificial lakes, and woods intersected with winding paths leading to various pleasure-kiosks. In the Imperial park are situated also the Sultan's private theatre and various detached pavilions and villas. One of the latter, styled the Palace Merassim, has been specially erected and furnished for the reception of European princes of the blood.

The Commander of the Faithful, as is well known, has a great repugnance to going beyond the walls of his private domain, and is thus enabled to fulfil all the duties of hospitality and courtesy to his occasional royal guests without exposing his Imperial person to the gaze of the vulgar and the danger of assassination, of which he is believed to live in constant dread. On certain occasions, however, custom and precedent oblige the Padishah to do violence to his desire

for seclusion, and to show himself to his loyal subjects, these occasions being termed generally *Selamlık*, from *selam*, "salutation." It has been the immemorial custom for Turkish Sultans to proceed in state to one of the principal mosques of the capital for the performance of the midday Friday prayers; and no consideration of any kind is allowed to prevent the present sovereign's fulfilling this religious obligation, as his failure to show himself on this day would give rise to rumours of his illness or death, and consequent political complications. And however indisposed the Padishah may be, at the important hour he is invariably reported by his *entourage* to be in the best of health, and he nerves himself for his weekly public appearance. But even on these occasions Sultan Abdul Hamid deviates from the habits of his ancestors, and instead of making a weekly progress through the streets of his capital amid the acclamations of loyal subjects, he prefers to perform the Friday *namaz* in the private mosque bearing his own name, built some years ago in the palace precincts. From the gate of Yildiz descends a steep road, having on one side annexes of the palace, terminating in a pavilion, from the windows of which the foreign ambassadors and other distinguished persons and their friends may witness the ceremony. A second pavilion a little lower down, which formerly accommodated unofficial European spec-



tators, has lately been demolished. On the other side is a railed-in garden surrounding the mosque, new and white, of a pseudo-Oriental style of architecture.

Some time before midday on Friday the roads surrounding the mosque are filled with troops belonging to the first and second army divisions. The first to arrive are the battalions of the Albanian or Arab Zouaves, with their quaintly twisted red turbans, who take up their positions near the palace gates; after them come the marines, followed by battalions of Anatolian infantry, who form in lines several deep on either side of the roadway, while cavalry regiments take up their positions behind them, flanked again by gendarmes in couples. The Turkish populace, composed chiefly of women, and interspersed largely with palace spies, occupies every available inch of the roadway on the lower side of the mosque, but can nowadays see nothing of the ceremony beyond the arrival and departure of the troops; and it is, consequently, impossible for any one to approach and present petitions personally to the Sultan, as in previous reigns had always been the privilege of his subjects during his progress to and from the mosque on Fridays. Students of the military colleges are, it is said, forbidden to be present, and a sharp lookout is kept by the spies on all Turks of the better class who may venture to mingle

with the crowd. Strains of military music fill the air; officers in smart, well-fitting uniforms ride to and fro on beautiful Arabs; well-appointed carriages pass, conveying high civil functionaries to the mosque, or members of the various foreign embassies and legations to the pavilion. Presently broughams arrive from the palace, bearing uniform-clad princes and white-veiled Sultanas; and lastly, driven very slowly in a smart landau, appears the Padishah himself. A bugle sounds, and simultaneously from a thousand throats the cry of "*Padishahim chok Yasha!*" ("Long live the Sultan!"), thrice repeated, greets the Commander of the Faithful. Salaaming continually, in acknowledgment of the cheers and salutes, Abdul Hamid passes down the road and through the gates to the stairway leading to the private entrance and saloon, a passing glimpse only being caught of his keen, astute, yet dignified face, with its longish, hooked nose, and beard and moustache already quite grey. On alighting, the Commander of the Faithful is received and surrounded by a little crowd of obsequious dignitaries, civil and military, and having mounted the short flight of carpeted stairs, he courteously turns before entering to acknowledge with the military salute the homage of his troops, who again cry, "Long live the Sultan!" At this moment, in accordance with a curious ancient usage, half a dozen

dwarfs, a number of whom are still maintained in the old *Serai*, cry out in chorus the admonition, "Be not overproud, my Padishah! there is also One above you, even Allah!"

Half an hour or so elapses, during which the waiting multitude—or, at least, that section of it sufficiently well placed—has leisure to contemplate the wide view of the Bosphorus and Stamboul extending below to the south; to admire the half-dozen superb saddle-horses which have been led behind the Imperial carriage; and to watch the *Sakas*, or regimental water-carriers, distribute the contents of their curious leathern jacks among the soldiery. Presently the battalions are called to attention, form again into line, and march past the northern side of the mosque before the Sultan, who is stationed at one of the saloon windows. A stir follows at the door, the Padishah emerges, and now, seated in a victoria drawn by a pair of spirited greys, the reins of which he himself holds, again passes, closely surrounded by staff-officers on horseback and palace attendants on foot, and disappears through the gates of Yildiz Kiosk. In addition to the Friday *selamlik* there are five other occasions in the course of the year on which the Sultan must show himself in public. Two of these are the ceremonies connected respectively with the opening of the Greater and Lesser Bairam; the others are the Veneration of the Prophet's Mantle in mid-

Ramazan, the *Mevlud*, or Birthday of the Prophet, and the departure of the Caravan of Pilgrims to Mekka, all of which are elsewhere described.

The Commander of the Faithful is no *roi fainéant*. Like the humblest of his subjects, he rises with the sun all the year round, often commencing his morning's work at five o'clock, after partaking, with his first cigarette, of a cup of coffee prepared in his study by the chief coffee-maker; for the Sultan is a great smoker and coffee-drinker, and is never, it is said, without a cigarette (made in his presence) between his fingers; and he is followed everywhere about the palace grounds, when he takes walking or riding exercise, by his *cafédji-bashi*, who carries the paraphernalia requisite for preparing at a moment's notice a cup of his favourite beverage. He has also his little superstitions, like most of his ancestors; and as it was once prophesied to him by a Gipsy that he would reign as long as he continued to drink the water from the springs of Kiathané in the Valley of the Sweet Waters, his daily supplies are regularly brought thence in sealed jars, and no other passes his lips. The Sultan partakes of a light breakfast of eggs and milk about six o'clock; about ten o'clock he indulges in a rather more substantial *déjeuner*; and, like the rest of his subjects, he dines at sunset. The Imperial dinner, which is eaten in solitude, and served with great state and cere-

monial, consists of a number of courses, all of a very simple character, as the Sultan is no Sybarite, and for hygienic reasons eschews rich dishes, though "for his stomach's sake" he follows St. Paul's advice, taking occasionally a little brandy, champagne, or punch.

Formerly the dishes for the Imperial table were prepared in the harem under the immediate superintendence of the Validé Sultana—as the mother of the reigning Sultan is by courtesy termed—and sent in sealed napkins to the *ma-beyn*. His Majesty Abdul Hamid, however, having no mother to watch over him, guards against the possibility of poison by having a private kitchen for the service of his own table, which is quite a little fortress, with barred windows and a massive door. When the Sultan intimates to his attendants that he wishes to dine, a table is placed before him laid for one, and the bread, water, and dishes, all enveloped in napkins, and sealed by the *Kilerdji*, or Chief Steward, are carried in solemn procession from the kitchen on trays by a number of lackeys; all persons whom the Sultan's dinner may encounter on its passage from the kitchen to the presence bowing before it with their hands clasped on their stomachs. The seals are broken in the Sultan's presence and the dishes placed in succession on the table by the *Kilerdji*, who may possibly be commanded to partake of the viands

himself should his Imperial master be suddenly seized with an apprehension of poison, and to the same motive is also attributed his habit of feeding several cats and dogs from his table. After partaking of one or two of the dishes placed before him, the Sultan, as a mark of royal favour, names those of his courtiers to whom he wishes the rest to be conveyed. And on Friday, in the midst of the great military display awaiting the Sultan's appearance at the gates of Yildiz Kiosk, one may see palace attendants sallying forth bearing dishes enveloped in napkins tied at the four corners, destined for the Court dignitaries their Imperial master thus delights to honour, a number of whom occupy private houses on the hill between Pera and Yildiz, acquired by the Padishah in order to prevent the European colony's spreading in the latter direction.

The intervals between these simple royal repasts are occupied chiefly with the transaction of State business. Every Sultan of Turkey has been, theoretically at least, an autocratic ruler, but the degree of power exerted by each of the descendants of Othman has varied according to the vigour of his character and the social and political conditions of his time. But the present reign has witnessed the most remarkable union of all the conditions requisite for real autocracy—an extension of the telegraph system throughout the Empire, an absence of all elements capable of

thwarting or resisting the sovereign will, and a prince who scorns delights and spends laborious days in controlling every detail of government. Nominally, the affairs of the Empire are in the hands of the two Councils—the Cabinet Council, presided over by the Grand Vizier, and including the Shekh-ul-Islam and most of the Ministers, of whom there are at present twelve; and the Council of State, a body somewhat resembling the English Privy Council, both of which sit at the Sublime Porte. The office of Grand Vizier has, however, under the present reign been deprived of much of the importance formerly attached to it, when that functionary was the sole recipient of the Sultan's delegated power, and stood between him and all the other officers of State; and Abdul Hamid communicates his wishes directly, not only to his Ministers, but also very frequently to the heads of subordinate departments. Every vestige of executive authority has, indeed, been of late years removed from the Porte and centred in Yildiz Kiosk, and the various bureaux now there established have usurped the functions of every department of the Porte. The natural result of this arrangement has been the installation at the palace of a vast body of officials of all grades, civil and military, between whom and their Imperial master a large staff of secretaries act as intermediaries. The courtiers and principal secretaries are the recipients of all

business connected with the various State Departments, and deal with it after submitting it to the Sultan. Army questions are settled by a council of military favourites instead of by the War Office; a secret information bureau usurps to a great extent the functions of the Minister of Police; the duties of the Shekh-ul-Islam are performed by a palace coterie; a political and translation department, established at Yildiz, deals, instead of the Foreign Office, with questions of Turkey's relations with other States; and the post and telegraph office established at the palace is the most important in the Empire. If report speaks truly, the reports of spies and informers at home and abroad occupy far more of the Sultan's attention than legitimate affairs of State, which may be either summarily and arbitrarily dealt with, or hopelessly pigeonholed until some courtier having the Imperial ear has been bribed to bring them to the Sultan's attention. For of all privileges enjoyed by a Turkish subject, the highest and rarest is that of being allowed to appear unsummoned in the Imperial presence and lay before him a request. Any favourite who obtains this privilege becomes for the moment of greater importance than a Minister of State, the highest among whom have only the right of addressing their Padishah when summoned to appear before him.

Strenuous worker though he habitually is, the



Sultan has, however, his hours of relaxation. His favourite diversions are drawing, painting, and wood-carving, and he also takes a practical interest in chemical experiments. Having all his life been fond of shooting, he has become an expert marksman, and keeps his hand in by regular target practice and firing at glass balls and other moving objects. Report says that fear of assassination has incited the Padishah to attain this proficiency in the use of firearms, and that he always carries a pistol on his person. In his partiality for dramatic and operatic representations, Abdul Hamid resembles his father, Abdul Medjid; and to the unpretentious little theatre in the palace grounds are permanently attached a company of light comedians and an operatic troupe, whose rehearsals the Padishah often supervises in person. The foreign troupes which periodically make the tour of the Levant are also often "commanded" to appear at Yildiz. Sometimes high officials or royal guests are invited to witness these performances, but the Sultan, as well as the ladies of his family and their attendants, are concealed from view by gilded lattices, and vouchsafe no audible sign of approval or the reverse, though courteous messages, accompanied by presents or decorations, may be sent to the leading artistes after the performance. Foreign visitors and attendants alone occupy the *parterre*, an arrangement which must have a

curious and somewhat chilling effect on actors accustomed to a crowded auditorium. Like all Orientals, the Sultan has a weakness for mechanical toys and shows of all sorts; and cinematographs, phonographs, musical-boxes, and other products of Western civilisation are in great favour at the Kiosk, as well as such Oriental shows as Karaguez, the Turkish Punch and Judy, marionettes, and shadow-plays.

A genuine Turk also in his fondness for animals and interest in them, the Sultan has stocked his park with numbers of deer and goats, which he delights to feed with his own hands. And in addition to the multitudes of birds of many species which enliven the hills and vales, large numbers of pigeons and parrots, including a collection presented to the Sultan by the Mikado, build and brood in the Imperial demesne; while well-appointed kennels, to which a veterinary hospital is also attached—a great innovation,—are tenanted by favourite dogs of various breeds. The royal stables contain nearly a hundred and fifty horses, including some valuable thoroughbred saddle-horses reserved for his Majesty's own use, his favourite being a white Arab, "Azyl" by name. Half a dozen of these beautiful creatures are on Fridays led behind their master's carriage by grooms dressed in the handsome Imperial livery of red and gold—baggy breeches, short jackets with hanging sleeves, and

full silken girdles. Attached to the stables is a riding-school for the use of the young princes,—some of them very interesting boys,—who here receive lessons in horsemanship, occasionally supervised by the Sultan from a glazed gallery overlooking the ring.

As has been remarked, Oriental sentiment is opposed to the formation of an aristocratic class occupying an intermediate position between the Sovereign and the people; and even the connections of the Imperial family form no such noble or privileged class. The male members of the Imperial family, including the heir-apparent,—who is not the Sultan's eldest son, but the senior among his relatives,—live in compulsory seclusion in separate palaces; and no collateral branches of the dynasty which has reigned for five centuries in Constantinople appear to exist in the country. The Sultan has five young sons and a number of daughters, all of whom are inmates of the harem, the former going daily to the apartments of the *selamlık* for their lessons. The publication of any list of the princes and princesses is strictly forbidden, and almanacs which have attempted to give such information to the world have been promptly suppressed. The offspring of a Sultan's daughters are ineligible for the higher military offices, and the position of spouse to these ladies carries with it no influence in compensation for the unpleasant domestic

arrangements to which the husband of a Sultana finds himself bound; for the daughters of Sultans who, as above mentioned, also bear the title of Sultana, assume, in virtue of their royal birth, precedence over their husbands, and consider themselves exempt from many of the restraints imposed by Oriental custom on their sex. The whole system of the Imperial harem has, indeed, apparently been framed with the view of preventing the formation of a hereditary aristocratic class. The slaves who constitute its inhabitants have, in most cases, been brought in childhood from foreign lands, and educated in ignorance of everything outside the palace walls, so that no family can become powerful through Imperial alliances with its daughters. How real is the danger thus guarded against can be judged from the fact that, even under the present system, one of the surest methods of preferment for individual Turks is to have some connection through their wives with the inmates of the *Serai*.

The Imperial harem, though organised on a more moderate scale than in former reigns, still contains many hundreds of women, who form a society apart from the rest of the population, and constitute a peculiar feminine Court which lives its own life, has its own traditions, manners, customary laws, and etiquette, and even its own dialect. For even the speech of the *Serailis* differs in pronunciation and expression from that

of the outer world; and their extraction can invariably be detected by this peculiarity. But, large as is the number of women thus brought together under one roof, so complete is the organisation of the whole, and so absolute the discipline, that there is not the slightest confusion or disorder, each member of the household having her assigned position and functions. The titular head of the Imperial harem is the *Validé Sultana*, the mother of the reigning Sultan, next to whom ranks the mother of the heir-apparent, the *Khaséki Sultana*, and after her the second, third, and fourth Kadin Effendis, should there be so many. To each of these ladies is assigned a *daira*—*i. e.*, a pension from the Sultan's Civil List, a suite of apartments, and a train of eunuchs and female slaves. The chief officials of the Queen-Mother's Court are twelve in number, and each of these Ladies of the Household, or *Kalfas*, as they are called, has under her an assistant and six or more pupils, who are all designated according to their several departments. The *dairas* of the other ladies are formed on the same model, but the number of attendants composing them varies according to the rank of their mistress.

On the accession of a new Sultan the various ladies of the deceased or deposed Sultan's harem, together with their immediate attendants, are removed to one of the smaller palaces in order to

make room for the household of the young Padishah, whose mother is immediately elevated to the rank of Validé Sultana, and at once invested with almost Imperial dignity. The new Sultan now requires all the persons composing his harem, from his wives down to the lowest menials, to take an oath of obedience to his mother, who is henceforth addressed or referred to as the "Crown of Veiled Heads," a title with which every petition to her must begin. No one may venture to sit uninvited in her presence, or even to appear before her unless an audience has previously been asked and granted. All stand before her in an Oriental posture of respect—arms crossed on the breast, and heads bent—and accompany every reply with a lowly reverence and the words "Our Lady." Ottoman Court etiquette also decrees the wearing in her presence, as "full dress," the simple *intarie*, or house-robe, and not even the Sultan's favourite wife would venture to enter the presence of her august mother-in-law wearing a pelisse, no matter how cold the weather.

In the harem the Validé Sultana wields the most absolute authority; and no one of its inhabitants, be she Kadin, Sultana, or Ikbâl, can leave her own apartments without her permission, or address any request to the Sultan, save through her. Should one of these ladies wish to go out for a drive, to pay a visit to some former

*Seraili* married to a subject, or to have a change of air at one of the numerous Imperial kiosks, a petition to that effect must be humbly addressed to the "Crown of Veiled Heads," and it is granted or rejected, as the case may be. Such extreme authority, however, naturally entails much responsibility, and duties sufficiently arduous. In these the Validé is greatly assisted by her First Lady of the Treasury, the Hasnadar Ousta. This functionary ranks, indeed, next to the Empress-Mother herself. She is generally a woman of a certain age, who has been long in the *daira* of the Validé, and whose seniority, coupled with her devotion to the interests of her mistress, has entitled her to this important post. Her office gives her absolute authority in every matter with which the Validé does not choose to concern herself; and should the latter die before her Imperial son, the Hasnadar Ousta succeeds during his lifetime to her position and prerogatives. At the present moment the Imperial harem is ruled over by the Hasnadar Ousta, the mother of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. having some years ago been—to use an Oriental simile—summoned by the "Cupbearer of the Sphere" to the "goodly plains in the Garden of Eden," prepared "for all resigned and believing women."

Slaves are, as a rule, bought for the Palace when very young, so that they may be suitably trained for the positions they may possibly occupy.

These youthful recruits are at first all classed under the designation of *adjemis*, or "rustics." The negro girls, and others who give no promise of future beauty, are placed under the care of *Kalfas* of inferior rank, who bring them up as cooks, housemaids, bath-women, laundry-maids, etc. The finer specimens of humanity, who may be called upon to fill high positions, are taught elegance of deportment, dancing, singing, and music. They are also carefully instructed in the art of adding to their natural charms, and initiated into all the graceful formalities of Oriental etiquette and deportment. A certain number who may be called upon to fill the post of secretary, or lady chaplain,—whose duties comprise reading the Koran aloud, and imparting religious instruction,—are also taught to read fluently and to write with elegance. There is thus always on hand a supply of these *Alaiks*, or pupil slaves, ready to fill any vacancy that may occur in the various establishments. Separated for ever from her own kindred, the slave-child becomes the adopted daughter of the *Kalfa*, who has purchased her for the service of her department, and who is at the same time her mistress and her instructor. Each *Kalfa* takes a pride in the appearance and the efficiency of her pupils, watches over their interests with the utmost vigilance, and, should marriage with an outsider be the *Kismet* of any one of them, does all in her power



to secure for her adopted child as good a match as possible. Both slaves, the *Kalfa* and the *Aliak* look to each other for mutual support, and the affection that arises between them is a touching proof of the need of the human heart for sympathy and love. Even when a slave-girl is removed by marriage to another sphere, she maintains the same intimate relations with her adopted mother, who continues to watch with undiminished zeal over the welfare of her former pupil.

The *Kalfas* are generally those slaves who have not been honoured with the notice of the Sultan, nor given in marriage to a subject, and have attained their positions by right of seniority. Some may still expect to be married; but the majority, contented with the life which has become habitual to them, and devoted to their respective mistresses, look for their only promotion within the walls of the *Serai*. These old *Serailis* are the faithful guardians of all the palace traditions and usages, which they cherish with jealous conservatism, and transmit to their successors in office from century to century. The *Serailis*, however, even when not given in marriage to outsiders, are by no means, as is generally supposed, imprisoned for life within the precincts of the palace; and many of their amusements are found outside its walls. Sultanas and their ladies-in-waiting, like the generality of women

everywhere, find their chief distractions in their toilettes, in visits, and drives and excursions. Visits to the shrines of Moslem saints, or to the services in Dervish *Tekkehs*, vary their mundane pursuits, and are made the opportunity of atoning for some of their sins by pious gifts and almsdeeds. Each lady has her favourite Shekh and her favourite shrine, to whom and to which she periodically makes offerings, either in money or in the shape of rich shawls and draperies for the tombs of the departed.

The ladies of the Imperial harem, in their excursions beyond the palace precincts, are invariably attended by negro eunuchs, resplendent in frock-coats, light trousers, kid gloves, and diamond jewellery. For these gentry, though valued chiefly for their size and ugliness, are preposterously vain, and their owners gladly gratify the little weaknesses of these generally attached and trustworthy servants. Mounted on prancing Arabs, they ride on either side of the smart closed broughams, through the windows of which a passing glimpse may be caught of a filmy white *yashmak*, athwart which dark eyes peer curiously at the denizens of the strange outside world, whom they may encounter on the way to one of the fashionable resorts of Turkish holiday-makers. The present Sultan is by no means, as so many of his predecessors have been, and as he is sometimes reported to

be, under the influence of the women of his household. His mother, as already mentioned, is dead; he has but one wife living; he is no longer a young man; and he is too much engrossed with affairs of State to take any active interest in matters connected with his harem, in which he does not now reside, and which he visits only occasionally.

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## CHAPTER VII

### RELIGIOUS LIFE AND THOUGHT

IT would manifestly be impossible to give within present limits of space even a cursory account of the actual working among the Osmanlis of the vast code of morals and devotion contained in the Koran. The main tenets of Islam, as summed up in the "Five Pillars of Practice," are belief in one God and the Divine mission of his prophet Mohammed; the repetition of the *namaz*, or five daily prayers; the performance of the pilgrimage to Mekka; the practice of almsgiving, and the observance of the fast of Ramazan. The Moslem confession of faith runs as follows: "I believe in God and His angels, and His Books and His Prophets, and the predestination of good and evil by God, and the resurrection after death. I bear witness that there is no God but God, and I testify that Mohammed is His servant and His Prophet." The tenets here enumerated comprise all that is most important in Mohammedanism.

The Koran inculcates monotheism in its most

uncompromising and absolute form, a great portion of the book constituting a fierce invective against polytheism or trinitarianism. And though in the Koran Allah is usually characterised as "the Merciful" and "the Compassionate," and as ready to forgive the sins of the truly penitent, the general conception of the Deity is at the same time that of a Being more terrible and inexorable than the "jealous God" of the Jews. The term "Moslem" signifies "resigned"—resigned to the mysterious decrees of an irresponsible ruler who, though He has revealed a certain moral law for the guidance of His creatures, is Himself above all law and all morality. This view of the Almighty as "the only potentate, Lord of lords, and King of kings," recurs all through the Koran, and is curiously illustrated by the formula of devotion, both public and private, termed the *namaz*, instituted by Mohammed. For there is in Islam, properly speaking, no ritual, no sacrifice of horned beasts, as in Judaism, or of the Mass, as in Christianity, nor sacerdotalism; for the Ulema form no spiritual hierarchy, and the Imâm lays claim to no priestly rank, but merely for convenience' sake leads the collective devotions of the congregation in the mosque. The mosque itself is indeed merely a convenience, for the *namaz* may be equally well recited elsewhere so long as the worshipper's face is turned in the direction of Mekka—in the privacy of the harem, in the

public thoroughfares, in the council chamber, and preferably out-of-doors. This act of worship should, however, be preceded by ablution, as prayer must be made in a state of legal purity, and for this facilities are offered by the fountains with which the courtyard of every mosque is supplied. The ablution usual before prayer is called the *abtest*, and consists in washing the hands and forearms, the face and feet, in running water. Prayer carpets are used to guard against any impurity on the spot where prayer is offered. The *namaz* consists merely of two or more repetitions of a ceremony called the *rikat*, or "prostration," which is little more than the recitation in various prescribed attitudes of certain formulæ, such as, "God is most great!" "We give praise unto Allah!" A few minutes before the hour of each of these five prayers, a servant of the mosque, called the *Muezzim*, generally chosen for his vocal abilities, ascends the spiral staircase of the minaret, and, emerging on its surrounding balcony, chants in Arabic the *Ezan*, or call to prayer, "*Allahu Akbar!*" (repeated four times), "God is most great! Come to prayer! Prayer is better than sleep!" (for the sunrise *Ezan* only). "There is no God but Allah! He giveth life and dieth not! My sins are great, greater is Allah's mercy! I extol His perfections! *Allahu Akbar!* God is most great!"

At the full midday service the Mollahs, seated

on the elevated platforms in the mosques, repeat the same formula, while the men worshippers seat themselves in rows on the mats and carpets with their faces towards the Kiblah, a niche in the south-eastern wall indicating the direction of Mekka, the few elderly women and children who may be present being concealed in a latticed gallery approached by a separate entrance. The Imâm stands alone facing the Mihrab, with his back to the congregation, who, led by him, perform the prescribed gestures simultaneously with the precision of soldiers at drill. First he places his thumbs behind his ears with the fingers extended, while he ejaculates, "God is most great!" Then, with his hands folded on his stomach, and with downcast eyes, he recites a collect and the *fatiha*, the Moslem equivalent of the Lord's Prayer: "Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Universe, the Merciful, the Compassionate, Lord of the Day of Judgment. Thee only do we worship; to Thee do we cry for help; guide us in the right way—in the way of those whom Thou hast laden with Thy blessings; not in the way of those who have encountered Thy wrath or have gone astray." Other passages from the Koran may follow, after which he inclines himself, placing his hands on his knees, with the words, "God is most great! I praise Allah!" three times. Then, after standing erect, with his hands at his side, saying, "God hears those

who praise Him! O Lord, Thou art praised!" he falls on his knees—"God is most great"; he next prostrates himself with his forehead touching the ground, repeating thrice, "I extol Thee, O God." This formula of recitation and posture forms what is termed a *rikat*, the ordinary midday prayers consisting of ten, and on Friday of twelve *rikats*. At the conclusion of the *namaz*, the worshippers stand erect, with outstretched arms and extended palms, as if to receive the promised blessing from on high. Most impressive is the simple faith, reverence, and absorbed devotion with which this service of worship is performed by the mixed congregation, composed chiefly of the working classes—in Turkey the most devout section of the population. On Fridays, after the *namaz*, the Mollah ascends the pulpit and delivers a discourse, which is hardly a sermon in our sense of the word, being largely addressed to the Deity, and including prayers for the protection and triumph of Islam, followed by mention of the early Khalifs and companions of the Prophet, whose names are greeted by the congregation with the words, "May he find acceptance with Allah!"

In addition to the *namaz*, which is essentially a service to be recited at certain hours, Moslems are accustomed to say a *dua*, or prayer, on any important or solemn occasion, such as a birth, wedding, circumcision, on setting out on a jour-



ney, or on taking possession of a new house. Sometimes the *fatiha* is used, and Koranic phrases are generally made use of in such occasional prayers. Such expressions as "*Bismillah*" ("In the name of God"), and "*Inshallah*" ("God willing"), are also very frequent on the lips of a pious Moslem.

The fatalistic doctrine of *Kismet*, which so importantly influences Turkish thought and action, or inaction, has its origin in the dogma that all the actions and events affecting mankind are absolutely predestined by Allah, who has written them down in "the preserved Tables," delivered to the Angels on the Night of Destiny before mentioned. Many people besides Turks are fatalists, but they consult a doctor when they are ill and take other ordinary precautions against disaster. But in the opinion of the Turk all such precautions are vain; if it is his *kismet* that calamity shall overtake him, overtake him it will, and what, then, is the good of troubling himself with efforts to avert it? That fate helps him who helps himself is a doctrine incomprehensible to a Turk. Whatever energy he may display, fate, in his belief, may thwart his best endeavours or crown his supineness with equally unmerited and unexpected prosperity; and many are the folk-tales, some not without humour, illustrating and confirming popular belief in this great factor in human affairs. The effects of such a mental

attitude are naturally far-reaching. Not only are lives constantly sacrificed and wealth and happiness missed by this fatal principle of passivity, but the whole character of the nation is enfeebled. Neglect of all sanitary precautions—not to say hostility towards them—is one important result of *kismet*. Turkey is especially liable to epidemics, which among so passive a population naturally create terrible havoc. Quarantine regulations are certainly officially observed at Constantinople and the other large seaports. But in the towns of the interior, the Moslem population manifest the greatest dislike to such sanitary regulations, which they regard as a profane interference with the will of Allah, and do their best to avoid carrying out. The doctor of the first quarantine station established at Broussa was, for instance, attacked in the street by several hundred Turkish women, who, save for the intervention of the police, would have beaten him to death for his supposed impiety.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Cities of Islam, though less frequently performed at the present day than formerly notwithstanding the greater facilities of travel, is still considered the holiest action in the eyes of a Moslem, entitling him thereafter to add to his cognomen the honourable prefix of *Hadji*, or Pilgrim. A pilgrimage may be, however, and often is, performed by deputy, should the person desirous of performing it be prevented by

bodily infirmity or circumstances from accomplishing it in his own person. In order, however, that all the merit of the act may accrue to himself, he must defray all the expenses of the expedition, and be able to satisfy the religious authorities who sanction the transaction, that the funds for it have been acquired by strictly honourable means. This religious duty is equally binding on men and women; young unmarried girls, however, must be in charge of both their parents, and adult women, though they need not necessarily be accompanied by their husbands, must be married before setting out. Previous to leaving home with this pious object, a Moslem is bound to set his worldly affairs in order, to pay all outstanding debts, and make provision for his family during his absence.

Pilgrims from Constantinople and the neighbourhood assemble early in the morning fourteen days before the festival of the Kourban Bairam, the "Feast of Sacrifice," in one of the large open spaces at Stamboul, where a procession is formed, which includes a number of camels with gorgeously ornamented saddles bearing the coffers containing the Sultan's gifts to the holy shrines, together with the alms and presents of his well-to-do subjects for the religious trustees of their respective families in the cities of Mekka and Medina. Other camels have attached to their saddles a kind of palanquin, covered with

costly silken stuff, in which women pilgrims will perform part of the journey. A company of picturesquely garbed Arabs who accompany the caravan exhibit at every halting-place, to the rattle of kettle-drums, feats of swordsmanship to the crowds of spectators which surround and follow the caravan and its military escort through the streets and across the long bridge spanning the Golden Horn on its way to the Yildiz Kiosk, to salute the Sultan before embarking. The best view of this quaint procession is obtained as it mounts the steep road leading to the palace, now lined with troops of the Imperial guard, the rising ground on either side looking like a flower-garden, covered as it is with the variously hued cloaks and white head-gear of thousands of Turkish women of the lower orders. The Sultan, himself unseen, is believed to be at one of the windows of Yildiz Kiosk to receive the salutation of the departing pilgrims, who, after offering up in unison a prayer for the success of their undertaking, retrace their steps to the quay, whence they embark in special vessels for Beyrout. In former days the pilgrim caravan, after crossing to the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, made the long journey to Arabia by land. At the present day, however, the caravan proper starts from Damascus, where it is joined by thousands of pilgrims from Africa, Asia Minor, and Syria, and under the command of a special official, styled

the "Steward of the Offerings," and escorted by troops, travels across the desert to the Holy Cities.

A complete pilgrimage includes visits to Mekka, Medina, Damascus, and Jerusalem, but only Dervishes and other zealots accomplish this, the ordinary citizen being satisfied to have performed the task in the obligatory degree. In addition to this obligatory pilgrimage, Moslems, and especially Moslem women, make frequent visitations to the shrines of famous saints, who are generally the deceased Shekhs of Dervish orders. These lesser pilgrimages are generally undertaken in fulfilment of a vow, or for relief from sickness or other distress, in obedience to the exhortations of the *Hadith* or traditional sayings of the Prophet: "If thou art perplexed in thine affairs, go, seek assistance from the inhabitants of the tombs," and, "If thine heart be oppressed with sorrow, go seek consolation at the graves of holy men." These *ziarets*, as they are called, are generally made on the day of the annual *Mevlud*, or feast of the saint, but are also frequently undertaken at other times when his assistance is desired. It is customary for suppliants or visitors to bring with them, besides other gifts, such as draperies for the sarcophagus, a lamb or sheep, which is sacrificed, its flesh being the perquisite of the guardian of the *turbeh*, generally a Dervish.

Circumcision, though not held to be an insti-

tution of divine origin, is nevertheless considered an all-important rite, answering to baptism in the Christian Church, but not, as a rule, administered at so early an age. The Turks, charitable and hospitable on all occasions, are more ostentatiously so on this, when they consider it a religious duty to show special regard and attention to the poor and needy. Poor people, consequently, who cannot individually afford the expense of a *sunnet dughun* for their boys, defer it until they hear that the son of some grandee in their neighbourhood is about to be circumcised, when they send in to him the names of their children, begging that they also may be allowed to participate in the rite. The rich man, if pious and charitable, will grant such permission to as many of the children of the poor as his means allow of, as such acts of piety are held to be pleasing to Allah; and when the ceremony takes place in the Imperial palace, custom requires the Sultan to place no limit to the number of those allowed to participate in it. As the head of the house is also expected to furnish each candidate for initiation with a complete suit of clothes, and defray all other attendant expenses, a *sunnet dughun* is an exceedingly expensive affair for people of rank. Among the middle classes, who limit the public festivities to one day, the minimum expenditure is usually from £10 to £12.

On Monday morning the boys are sent to the bath, where their heads are shaved, with the exception of a tuft on the crown, which is plaited with gold thread. The chief candidate is richly dressed, his clothes and fez being covered with jewels. The number of precious ornaments considered necessary for the boys on this occasion is indeed so great that they have to be borrowed in part from relatives and friends, who are in duty bound to lend them, and the caps and coats of the young Bey's humbler companions are accordingly thus equally studded with jewels. Thus bedecked, and escorted by a number of old ladies, the boys make a round of calls at the various harems, and invite their friends to the ceremony. On this day and the following a series of entertainments is given in the *selamlık*, Wednesday and Thursday being reserved for the harem festivities, which are enlivened with music and amusements of various kinds. On the morning of the latter day, the ladies of the house busy themselves in preparing couches for the boys, who meantime, mounted on gaily caparisoned horses and accompanied by the *hodja*, or tutor, the family barber, and a number of friends, make a progress through the streets of the town, preceded by music. On their return to the house of festivity they are received at the door of the *selamlık* by their respective fathers. When the horse of the young Bey is brought up to the mounting-

block, and his father is about to help him to dismount, his hand is stayed by the *hodja*, who asks, "With what gift hast thou endowed thy son?" The father mentions the present he has destined for his young hopeful, which may be landed property, or some object of value according to his means, and then lifts him down from the horse. The other boys in their turn claim and receive a present from their respective fathers or next of kin, or, if they are destitute of either, from their entertainer, who is held to supply a father's place for the occasion. The sacred rite is performed on the morning of Friday in the *selamlık*, after which the children are again consigned to the care of the women, who place them on the beds prepared for them on the preceding day, and make every effort to amuse and distract them. The boys are visited by their friends, who offer money and other presents, not only to them, but to the officiating barber, and to the *musdadji*—the person who has announced to the mother the completion of the sacred rite. On the following morning the guest-children are removed to their respective homes, but the entertainments are continued in the principal house until Monday.

In addition to the above and other forms of charity, general almsgiving is so largely practised that, notwithstanding the bankrupt state of the country and the absence of anything in the shape



of poor-law relief, there is really no such destitution as disgraces the large cities of Europe and the United States. Blind Bartimeus and Lazarus still sit by the wayside, and the true believers fulfil the precepts of their religion by supplying the wants of these afflicted ones, and of the fatherless and the widow.

Although as many as seven annual fasts are observed by devout Moslems, one only of these, the month-long fast of Ramazan, is held to be of divine institution, and consequently its observance is incumbent on all true believers over the age of fourteen, invalids and travellers only being exempt from its strict observance. This month, the ninth of the Mohammedan year, constitutes for the Turks, as for Moslems generally, a kind of revival time. Western customs, wherever adopted, are, for the time being, laid aside, and the more primitive native manners reverted to. During this season, too, the Muezzim supplements his usual announcement of the hour of prayer from the minaret with this exhortation:—“Give food, O ye Faithful, unto the orphan and the poor, the wayfarer and the bondsman, for His sake, saying, ‘We feed you for Allah’s sake, and we desire no recompense from you nor word of thanks’”; while in the mosques the Mollahs similarly call upon their congregations to remember those less favoured by fortune. And though the wealthy do not

now, as in olden days, literally stand at their doors to bring in and set at their supper-tables all the poor who pass by, peace and good will reign supreme, and charity and hospitality are largely practised. More time is also devoted during this period to religious observances, and many devout Moslems of both sexes seclude themselves for a portion of each day in the mosques, abstaining from all worldly conversation, more especially during the last ten days of the fast.

“As soon as any one of you observeth the new moon,” said the Prophet, “let him set about the fast.” And all over the Moslem world, at the end of the eighth lunar month, lone sentinels on minaret and mountain watch for the appearance of the moon of Ramazan. For religious observances change not with advances in scientific knowledge, and almanacs are ignored in the matter. Consequently, if the weather happens to be cloudy when the new moon is believed to be due, but is still invisible, it is held to have risen thirty days after the appearance of the last moon. The moment the first faint silver streak is visible, the watchers hasten to announce the tidings to the expectant multitude. The news spreads like wild-fire through the city, and the faithful immediately “set about the fast,” in obedience to their Prophet’s command. In consequence of this lunar character of the Moslem

year, Ramazan makes in course of time the round of the seasons. But through the long hot days of summer, as well as in the short winter days, the pious Moslem will rigidly abstain during this month from food, drink, and tobacco between dawn and sunset. To the poor, who are among its strictest observers, and whom necessity compels to pursue their usual avocations unrefreshed, this period is one of real mortification of the flesh, especially in summer. The wealthy, however, merely turn night into day, and very little official business is transacted. As the sun approaches the horizon, a tray is brought in to the assembled family, or company, laden with *mezz-likes*, or "appetisers," — tiny plates of sweets, dried fish, fruit, olives, and other *hors d'œuvres*, — together with glasses of iced sherbet, made from fresh fruits. As soon as the sunset gun has thundered out the welcome tidings that the fast is at an end for the day, each person utters a "*Bismillah!*" ("In the name of Allah!") and helps himself to an olive, it being considered more meritorious to break the fast with that than with any other edible. After the contents of the tray have been sparingly partaken of, the evening meal, for which special sweets and delicacies are at this season prepared, is served.

Two hours after sunset the *Teraweh* prayers are performed, either at the mosque or in private. It is customary for the Stamboul Mos-

lems at the close of these prayers to repair to the esplanade adjoining the Suleimanieh mosque, where hundreds of elegant equipages, filled with Government officials, portly dames, or "Lights of the Harem," may be seen slowly making their way through the crowds of pedestrians who, on this occasion, allow themselves, and are allowed, a carnival licence quite unknown at any other time. The working classes, who have their usual avocations to pursue on the morrow, usually retire to rest after the *Teraweh* prayers. The wealthy, however, as I have said, turn night into day, pay calls, give parties, and spend the time in a round of feasts and entertainments. Two hours before dawn, the "Awakeners" take their way through the streets of the Turkish quarters, to warn those who sleep that it is time to arise and partake of the *sahor*, the last meal eaten before sunrise. Accompanied by a boy carrying a lantern, the "Awakener" stops before every Moslem house, and taps a small hemispherical drum four times, after which he chants: "He prospereth who saith: There is no god but God!" He then beats the drum as before, and adds: "Mohammed, the Guide, is the Apostle of Allah!" And after repeating the notes on his instrument, he passes on with the greeting:—"The happiest of nights unto thee, O Achmet!"—or whatever the householder's name may be. When the *sahor* has been par-

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taken of, the time is filled up with smoking and coffee-sipping until the boom of cannon announces the moment for rinsing the mouth and "sealing" it against food until the evening.

On the twenty-seventh day of Ramazan is celebrated the anniversary of "The Night of Power," or "Excellent Night," during which the Koran is believed by Moslems to have come down entire to the "Lower Heaven," whence it was revealed in portions to the Prophet by the angel Gabriel. During certain hours of this night, which is also termed the "Night of Destiny," popular belief holds that the waters of the sea become sweet; that the whole animal and vegetable creations bow themselves in humble adoration before Allah; and that the destinies of men for the coming year are revealed to the angels.

The name of this season of day-fasting and night-feasting invariably conjures up before me the fair scenes amid which I first witnessed its observance, under the blue skies of an Asian winter—a winter the charm of which still lingers pleasantly in my memory. Ramazan fell that year in December, when I was on a visit to an Armenian family in the little town of Bournabat, about six miles from Smyrna. The house, a long, low, one-storied building, opening on one side on a wide verandah, was situated at the juncture of the Armenian and Turkish

quarters of the town. Every evening, at supper, Ramazan loaves—long, flat cakes plentifully besprinkled with sesame seeds—were laid by each cover instead of the customary hunch of bread; and a dish of some Ramazan delicacy, sent by a Turkish neighbour, often appeared on the table. During the small hours of every night the “Awakeners” passed under the garden walls, the monotonous beat of their little drums, and the wild, yet plaintively sweet chant mingling with our dreams, and producing, in the stillness of the night, a singularly romantic impression.

On another occasion, while residing at Salonica, I was invited, with a party of friends, to an *Iftar*, or Ramazan supper, by the Vali Pasha, or Governor-General. The feast was to be served *al fresco* in the public Garden of The Five Plane Trees, outside the ancient walls of the city; and, arriving just before sunset, we found our host engaged in his devotions at a little distance on the mat-strewn shore of the great land-locked bay. In Islam all men are equal. Field-marshal and private, judge and pipe-bearer, were standing shoulder to shoulder, shoeless and reverent, waiting for the Imâm to commence the Sunset Prayer. Then a chorus of devotion rose on the air, and, “God is great! God is great!” was shouted by some scores of voices. Now and again a late-comer, soldier or servant, whom worldly duties had delayed, arrived, slipped off

his shoes, and joined the ranks of the worshippers. In the meantime, the sun had been fast sinking behind the western mountains, flushing the Olympian summits with a wondrous glory, and tinging the white-walled city opposite with a rosy glow which flashed back in fiery gleams from casement and crescent. And now the thunder of a gun from the citadel proclaimed the day's fast at an end. Round every minaret diadems of lamps began to twinkle, and the Muezzims' voices could be faintly heard chanting the call to prayer.

His devotions concluded, our host, accompanied by his young son, a boy who had shared the studies of the Imperial princes, now advanced to greet us, and offering an arm each to my friend and myself, his Excellency conducted us to a small table spread under the trees. Numerous other tables were placed round about, at which groups of Moslems, both civil and military, soon gathered. Besides his Excellency and son, our immediate party consisted of two smaller Pashas — that is, Pashas of lower rank, for physically either of them would have made two of our Governor-General — and a couple of Europeans. The table was laid with spoons, forks, and napkins, and to each cover were added a Ramazan cake and a goblet of iced fruit-sherbet. I found that Ramazan customs were to be observed and plates to be dispensed with. "Begin,

madam," said our host to my companion, inviting her, with a polite wave of his hand in the direction of the tureen, to take the first spoonful. My turn came next; the Pasha—and, after him, the rest—followed suit. The Turks were, no doubt, very hungry, having fasted since day-break, and they now "supped their broth" with great gusto. Fish and meat of different kinds followed, mostly stewed, and mixed with vegetables, but very rich and savoury, to which all helped themselves with their fingers. My friend, who was quite at home in Turkish society, seeing me somewhat diffident at putting my fingers into the dishes, occasionally came to my assistance by fishing out from the mess a nice little cutlet, or limb of some bird, placing it on my Ramazan cake in default of a plate. Sweets were handed round between the courses, and also fruits of various kinds. Tahir Bey, the Pasha's son, who sat next to me, every now and again in the intervals would take up in his fingers a cube of pink watermelon, and present it to me with a polite salaam, and I was compelled in politeness to accept and consume it. Fortunately I was spared the ordeal of being made the recipient of what is considered among Orientals a very polite attention, namely, receiving in my mouth a tidbit picked out of the dish by his Excellency's own small and shapely fingers. My neighbour, however, accepted and swallowed



the savoury morsel offered to her with the utmost complacency, smilingly acknowledging the compliment with the usual salaam.

Night had now fallen, and the moon of mid-Ramazan rode high in heaven. During the meal a military band, seated at a little distance—a Turkish band always sits down to play, if possible—had been discoursing to us, now a wild Oriental march, and now a selection from some Italian or French opera. And as the business of the table relaxed and we looked round us, lo! the trees were glittering with myriads of tiny lamps, which sparkled and gleamed amid the foliage like the fireflies of the tropics. As the guests at the other tables finished their supper, they rose, and in their flowing, many-coloured robes, their ample white turbans or quaint Dervish caps, strolled slowly and gravely along the garden paths, fingering meditatively the large brown beads of their rosaries, until the hour for the *Teraweh* prayers was proclaimed from the distant minarets of the city.

The conclusion of Ramazan is celebrated by the festival of the Breaking of the Fast, also called the Feast of Alms, which lasts for three days, during which no work whatever is done. On the first of these days, in addition to a considerable donation to the poor, every well-to-do person makes a present to his slaves, and also to all those holding a subordinate position to him.

Congratulatory visits are also exchanged, and after the midday service in the mosques the days are given up to rejoicing and amusement.

The greatest of all Moslem festivals is, however, the *Kurban Bairam*, or Feast of Sacrifice, which, besides forming part of the rites of the pilgrims while at Mekka, is observed equally in every part of Islamiyeh. Though there is nothing in the Koran to connect this annual sacrifice with the story of Ishmael, it is generally held by Moslems to have been instituted by the Prophet in commemoration of Abraham's willingness to offer up his son as a sacrifice, Ishmael being substituted for Isaac in the Mohammedan version of the story. For some days prior to this feast the great open space skirting the beautiful mosque of Bayazid in Stamboul resounds with the bleatings of thousands of prospective victims, tended by a motley throng of nomad shepherds from the hill-pastures of both Europe and Asia. Here each head of a household selects beforehand a lamb, which is led about by the children of the family until its day of doom, its fleece stained with henna or cochineal, and its budding horns covered with gold or silver leaf. When the lamb has been sacrificed on the morn of the festival, its flesh is divided into three portions, one being given to the poor, another to relatives, the third being kept for consumption by the household. At an early hour on this day the Sultan, attended

by Ministers and officials, civil and military, proceeds in state to the mosque to celebrate the opening of the feast, greeted as he passes between the troops lining the way with loyal cries of "Mashallah Padishah!" and "Long live our Padishah!" echoed by all the privileged spectators. On returning to the palace the Sultan holds a levee at which the dignitaries of the Empire attend to do homage, and members of the Embassies and other distinguished foreigners to offer their congratulations.

In former reigns the ceremony of opening the Bairam usually took place at one of the royal mosques of Stamboul, and was of a much more public character, thousands of the faithful assembling to greet their Padishah on this auspicious occasion. But, as elsewhere mentioned, Sultan Abdul Hamid is chary of exhibiting himself to his lieges, and places every obstacle in the way of their assembling themselves together. The festival is, notwithstanding, in the capital, as throughout the Empire, observed with great rejoicings. New garments are donned in its honour by rich and poor, and gifts and alms lavishly bestowed. Cheap toys are on this day exposed for sale in the streets in large quantities, and every visitor who comes to wish his friends "A happy Bairam" is laden with these gifts for the children. The open spaces near the mosques are accordingly lined with the stalls of the Christian and

Jewish vendors of such toys, and also of fruits, and sweets, and all the favourite suburban resorts are thronged with happy but orderly holiday-makers, for whose delectation are assembled the various caterers to their amusement elsewhere described. As evening fades into night the whole of Stamboul begins to glitter with the lights from myriads of tiny oil-lamps, hung round the windows of houses, festooned from minaret to minaret, or suspended in double or triple coronals round their slender pinnacles. Along the winding banks of the Bosphorus an endless range of lambent flames, interspersed with lamps and cressets innumerable, and here and there a bonfire, are reflected in the darkening waters, adding to the natural charm of the scene an effect which almost savours of enchantment.

The other most important Moslem festivals are the *Mevlud*, or anniversary of the Prophet's birth, and the "Feast of the Prophet's Mantle," when the Sultan proceeds in state to the mosque in the Old Serai at Stamboul, in which this precious relic is preserved. Here, after the performance of the midday *namaz*, the Padishah with great solemnity unfolds from its forty silk wrappers the "mantle"—said to be a small fragment of greenish cloth—which he displays to the select company of high officials who have the honour of accompanying him. On all these festivals the mosques and public buildings are

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illuminated on the preceding evening, the Turkish day, like the Jewish, beginning, as before mentioned, at sunset.

The characteristic attitude of the Moslem mind of profound and complete resignation to the will of Allah is, perhaps, on no occasion more strongly manifested than in the presence of death. The pious Moslem has ever present to his mind the termination of earthly existence and the life beyond the grave; he considers himself but encamped in the world, just as the Osmanli nation has been said to be but encamped in Europe; and he regards the joys and allurements of mundane life as but illusions and shadows in comparison with the delights which await him in Paradise. *Kismet*, which determines the events of a person's life, and *Edjel*, "his appointed time," are decreed by Allah, who, it is popularly believed, has inscribed them in invisible characters on the brow of every human being. This unquestioning submission to the decrees of fate renders death terrible to Moslems only in the abstract, and when viewed from a distance. In polite society it is never alluded to save under some poetical name, such as the "Cupbearer of the Sphere," and prefaced by the wish "Far be it from you!" and the common people, before uttering the word, invariably spit, an action which has much the same signification. Such a fatalistic view of life and death naturally causes

the Osmanlis to put little faith in the medical art. If a person's *Edjel* has called him, he will die, doctors and "charmners" notwithstanding.

Among the Turks, who have not, like the Greeks, adopted the use of hearses, the dead are always borne to the cemetery on the shoulders of the living, followed by a long procession of men as mourners. It is considered a meritorious act to carry a dead body even for a little way, and the bearers at a Moslem funeral are consequently continually relieved by others who wish to obtain the benefits which the performance of this religious duty is believed to confer. The only distinction made in the decoration of the coffins of men and of women is that that of a man carries the turban or fez of its occupant suspended on a peg at the head, and that of a woman her *chimber*, or coif. No lugubrious chants or noisy demonstrations of woe, such as attend the funeral of Eastern Christians and Jews respectively, mark the progress of the Moslem to his last resting-place. The procession takes its way in reverent silence to the mosque, where the first part of the burial service is read, which includes several very beautiful prayers. When the interment has been concluded, and the mourners have dispersed, the Imâm remains a short time longer by the grave, in order, it is said, to prompt the deceased in his replies to the "Questioners." These are the two angels, Mounkir

and Nekir, who, according to the Moslem creed, enter the grave with a dead man in order to interrogate him concerning his faith. For, according to a belief common to many Oriental races, the soul retains after death some mysterious connection with the body, which cannot be buried without it. If the dead has been a devout Moslem, his reply will be: "My God is Allah; my prophet, Mohammed; my religion, Islam; and my *kiblah*, the holy Kaaba." If, however, he has been lax in his religious duties, he will not be able to remember the words of his creed.

If the deceased has been well-to-do, gifts are made to the poor from among his personal effects, and money is also distributed. Three days afterwards specially prepared dishes, consisting chiefly of pastry and fruit, are sent round to the houses of friends, and the poor also receive their portion of these funeral cates, in return for which their prayers are requested for the soul of the departed. This ceremony is repeated on the seventh and fortieth days after the funeral, and on the latter occasion a dole of loaves is added. Prayer for the dead is, indeed, considered by Moslems an act of religious duty of the greatest importance. On their tombstones may be seen engraved appeals to the passer-by to offer up at the throne of grace a *fatihah*, or recitation of the opening chapter of the Koran, a customary act with all true believers on visiting

the tombs of friends or the shrines of holy men. No external signs of mourning are used by the Osmanlis, either for a funeral or subsequently, nor are periods of seclusion observed by them after the death of a relative. Excessive sorrow for children is considered not only sinful, but detrimental to their happiness and rest in Paradise. It is, however, an act of filial duty to mourn constantly for lost parents, and not to cease praying for their forgiveness and acceptance with Allah.

Superstitions innumerable are rife among all creeds and nationalities in Turkey, but for Turkish women almost every incident, ceremony, or social relation is hedged about with fears and omens and forebodings. Whatever evil befalls a person is the work of supernatural agencies, and can only be remedied by having recourse to counter-spells. If an article is lost or broken, it is the "evil eye" of some false friend that has caused the misfortune. If any one chances to look fixedly at a person or thing, he is immediately accused of casting the evil eye on it. Nor are these beliefs mere affectations, as they often are with us, but matters of vital importance. For such spells cast upon persons are believed to exert a fatal influence on their health, prosperity, beauty, personal attractions, or affections. A Turkish lady, for instance, however high her rank, will almost invariably attribute to the influ-



ence of witchcraft any neglect that she may experience from her husband.

The supernatural and magical beings, belief in whose existence and uncanny power may be said to constitute for the Turks, as for Moslems generally, an article of faith, fall for the most part under the denomination either of *djins* or *peris*. Under the former term are comprised demons generally, the *tellestims* which guard ancient buildings or buried treasures, and other imaginary beings whose propensities are rather those of the goblins of the West. Some houses are believed to be frequented by *djins* of the last description, who are called *ev-sahibi*, "the Masters of the House." If these are good *djins* they bring all kinds of prosperity to their hosts, and no matter how idle or extravagant the housewife may be, everything goes well with the household. They are said to be clothed in bridal garments, edged with tiny bells, the tinkling of which announces their passage through the house, and they sometimes allow themselves to be seen by those whom they honour with their favour. The wicked *ev-sahibi*, on the other hand, are most mischievous in their dispositions and destroy everything that comes in their way, besides annoying the inhabitants of the houses they enter by making most intolerable noises. Like some supernals, the *djins* have the power of assuming any shape they please, from that of

a shadowy being of colossal proportions, or a beautiful youth or maiden, down to that of a cat or mouse, or even a pitcher or broom. Both the good *djins*, or *peris*, who serve Allah, and the evil *djins* who are the followers of Eblis, are believed to have been created before man, the rebellion of Satan having consisted, according to Moslems, in his refusing to pay homage to the newly created being when commanded to do so by Allah.





## CHAPTER VIII

### MONASTIC LIFE

THE conventual establishments of the Dervish Orders, who constitute the monks and saints of Islam, are to be found wherever the creed of Mohammed has spread, and are very numerous in both the European and Asiatic provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Many of the orders possess several *tekkehs*, as their convents are termed, in Constantinople and its suburbs, and at least one in every important town. These convents occupy for the most part picturesque and commanding situations, sometimes in the midst of crowded cities, but more frequently on their outskirts.

Although monasticism is not only contrary to the spirit of Islam, but was expressly forbidden by its prophet, fraternities of Moslem ascetics appeared at an early date in the history of that religion. The austere and holy lives led by the generality of dervishes, and the possession of supernatural powers with which they are credited, have at all times given them great

influence, and especially with the ignorant and superstitious populace. And though this influence has often excited the hostility of the Ulema—the legists and representatives of the Moslem orthodoxy—and occasionally the alarm of the Government, it has invariably been utilised by the Sultans and their generals to stimulate the zeal and courage of their troops in time of war. Whenever a military campaign has been organised, a number of more fanatical dervishes from all the orders hasten to join the army, and their presence in the camp, their prayers and exhortations maintain a religious enthusiasm on the march, and during an action their voices may be heard above the din of war, shouting, “O Victors!” “O Martyrs!” or the Moslem war-cry, “Allah! Allah!” The munificence of Sultans, from Orchan downwards, who have attributed their victories to the presence in their armies of these holy men, enabled the dervish shekhs to found monasteries and colleges in all the conquered provinces; and their subsequent prosperity was so great that the twelve orders which existed at the time of the foundation of the Ottoman Empire have now increased to thirty-six.

Notwithstanding that all the dervishes, in accordance with their principle of poverty, are nominally mendicant and dependent for their subsistence on the offerings of the pious and charitable, begging is strictly forbidden, save

among the Bektashi and wandering orders. These, who deem it meritorious to live upon alms, frequent the bazaars and public thoroughfares for the purpose of recommending themselves to the charity of the passer-by, their formula of request being generally, "Something for the love of Allah!" Many Bektashis, however, make it a rule to support themselves by handicraft trades, and particularly by making, in imitation of their learned founder, Hadji Bektash, such small articles of wood and horn as spoons, ladles, bowls, and graters. They also carve out of greenstone, jade, and other substances the fastenings used by dervishes generally for the belts and collars of their garments, besides a variety of symbolic objects used or worn on the person by members of their own order.

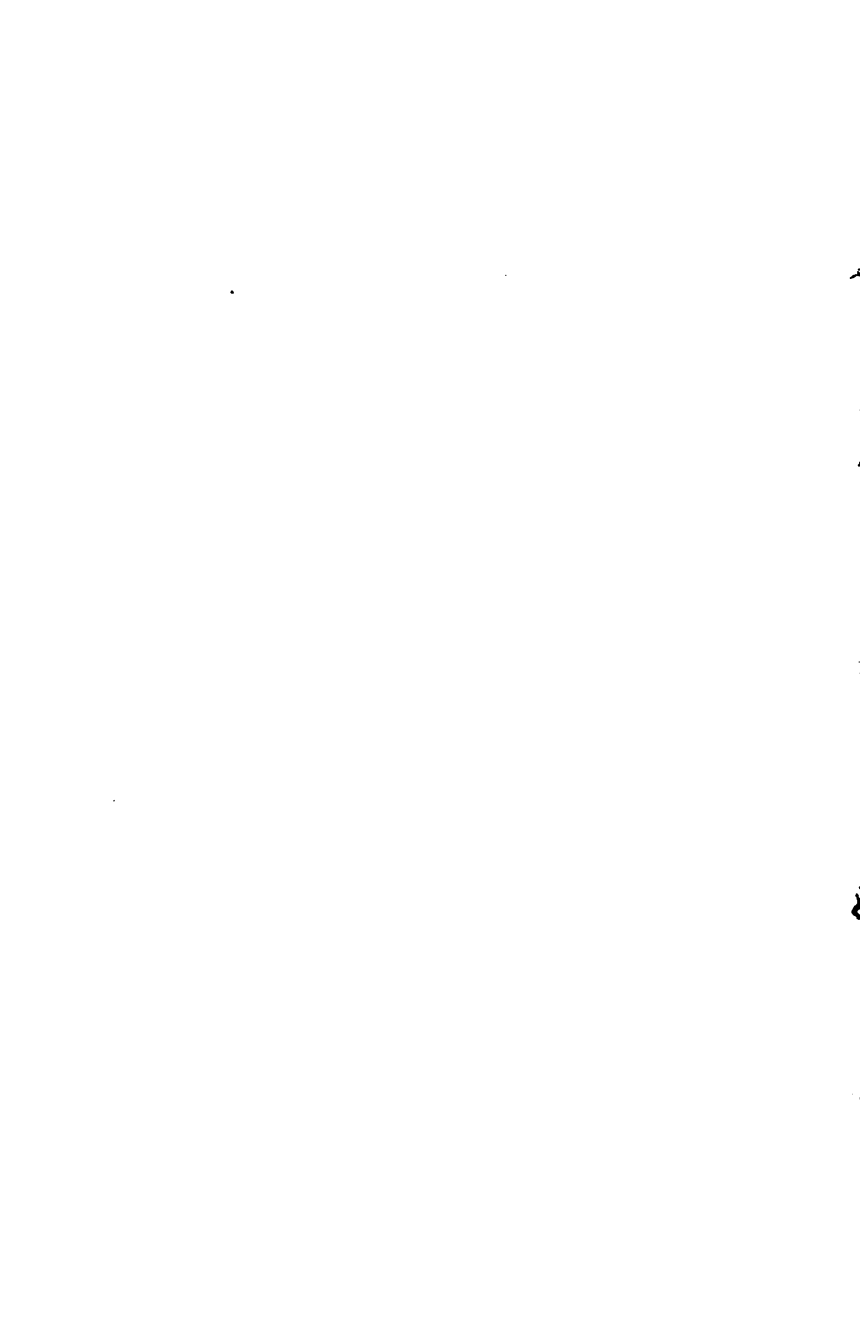
The monastic brethren belonging to the well-endowed orders are supplied with food and lodging only at the expense of the convent. Their meals, which are very simple and consist of two dishes only, are usually eaten in the solitude of their cells; but on certain occasions the brethren dine together in the common room. Each dervish is required to provide himself with clothing and other necessaries, and, though residing in the monastery, to follow some trade or profession. Those who are calligraphists find employment in copying the Koran, which is always used in manuscript, and other religious

books. If any are without resources, they seldom fail to receive either contributions from relatives, an allowance from their Shekh, or a pension from some wealthy individual. For, though forbidden to *solicit* alms, they are allowed to accept gifts when offered by the pious "for the love of Allah." The rule against mendicancy is also relaxed in the case of dervishes on their pilgrimage to the Holy Cities and shrines of Islam, as they then are without their usual means of support. Many Mohammedans reserve their alms exclusively for the dervishes, and make it their duty to seek out those of high reputation for sanctity, visit them frequently, and supply their wants. Others, again, lodge and board these holy men in their houses, in the hope of thus drawing upon themselves, their families, and their fortunes the blessing of Heaven.

The Mevlevi—commonly termed by Europeans "the Dancing Dervishes"—is the most popular, one might almost say the most fashionable, of all the orders; and ever since its foundation in the thirteenth century by the great mystic poet, Jelal-ud-din, it has included among its lay members men of high rank and official position. Even Sultans have not disdained to don the *kulah*, its distinctive head-dress, and join in the mystic gyrations of the "Brethren of Love." The Mevlevi fraternity is consequently very prosperous, and its convents and the



GROUP OF DERVISHES





shrines of its saints surpass those of all the other orders.

The possession of wealth has not, however, caused the monks of Islam to depart from the original rule of their founders. Their manner of life has remained simple and frugal in the extreme; the architecture of their convents is of the plainest and most unpretentious; while the few ornaments they possess are the gifts of pious and grateful souls. Their revenues are applied, in the first place, to the support of the Shekh and the resident dervishes, and, in the second, to the relief of needy monasteries of the same order, any surplus being either given directly to the poor as alms, or employed in the foundation of *imarets*—charitable institutions, such as almshouses, schools, or baths, the former of which are dependencies of *tekkehs*, or of mosques. Passing through a great arched gateway in the wall which divides the inner from the outer court, the visitor may find himself in a wide rectangular space planted with shady trees, three sides being occupied by the cells of the brotherhood, the kitchen, refectory, etc., all of one story only, and opening on a broad verandah, formed by the extended eaves of the red-tiled roof. In the centre is the chapel, a plain, square edifice, with a domed roof; in front of it a fountain for the customary ablutions, on the margin of which the pigeons and other birds

that here find an asylum coo, twitter, and preen themselves perpetually. Without are flower and fruit gardens, shaded by cypress, mulberry, and plane trees, with cisterns for their irrigation, and terraces raised to the height of the enclosing walls. And here, when the evening shadows are lengthening, the mystics, in their picturesque and symbolic attire, may be seen pacing tranquilly to and fro, or, seated on the broad wooden benches, meditatively passing through their fingers the brown beads of their rosaries, on their faces that expression of perfect repose which indifference to the world and its doings alone can give.

A dervish convent usually contains from fifteen to thirty brethren, ruled over by a Shekh, or abbot, who exercises unlimited authority within its walls. If it possesses landed property, he sells the produce of the farms, regulates the expenditure of the convent, and distributes its alms. Should the convent have no endowments, he looks for its support to the pious and charitable—"the friends of Allah." For, occupied as he is supposed continually to be with spiritual matters, a Shekh cannot, like his subordinates, follow a worldly avocation, but must live, according to the dervish expression, "on the doorstep of the Deity." The lay members of the order are also expected to contribute to his support and to the expenses of the convent

generally, and it is usual for them to bring some small offering every time they visit him. As every detail of convent life is symbolical, this custom is held to commemorate the offerings brought by the angel Gabriel to Adam after his expulsion from Paradise, which, tradition says, consisted of "small loaves and corn, with parrots and turtle-doves for his entertainment, and swallows and hens for that of Eve."

The Shekh of a celibate order resides permanently in the convent, where a special apartment, termed "the cell of the Master," is reserved for his use. In some of the orders, however—the Mevlevi, for instance—the office of Shekh is hereditary and marriage is in consequence obligatory. Like most Ottomans of the present day, dervishes are practically monogamists, and take a second wife only when their office is hereditary, and the first wife childless. A married Shekh appoints a deputy, called the Naib Khalifeh, who rules over the monastery in his absence with an authority equal to his own. Twelve being the symbolical number of the Bektashi order, their communities include twelve elders, each of whom has some special office assigned to him, and occupies one of the twelve sheepskin mats which form the seats of honour in their assemblies. These elders rank in the following order: (1) The Shekh; (2) the Deputy Shekh; (3) the Cook; (4) the Baker; (5) the

Superintendent; (6) the Steward; (7) the Coffee-maker; (8) the Almoner; (9) the Sacrificer; (10) the Groom; (11) the Servant of the Convent; (12) the Attendant on the Guests. In the other orders the resident dervishes also perform duties similar to these for the benefit of the fraternity.

The rules observed in the admission of new members into a brotherhood, though substantially the same in all orders, differ somewhat in the severity of the discipline imposed on a neophyte, in the length of his period of probation, and in various minor details. A candidate for admission to the Mevlevi order is, for instance, required to perform an uninterrupted novitiate of a thousand and one days. Should he fail in a single day's duties, or be absent from the monastery for one whole night, his probation must be recommenced. Whatever his worldly rank, he must be subordinate to every member of the brotherhood, being instructed in his duties by the *ashdji-bashi*, or head of the kitchen. He spends much of his time in meditation, and in committing to memory the prayers and passages of the Koran more especially used by his order. Having passed through this period of probation to the satisfaction of the *ashdji-bashi*, that functionary, who acts as his sponsor, reports him to the Shekh as worthy of admission to the brotherhood. A meeting is convened in the private assembly room of the community, and with

many symbolic ceremonies, which vary in each order, accompanied by prayers and exhortations, the probationer takes the vows, and is formally accepted as a member of the community. The Mureed, as he is now termed, is not yet, however, looked upon as an accomplished dervish. He has, indeed, merely entered on "the Path," and several successive stages of spiritual advancement must be passed through before he reaches that which will entitle him to become in his turn a "Guide" to others.

The collective devotions of the Mevlevi, Rufai, Sadi, Kadiri, and a few of the "vocative" orders are performed in public, and even non-Moslems, who are rarely admitted into the mosques at the hours of prayer, are made welcome in the convents of such orders. The devotions of the "Contemplatives" are, however, strictly private, and do not, indeed, appear to be of a character to attract outsiders. The *devr*, or exercise, of the Mevlevi differs entirely from that of the other orders, and is accompanied by instrumental music. The service begins with the recitation of prayers and passages from the Koran, followed by a pleasing performance on the flutes, zithers, and tiny drums of which the orchestra chiefly consists. The brethren, who have meanwhile been seated on the floor round the circular space, now rise, throw off their cloaks, and advance in single file, with arms

crossed on their breasts and downcast eyes, to the Shekh. Bowing to right and left of the prayer-mat on which he stands, they kiss his hand, and in return receive from him a kiss on their tall sugarloaf-shaped hats. This done, they immediately begin to spin round, balancing themselves on the left foot, while maintaining a rotary motion. Gradually the arms of the devotees are unfolded and extended, the right hand raised with the palm upwards, and the left lowered with the palm downward; the eyes are closed, and the head is inclined towards the left shoulder. Mentally reciting the invocation of "Allah! Allah!" they whirl round the Hall of Celestial Sounds, the faces of even the youngest neophytes wearing an expression of devout serenity as they revolve to the sound of the reed-flutes, a music which appears to have an entrancing effect on those who understand its mystic language. For to the dervish "lovers of Allah" it is said to express the harmony of His creation, in which they circle like the planets of the empyrean, detached from the world, in a rapture of spiritual love and communion with the Eternal.

Among the Rufai, Kadiri, and other "vocative" orders the collective religious exercise consists in the dervishes' holding each other by the hand, or pressing closely together, and increasing the movements of their bodies at every step

they take in making the round of their hall, those gifted with greater powers of endurance and more excitable temperaments striving by their exertions to excite the rest. These, after a time, throw aside—or rather hand to the Shekh after kissing it—their *taj*, or head-dress, form an inner circle, entwine their arms, and press their shoulders together, repeating incessantly, “*Ya Allah!*” or “*Ya Hoo!*” The Rufai, or “howling” dervishes, not only exceed the other orders in the violence of their exercises, but in their strange religious frenzy occasionally cut themselves with knives, sear their flesh with hot irons, and swallow fire, all without evincing any sign of pain, but rather as if these wounds caused them exquisite pleasure. When all have finally sunk exhausted and apparently unconscious on the floor, their Shekh leaves his prayer-mat, and walking from one prostrate devotee to another, he whispers in his ear some mystic word which recalls him to life, breathes upon his face, and anoints his wounds with saliva. It is said, and indeed commonly believed by the Moslem spectators, that all traces of these self-inflicted injuries disappear in the course of twenty-four hours.

The dervishes make use among themselves of special forms of salutation. That in general use among the orders is “*Ya Hoo!*”—“O Him!” (the Deity); but as *love* is the leading principle of the Mevlevis, their mutual greeting is “*Eshk*

*olsoun!*'' ("Let it be love!") After the formal reception of a neophyte into an order, the only salutation required of him on entering the assembly is an inclination of the head towards the Shekh, with the right hand placed on the left shoulder, a gesture symbolic of perfect submission to him. On asking for hospitality at a convent, Turkish travellers use the formula, "Allah is our Friend! Peace be to the dwellers in this *tekkeh!* Love to those who are joyful; to all the Poor Men (*i. e.*, dervishes) here; and to their Shekhs who dwell in the house of the Shah (the Khalif Ali.)" The "grace before meat" used by the orders varies only in the addition by each of the name of its *Pir*, or founder. That of the Kadiri runs thus: "Praise be to Allah! may He increase His bounties! By the blessings of Abraham, by the light of the Prophet, by the grace of Ali, by the war-cry of Mohammed, by the secret of Abdul Kadir Ghilani, we beseech Thee to be gracious to our founder!"

Though all dervishes are free to leave the order into which they have originally entered and to join another, or even to return to the world, they rarely make use of this liberty. Each seems to consider it a sacred duty and privilege to remain faithful for life to the brotherhood with whom he has performed his novitiate, and to wear their garb to the end of his days. To this spirit of devotion to their order they add that of perfect submis-



sion to the will of their Shekh. "Consider your Guide as the greatest of all Guides," and, "In your every deed and thought let your Guide be always present to your mind," are the primary obligations of a dervish. Humility of spirit and demeanour is required of all; they must not consider themselves superior to others, but as the poorest and lowliest of mankind. Hence, not only in the cloister, but in all their dealings with the outer world, they are distinguished by a deep humility of manner. They walk abroad with bowed heads and absorbed expression, and the words, "Thanks to Allah!" are ever on their lips.

As above remarked, a dervish Shekh is, as a rule, "the husband of one wife," and marries a second spouse only when the first happens to be childless and his office is hereditary. Such a contingency arose in the household of the Mevlevi Shekh of Magnesia in Asia Minor (Magnesia sub Sipylum), a dignitary who ranks next in the order to its chief at Konieh; and a description of a visit paid shortly after his second marriage may not perhaps be out of place in this chapter. I happened to be one of a party invited to accompany a Government official on a day excursion to this most picturesque and interesting old Asian city, built on the lower slope of the steep and rugged Sipylus. After a picnic luncheon in the garden of the railway-station, to

which the obliging Levantine *chef de gare* had added a bowl of delicious native clotted cream and a Cassaba water-melon, we set off up the town, the gentlemen to pay their respects to the Shekh of the Mevlevi dervishes, who was well known to the Commissioner, and the ladies to visit the Shekh's harem, a messenger having been sent on beforehand, according to Turkish etiquette, to announce our coming. The courtyard gate of the *haremlik* was opened to us by an old woman, who kept her face concealed with unnecessary care from the gaze of any chance passer-by, and we were conducted up an outside staircase to a broad wooden balcony, on which all the living-rooms opened. Over the doors hung the leathern *portières* so common in Turkish houses; and, raising one of these, the servant held it back while we entered the *divan-khané*, or reception-room, a small apartment warmed by a charcoal brazier, and furnished simply but comfortably enough in Oriental fashion. A rather pretty and pleasant-looking young woman, with brown hair and eyes, the Shekh's second wife, uncurled herself and rose from the divan on which she had been sitting cross-legged. She salaamed low in acknowledgment of Madame the Commissioner's wife's *temená*; and seeing with ready tact that we foreigners were unequal to the performance of this graceful Oriental salutation, she offered her hand to each of us in turn, and mo-

tioned to us to be seated. Presently the *Bash Kadin*, or first wife, entered the room. She was a tall, dark, imperious-looking person, just beginning to lose the first freshness of youth. Her long black hair hung in two thick braids from below a yellow muslin kerchief, bound tightly round her head, and her dark eyebrows were artificially extended till they met over the nose. She was dressed, like the *Ikindji Kadin*, in a long, trailing gown of brightly patterned stuff, over which she wore a fur-lined jacket of printed cashmere. This lady saluted us much more formally than her companion had done, and, with a frigid acknowledgment of the profound salaam of the other visitor present,—a fat little woman with a baby,—she swept to her own corner of the divan, whence she directed her conversation solely to her European guests. The fat lady, evidently snubbed, retired within herself, and divided her attention between her baby and the sweets and coffee that were from time to time brought in and handed round by slaves. Half an hour is the minimum of time in which a Turkish visit can be paid; but as soon as etiquette permitted, we rose to take our leave. The second wife's own special attendant, a pretty Circassian girl, brown-haired and blue-eyed, who was waiting outside on the balcony, showed us the way to the selamlık through a door in the courtyard wall. Beyond this she might not go.

Crossing another little court we were met at the door of the Shekh's apartments by a handsome youth of sixteen or so in the dress of a Mevlevi dervish—tall sugarloaf shaped hat of camel's hair felt, without brim, and long mantle of fawn-coloured cloth—who conducted us to the presence of his master. We found him alone, the gentlemen of our party having, it appeared, just left to call on the Turkish Governor. The Shekh was a tall, dignified man, in the prime of life, with handsome and refined features, dressed in the same costume as his attendant neophyte, with the addition of a green turban wound round his sugarloaf hat. After some general conversation, our host asked if we would like to see some of the sights of the town. He would send one of his probationers with us as guide, as he himself had, unfortunately, an engagement. The Shekh clapped his hands—the Oriental substitute for an electric bell—and the youth we had before seen made his appearance. On receiving the orders of his superior, Selim bowed respectfully to him with his hands crossed on his breast, saluted us with the customary *temená*, and then led the way into the street. We were soon fairly climbing the mountain-side, and the streets became regularly terraced staircases. As this was rather fatiguing to those unaccustomed to such thoroughfares, our guide good-naturedly took up on his shoulder the Commissioner's little daughter,

a child of eight. As he did so, some Moslem boys, who had collected to stare at the strangers, asked him, with the fanaticism and assurance usually found in conjunction with complete ignorance and inexperience, "if he were not ashamed to be going about with *Giaours*?" The neophyte made no reply, but turned again with an apologetic smile to reply to a remark made by the child's mother. Had this mere boy, I asked myself, already learnt the lesson of self-control, which forms so important a part of dervish discipline?

We ascended the old tower to inspect the mechanism of the wooden clock, which reminded me of a much more antiquated Chinese timepiece in a temple in Canton, and from the same vantage-ground we were able to enjoy the grand views spread out before and around us. At our feet were the red-tiled roofs of the town, interspersed with trees, now leafless, save the tall, sombre cypresses, among which rose the domes and minarets of twenty mosques; while in front and far below us stretched the wide and fertile plain watered by the Hermus and its tributary, the Hyllus; and beyond it, again, the Sardene Mountains, beyond which, faintly visible in the blue haze, could be seen the snow-capped peaks of distant Ida, the scene of the tragic story of Paris and *Ænone*. But the shadows were lengthening, and Selim was anxious to conduct us to the

mausoleum in which a dervish saint lies buried. Like most edifices of the kind, it consists of a domed central apartment, with rooms attached for the accommodation of the dervishes who act as guardians of the shrine. On either side of the doorway are serpentine columns of red porphyry, relics, no doubt, of some Byzantine church once existent in the neighbourhood. Selim slipped off his shoes on the threshold, and then, for a moment, seemed puzzled as he looked at our boots. Only for a moment, however. Asking us to await his return, he disappeared into the edifice. Presently emerging with a smile on his face, and his hands full of roomy slippers, he proceeded to put them on over our boots, and then led the way into the sacred precincts—for to Moslems a *turbeh*, being the resting-place of a holy man, is as sacred as a mosque. In the centre of the *turbeh* stood the tomb of the saint, an erection of masonry about four feet high, rising to a ridge at the centre, and lower at the foot than at the head, where a turban of a peculiar shape indicated the character of the occupant. Rich shawls and draperies completely concealed the sarcophagus, save at the end beneath the turban, where, in a niche, a small oil-lamp was burning. At the foot squatted a couple of wild, outlandish-looking pilgrims from Central Asia, repeating the *Fatiha*,—the opening chapter of the Koran,—the Moslem *Paternoster* before men-

tioned, and other formulas customary on visiting the shrines of the saints of Islam. The only ornaments on the whitewashed walls were illuminated texts from the Koran, and the unglazed and grated windows gave the apartment a bare and prison-like appearance. As we could not recite *fatihas*, we honoured the memory of the departed by giving a liberal *bakshish* to his living guardians, chiefly, however, for the sake of Selim's feelings, to whom we had become quite attached during our walk. For though, as a dervish neophyte, he was now, according to the rules of the order to which he had been promised by his parents at his birth, and to whom he himself aspired to belong, performing for a thousand and one days the menial duties connected with the *tekkeh*, Selim belonged to a family equal in worldly position to that of his spiritual master, the Shekh.

In addition to the cloistered brethren, the Dervish Orders include in their ranks a vast number of affiliated laymen, who subscribe to their tenets and join in the religious exercises in the *tekkehs*. The Bektashi Order, it is said, possesses not fewer than 80,000 adherents among the Albanians alone, and reigning Sultans are usually honorary members of several orders.



## CHAPTER IX

### EDUCATION AND CULTURE

**I**N Turkey at the present day two distinct systems of State education exist side by side—the ancient, instituted at the Conquest and common to all Moslem countries, and the modern, initiated in the earlier half of the last century, and greatly developed during the last forty years. The educational establishments belonging to the first class comprise the *Mahallah-Mektebs* or parish schools, and the *Médressehs* or mosque colleges, both supported by the funds of the mosque of which they are generally dependencies. There is perhaps no country in Europe in which primary education was provided for at so early a date as in Turkey, or so many inducements held out to poor parents to allow their children to participate in its benefits. The *Mektebs* afford rudimentary instruction to children of both sexes, who usually begin to attend them at a very early age, paying for the privilege a nominal fee amounting to about two shillings a year, though at some of these mosque schools each



pupil is entitled to receive two suits of clothing a year, while at others free meals and pocket-money are distributed.

The first day of a child's school life is considered so important an event that it is celebrated with a little ceremony as interesting as it is quaint. Dressed in his holiday suit, and bedecked with all the jewels and personal ornaments which his parents possess or can borrow for the occasion, his little fez almost concealed with strings of gold coins, pendants, pearl tassels, and various little objects worn as charms against "the evil eye," and his finger-tips tinged with henna, he is mounted on a superbly caparisoned horse, and led in pompous procession through the streets of the neighbourhood. In front of him his future instructors walk backwards, slowly and gravely, as if to prolong the ceremony. Behind him one boy carries on a silken cushion a copy of the Koran, to know which holy book by heart entitles a youth or maiden to the honourable title of *Hafiz*; another bears his folding book-stand, of walnut-wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl, on which the sacred volume is placed when open; a third holds his *chanta*, or writing-case of velvet, embroidered with stars and crescents in gold thread. Behind these come all his future school-fellows, walking two and two, and chanting verses said to have been composed by the Prophet, extolling the pleasures of knowledge, exhorting

to love of one's neighbour, inciting to industry, and concluding with good wishes for their new companion, eulogies of his parents and teachers, and finally, glorification of the Sultan, all the bystanders loyally joining in the refrain of *Amin!* *Amin!* On returning to the boy's home, his father distributes coppers to his school-fellows, and also to all the poor folk sure to be collected round the gateway. This ceremony is repeated when the boy passes his first examination, his *hodja* being presented at the same time with a Turkish lira (18s.) and a suit of linen.

The masters of these schools are at the same time functionaries of the mosques to which they are attached, and the instruction given in them is chiefly of a religious character, though elementary lessons in reading and writing have of late years been added to the curriculum. Squatting in rows on the matted floor, the children learn partly from their books and partly by rote, reciting the lessons in unison, while the *hodja*, who sits cross-legged at a low desk, expounds to them the Koran, which, being in Arabic, is not easily understood by the infant mind.

The *Médressehs*, or mosque colleges, resemble in some respects the universities of Western Europe as they existed in mediæval days, and owe their origin to the munificence of Sultans and grandees of former centuries, whose endowments of the mosques supported also their edu-

cational and charitable dependencies, the lectures being very frequently given in the mosque itself. The revenues of the majority of these religious foundations have, of late years, owing to changes in their administration, greatly diminished. Formerly the students invariably received, in addition to free quarters, certain daily rations from the college kitchen, and oil for their lamps, but in many cases such free commons can now only be dealt out on special days, and the edifices themselves can hardly be saved from ruin. The students' quarters are usually built in the form of a quadrangle surrounding a courtyard, and the arrangements are quite mediæval in character, several youths often occupying one apartment, in which they study, sleep, and do their cooking, besides having, as freshmen, to "fag" for the tutor who supervises their studies. Very poor many of these students are ; but living is cheap in Turkey, and from twelve shillings to fifteen shillings per month suffices for their subsistence. There are in the capital more than a hundred of these *Médressehs*, and one or more may be found in every provincial town.

Antiquated as they now appear, these Moham-  
medan colleges constituted in former centuries  
important centres of learning, as not only theo-  
logical teaching was given in them, but also  
instruction in all the branches of human know-  
ledge then available, and in their libraries many

valuable manuscripts have been preserved. At the present day the main subjects of study in the *Médressehs* may be classed under the heads of Theology and Language. The former includes, besides knowledge of the Koran and the *Hadis* or Traditions, with the commentaries thereon, Moslem law ; and language includes grammar, rhetoric, poetry, and calligraphy. It may thus be readily understood that the instruction given in the mosque schools and colleges is of a very conservative character, and not calculated to advance the cause of general enlightenment in the country. Seeing, however, that all the numerous poets, historians, and philosophers of whose literary eminence Turkey can rightly boast were, until quite recently, graduates of the *Médressehs*, it cannot be denied that they have done good service in their time, and more than justified their existence.

In olden days the population of Turkey was divided into two distinct classes, the *Ulema*, or learned, and the unlettered, the former comprising only the graduates of the *Médressehs*, from whose ranks came those who were at the same time the exponents of religious dogma and the administrators of the law of the land, there being at that time no secular system of jurisprudence as at present. The changes in the legal administration effected during the past century have, however, deprived the mosque colleges of their

former importance, and admission to them is now sought principally by those who aspire to become members of the *Ulema*, functionaries of the mosques, professors in the *Médressehs*, or practitioners in what may be termed the Ecclesiastical Courts, presided over by the Shekh-ul-Islam. Certain privileges are, however, secured to those who become *Softas*, as the students in these seminaries are called. Among these, that of exemption for life from military service induces many young men who have no vocation for the study of theology to pass at least the preliminary examination in Arabic and the subjects taught in that language, which will entitle them to this privilege, even if they subsequently adopt another career. The number of *Softas* accommodated in the *Médressehs* of the capital at the present day is estimated at about six thousand, most of whom are quite impecunious ; and in the great religious centres, such as Konieh, the ancient Iconium, they are also very numerous. The diminished revenues of the religious foundations no longer affording free rations at the *Médressehs* as heretofore, many of the undergraduates during the month of Ramazan visit the provincial towns and villages, where they preach or do special duty in the mosques, returning equipped with funds derived from fees and alms-gifts sufficient to enable them to continue their frugal college life. As a body, the *Softas* exercise considerable

influence. They have almost invariably taken a prominent part in revolutions and other political events, and constitute the most fanatical and dangerous section of the population, hostile, as a rule, to every innovation or attempt at reform. The authorities, too, have on occasion not scrupled to make use of their agency for the purpose of awakening that spirit of savage bigotry which, save when so stirred, slumbers peacefully in the heart of the Turkish peasant and artisan. An energetic Sultan in modern times has, on the other hand, more than once found it expedient to disperse some of these communities, and close their college; and the present Sultan, in the pursuance of his policy of suppression, has naturally not neglected to take precautionary measures with respect to this once redoubtable body, which render impossible any collective action on their part against the existing government.

In addition to the parish *Mektebs*, there are now in the capital and all the larger towns State-supported preparatory schools called *Rushdiyyeh*, to which boys are admitted gratuitously, and taught, beside reading and writing, such usual elementary subjects as arithmetic, Turkish history, and geography. In the *Idadiyeh*, or secondary schools, which are also State-supported, but very inadequate in number, elder boys receive more specialised instruction while qualifying for





A CLASSROOM IN A TURKISH COLLEGE





admission to one of the many modern schools and colleges modelled on the system of the educational institutions of France and Germany, in which all the subjects necessitated by modern requirements are taught. Among these are State military schools and colleges, a naval college, medical colleges, civil and military, besides various institutions specially devoted to the training of civil servants, lawyers, civil engineers, and a Lyceum organised in imitation of such establishments as they exist in France. In the last, founded in 1869 by the joint efforts of Ali and Fuad Pashas, the great reforming statesmen, it was proposed to afford to all subjects of the Sultan irrespective of race and creed, the opportunity of obtaining a liberal education. Notwithstanding the difficulties which naturally arose in connection with organising a system of education taking account of the prejudices of members of three different religious systems, the Lyceum was opened with some three hundred and fifty students, belonging to seven different sects, and in two years' time the attendance was doubled. The lessons generally were given in French by French professors, and every facility was afforded for the acquisition of other languages, classical and modern. The project of establishing provincial colleges in connection with the Lyceum fell through. But the original institution continued to prosper until the death of its enlightened

founders, after which many things, besides the management of the Lyceum, went from bad to worse ; and the later removal of the college to Stamboul has entirely deprived it of the cosmopolitan character which was the great aim of those responsible for its foundation. But the usefulness of all the educational establishments of modern institution has been seriously interfered with and retarded by the new Palace system, the object of which is to crush the growing spirit of liberalism, and prevent the spread of progressive ideas among Moslems. It is true that a year ago a project was mooted of founding at Constantinople a university similar to those of European countries ; but it is to be feared that it will be long ere this can take practical shape.

The American institution at Bebek, on the Bosphorus, known as Robert College, organised on the American system and conducted by a faculty which includes also Greek, Armenian, Bulgarian, and Turkish professors, all graduates of the institution, affords an excellent education, for moderate fees, to the youth of the East belonging to all nationalities and creeds, and drawn from every social stratum. The majority of the students are Greeks, but the Armenian element is very largely represented, as is also the Bulgarian. The obligation of attending daily chapel and the services of the Protestant Church on Sundays is, however, an obstacle to the useful-

ness of the college to the Turkish youth, as, under the present fanatical and harassing *régime*, it would be unsafe for any professed Moslem to become either a resident or a daily student. This institution has accommodation for two hundred resident students, and an attendance of over three hundred; and since its foundation forty years ago many of its graduates have attained to high positions in the Governments of the Balkan principalities, and otherwise distinguished themselves. All the Christian and also the Jewish communities have, however, in addition, their own special sectarian schools supported by voluntary contributions and organised upon European models, the majority of which offer a high standard of education and are well attended. For many years past the highest Turkish families have in most cases sent their sons to France and England to complete their studies, and a considerable number of Turkish girls have been educated at home by European governesses,—English, French, and German. Schools for Turkish girls of the middle and lower classes are also on the increase, though still very inadequate in numbers and equipment. Harem restraints also present obstacles to the girls' continuing to attend school after the age of twelve, as they then go abroad only when veiled and escorted by a woman, either a relative or an attendant of mature years.

Europeans visiting Constantinople are often surprised at finding how high a standard of intelligence and education prevails in the upper circles of Turkish society. The generality of men, in official circles at least, speak French, and many read, if they do not speak, English; while in all large towns there are quite as many Turks who read and write some foreign language as would be found in a corresponding class in this country. Of late years the Press censorship has, however, done its best to put a stop to the progress of culture on European lines. Native printing and publishing offices have been compulsorily closed, newspapers and periodicals suppressed, and many of the more prominent literary men of the capital sent into exile. Any foreign book or periodical, also, which may happen to contain allusions to the action of the Ottoman Government, or comments on the religion of Islam, is placed on the Turkish *Index Expurgatorius*, and if discovered is seized at the custom-house. The list of prohibited books includes also all guide-books and encyclopædias in which mention is made of the Sultan, Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, Chateaubriand's *Martyrs*, Victor Hugo's *Les Orientales*, La Fontaine's *Fables*, and the works of Shakespeare, Dante, Voltaire, Rabelais, Zola, and several modern French authors. Modern French works are, however, in greater demand by the Turks than

any other branch of literature; the booksellers of Péra are sufficiently enterprising; and their initiated customers express no surprise at finding that the contents of the volumes on their shelves do not always correspond with the titles on their covers, Zola's *La Terre* being happily labelled *La Culture Maraichière*, and his *Paris, Traité de la Langue Française!* For the Turkish official considers that he has done his duty in examining the titles of the books which pass through his hands, and if they do not happen to be mentioned in his list of forbidden works, that is not his affair. As all my own volumes have received this honour at the hands of the Turkish Censor, I was, on arriving at Constantinople recently, somewhat anxious while the trunk containing copies of them was being examined. The expectation of a substantial *bakshish* from our dragoman, however, added to my simulated concern at their handling of the "toilettes" covering the offending volumes, disarmed the watchfulness of the *goumronkdji*, and I carried them off in triumph. The customs officials are, of course, themselves unable to judge of the character of foreign books, all of which, new or old, are indiscriminately impounded at the frontiers, and after examination by the Censor may—or may not—be ultimately returned to their owners.

Printing was introduced into Turkey in the

earlier half of the eighteenth century, but to this day the Turks prefer a beautiful manuscript to a printed book. They have, indeed, always cultivated and esteemed calligraphy more than Europeans, and even more than any other Orientals, except, perhaps, the Persians. Copying books, as a trade, has not even yet completely died out, as with us; religious books have only of recent years been allowed to be printed, and the Koran is still always used in manuscript. Letter-writing is, however, still an art not understood by the vulgar. Many even of those who can read are unable to write, and the professional scribe still sits at the street-corners ready to set down in literary Turkish the simple messages of his customers to friends at a distance, who may possibly have recourse to the erudition of the village Imâm to decipher the missive. The trade of the seal-engraver, who, like the scribe, is invariably a Moslem, remains as flourishing as when the art of writing was less common, for Orientals generally consider a seal preferable to a written signature, their argument being that any one may imitate a man's handwriting, but no one but himself can be in possession of his seal. But the Turks, in common with Orientals generally, are not afflicted with the *cacoëthes scribendi*, neither social, intellectual, nor commercial activity being so great as to call for a frequent exchange of written communications.

Even the capital is without a local postal service; and it is customary to send by word of mouth long messages, of which, even if the general drift is conveyed, the substance must get somewhat altered in transmission by servants and employees.

In the course of the last half-century the Turks have abandoned the ponderous, grandiloquent, and inflated style of diction formerly in vogue, which constituted so great an impediment to the spread of education, in favour of short sentences after the European model, a literary revolution which has greatly benefited the nation. During this time thousands of new words have been adopted or adapted from other languages to express the wants of modern civilisation, and the language has been thereby so much enriched, simplified, and modernised, that numerous novels, scientific books, and periodicals have of late appeared, which may be said to be quite on a par with many contemporaneous productions in Western Europe.

The folk-tales current among the Osmanlis are not only very numerous, but are also exceedingly varied in character. No allusion is, however, to be found in them to the original home of the Turkish race in Central Asia. Yet such a total absence of any legends connected with the former habitat of the Turks is only what one might expect to find on consideration of the

history of the Osmanli nation. For the original small band which invaded Asia Minor in the thirteenth century has for the last six hundred years been increased, first, by the adherence and conversion of whole populations, and, secondly, by intermarriage in every succeeding generation with the best blood both of South-eastern Europe and Asia Minor. The women belonging to all the surrounding peoples—Kurdish, Georgian, Circassian, Byzantine, Armenian, Slav, and even Venetian—naturally brought with them into the harems of the Osmanlis their own folk-lore, which, gradually falling under the influence of Moslem ideas, has attained its present distinctive character. Many of these tales, like those of the *Thousand and One Nights*, deal with Peris and Djins, the race of beings created before Adam,—and to which his second wife, Lilith, is held to have belonged,—and with wicked magicians, enchanted princesses, and valiant heroes. There are also mythical stories concerning the magical exploits of King David and King Solomon; religious and semi-religious legends connected with the Prophet and the saints of Islam; charming animal tales, and fables with a moral application, and sarcastic stories relating to the impostures of pseudo-saintly dervishes, the rapacity of Mollahs and the corruption of Kadis, besides comic and humorous anecdotes innumerable. A large proportion of the last class have



for their hero Nasr-'d-Din Hodja, sometime parson-jester to the terrible Tamerlane during his invasion of Asia Minor. Many of these stories are, however, probably of much greater antiquity than the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century, the date assigned to this famous Oriental wit, who is made to do duty in his own person for our Wise Men of Gotham, Joe Miller, and Sydney Smith. The character of some of these anecdotes is proverbial or didactic; the weaknesses and shortcomings of woman form the subject of others; while in yet another class the honesty and integrity of the Hodja himself are more than questionable. Running through most of them, however, is a vein of the fine irony peculiar to Orientals, and in many the point lies in a subtle play of words impossible to reproduce in another language.

Much of this literature has still only an oral existence, but during the last century a considerable portion has been collected in book form, and it is said that the volumes in which are related the exploits of the famous Hodja have, next to the Koran, more readers than any other Eastern literature. Almost every humorous anecdote is, however, fathered upon this parson-buffoon who has become a sort of type personifying the humorous side of the national character. One authentic specimen which has not, I believe, yet appeared in English dress may

here be given. When the dreaded Tamerlane had pitched his camp in the neighbourhood of Ak Shehir, in which Asian town the Hodja resided, the good man consulted with his wife as to whether he should offer a basket of figs or a basket of quinces as a propitiatory gift to the Mongol invader. The good wife's opinion was that quinces would be the more acceptable present. "Then I shall take figs," promptly returned the Hodja. The offering was duly presented, and placed before the conqueror. "What is this?" he demanded fiercely, and taking up one fig after another he pelted with them the Hodja, who, raising his hands to heaven, ejaculated piously, "Praised be Allah that I did not take the counsel of my wife." Tamerlane, struck by the good man's words, demanded an explanation of them. "My lord, before setting out from the city I discussed with my wife whether I should offer thee figs or quinces. She said 'Quinces,' so I brought figs; and well it was for me—my head would have been broken by the quinces, hadst thou thrown *them* at me. Never henceforward will I follow the counsel of a woman!"

The taste manifested by the Sultan for theatrical and operatic representations already alluded to is largely shared by his subjects, and the drama is very popular among the Turks as well as among other nationalities of the Empire. The

actors in Turkish theatres are usually Armenians, and the women's parts, out of regard for Oriental prejudices, are frequently taken by men. But here again the censorship steps in, forbids to the public the recreation so freely indulged in by the Padishah, and makes the progress of dramatic art impossible. A number of plays have been either written in Turkish or adapted from the works of European dramatic writers, but every obstacle is placed in the way of their representation in the capital. Even performances at European theatres by foreign companies are frequently interfered with on the most puerile pretexts. Not long ago the management of a Péra theatre announced the production of Molière's *L'Avare*, and the services of an ex-member of the Comédie Française having been secured for the chief rôle, every seat was quickly disposed of. The audience were in their places, and the curtain was about to rise, when an official of the police appeared and informed the manager that the performance had been forbidden, and the money taken must be returned to the public. The French Ambassador was at once communicated with, and he proceeded without delay to Yildiz Kiosk, where he was informed to his surprise that *L'Avare* was an adaptation of a Turkish comedy in which the Sultan was treated with scant respect, and could not, therefore, be allowed to be played in Turkey! The assurances

to the contrary of the representative of the French Republic were, of course, courteously received; but the fiat had gone forth and was irrevocable, and the only solatium for the wounded feelings of the actors was a golden one of three or four thousand francs, of which the Padishah requested their acceptance. Still more recently an attempt was made to prevent the repetition of an amateur performance by the children of the English colony at Kadikeui on the pretext that the play—produced, by the way, under the superintendence of the English chaplain—was of an immoral tendency! This was, however beyond the limits of human patience, and the representations made were of such a character as speedily to obtain the removal of the interdiction.

Turkish music is very primitive in character. The airs are generally either wild and plaintive, or sentimental and melancholy, presenting little variety, and always pitched in a minor key; and the popular idea of singing in the country generally I once heard not inaptly described as “pirouetting around a single note.” The repetition of the Turkish words “*Aman, Aman!*” —which may be translated as “Oh, dear!” or “Have pity!”—appears sufficient to express the sentimental feelings of the lower classes of all races, and the muleteer on the road, the fisherman in his boat, or the town ’prentice taking

his *kaif* at a coffee-house by the seashore will, for hours together, make nasal excursions up and down the scale from the keynote on which he enunciates his "*Aman, Aman!*" Military bands and barrel-organs have, however, introduced European music, chiefly French and Italian, and *La Fille de Madame Angot* has had, perhaps, a greater vogue in Turkey than even in her native land.

The musical instruments in ordinary use among the populace are the rebeck, or lute, the *kanoun*, a kind of zither, the reed flute, and the small hemispherical drum. But the favourite instrument of the Oriental rustic generally is the bag-pipe—not the complicated instrument, be it understood, of the Scottish highlanders, but a much more primitive one, made from the skin of a sheep fitted with a mouthpiece and a single reed pipe, by means of which the notes are produced. The inflated skin is held against the chest of the player, who moves his fingers over the holes, producing sounds discordant enough to Western ears, but pleasing in the extreme to the unsophisticated Turk, Arab, Bulgarian, or Armenian, especially when accompanied, as is generally the case, by the equally primitive *dou-bana*, or native drum.



## CHAPTER X

### THE ALBANIAN HIGHLANDERS

UPPER, or Northern, Albania, as its native name of *Skiperi* ("The Land of Rocks") signifies, is one of the most mountainous regions in the Ottoman Empire. The principal chain runs north and south parallel with the Adriatic, and from it jut many spurs as lofty as the main range, which ramify in every direction, so that almost the whole surface of the country is covered with rugged hills and deep valleys. Even the coast is grandly mountainous, the spurs there often terminating in abrupt precipices, the sides of which are eternally beaten by the lashing waves. Almost every variety of climate is found within the limits of Albania. In the south, and near the sea, the temperature is as mild as at Naples, and oranges, citrons, grapes, pomegranates, figs, and other fruits grow in abundance. But the cold increases with the distance from the coast, and only twenty miles away the snowfalls are heavy and the frosts severe. The higher and more northern summits

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are clad in perpetual snow; but at lower elevations stretch vast forests of pine and other trees, and rich pasturages, over which the sheep and cattle roam in summer. The land is cultivated to any considerable extent only in the south, where the climate is more suited to the production of crops and the character of the people to the pursuit of agriculture. For the Gheg, or Moslem Albanian, has, generally speaking, no great fondness for farmwork, which he usually leaves to the women, children, and old men; and when he does not follow the calling of soldier or trader, prefers wood-cutting, vine-dressing, or, still better, tending sheep on the mountains, a pursuit in which laziness is occasionally and agreeably diversified with peril.

The Albanian nationality is composed of several distinct tribes—Tosks, Ghegs, Mirdites, Khams, and Liaps—each of which is subdivided into a number of clans. Though, as a rule, the same splendid physical type is observable among the Albanians generally, they vary somewhat according to the degree of admixture with neighbouring races, Slav in the North, and in the South Greek. Proud, independent, and often arrogant in bearing and manner, the dignity of their personal appearance is not a little enhanced by the picturesque and elaborately decorated national costume, and by their custom of wearing under all circumstances a waist-belt bristling with

arms — inlaid pistols, daggers, and yataghans. Each section of the nation has also its own traditional laws and usages, and by these alone is their social life regulated. Their internal government is a species of aristocratic republic, all matters affecting the community being decided in council by the chiefs, the elders, and other hereditary functionaries. Notwithstanding that the Albanians were brought under Turkish rule five hundred years ago, they have never considered themselves a conquered race, and their old feudal social system, which they still in some degree retain, aided by the nature of their country, has occasionally made it possible for the chieftains to throw off for the time being the authority of the Porte. Under existing political conditions profession of the creed of Islam certainly offers a favourable field of action for the martial and predatory instincts of the Albanian highlander; for though he objects to ordinary conscription, he gladly follows the standard of his own chieftain to fight the battles of the Sultan either as a regular or a Bashibazouk. When on the march to the seat of war, a company of Albanians is a terrible scourge to the country it passes through, leaving nothing behind that it can possibly carry away with it. As a soldier the Albanian is valued for his rapidity of motion, ability as a marksman, carelessness of danger, and uncomplaining endurance of



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privation. Raised from childhood to the use of arms, his gun is his most cherished possession, and with it he seldom fails to supply his daily wants when on the march or in camp.

Though speaking the same language and cherishing the same traditions and national aspirations, the Albanians are at the present day, in matters of religious belief, divided by three creeds, the Moslem, Orthodox Greek, and Roman Catholic. The Moslems constitute about half the population, and of the remaining half the majority follow the rites of the Eastern Church. The Mirdites and some tribes of Ghegs on the coast adopted the Roman Catholic faith about the end of the eighteenth century, and follow the Latin rite with some Oriental differences, as, for instance the administration of the Sacrament, in both kinds to the laity. Previous to the Turkish Conquest the Albanians were all members of the Greek Orthodox Church. But after that event many chieftains, with their tribesmen, voluntarily embraced Islam for the sake of the material advantages which resulted from such a change of creed. Perversion, however, became more general in the reign of Sultan Murad II., who, incensed by the apostasy from Islam of the famous Albanian hero Scanderbeg, converted all the churches in Epirus into mosques, and commanded its inhabitants, on pain of death, to confess that "there is no God but God, and

Mohammed is His Prophet." Until the beginning of last century much of the land in Lower Albania had remained in the possession of its hereditary Christian proprietors, and many semi-independent villages still existed in various localities. Usurped, however, by the three methods of force, fraud, and nominal compensation by the despot Ali Pasha, these lands, passing on his downfall to the Crown, were never regained by their former owners; and at the present day the large landowners throughout Albania are Moslems, who exercise a despotic and unlimited sway over the Christian peasants on their estates.

Differences in religious belief, however, form, generally speaking, in Albania no ban to social intercourse. Christian men wed Moslem maids, and *vice versa*; the sons being brought up in the faith of their father, and the daughters in that of the mother. Moslems revere the Virgin Mary and the Christian saints, and make pilgrimages to their shrines. Christians reciprocally resort to the tombs of Moslem saints for the cure of ailments, or in fulfilment of vows; while Christians and Moslems alike mingle with their culture-beliefs ancient pagan rites and superstitious usages which both creeds have proved powerless to eradicate. The Festival of Our Lady of Scutari is honoured equally by Christians and Moslems; and the scene on this day in the great square

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building, which with its bare walls and absence of ornament bears little resemblance to a Romish Church, is most striking and strange. The Mass is listened to by a congregation whose waist-belts are perfect arsenals of small-arms, pistols, yataghans, and daggers of every shape and pattern. There are wild-looking, fiercely moustachioed Papist highlanders, white-kilted Mohammedans, chieftains blazing with gold embroidery, and milder citizens in more homely garb, all assembled in honour of the Madonna, at whose shrine the ancestors of all had worshipped. Yet, notwithstanding their friendly participation in the religious ceremonies of their neighbours, the Albanians are not less tenacious of their own honour than they are of that of the creed they profess, any insult offered to a Christian church being promptly retaliated upon a mosque, and *vice versâ*.

Tribal and family pride may be said to be the leading feature of Albanian character; and although the Skipetar chieftains have neither genealogical charts nor armorial bearings, matrimonial alliances between their families are arranged with rigid regard to rank and precedence. The wives and mothers of the beys, like well-born women generally, are intimately acquainted with the genealogies of all the neighbouring families, and the preliminaries of betrothal are usually settled by them in the harem before formal proposals

are made to the heads of the respective households, or the couple themselves. Exogamy is the general rule in the affairs of marriage; and by the Roman Catholic Mirdite chieftains it is observed to the extent of occasionally carrying off by force a woman from one of the neighbouring Moslem tribes. The wives of many of the principal inhabitants of Orosh have been acquired in this way, and, far from resenting or being ashamed of the circumstance, they are, on the contrary, proud of it, and their relatives accept the situation on payment of the usual dowry.

From the age of twelve to the time of their marriage, which generally takes place before they are sixteen, the girls of the towns, both Christian and Moslem, are kept strictly secluded from the outer world. The customs of the Christians are, indeed, in this respect the more rigid; for their daughters are not, during this interval, allowed to present themselves before visitors, even of their own sex. The highest praise that can be given to an Albanian maiden is conveyed in the phrase, "The sun has never seen her." The peasant and country girls, however, both of the mountains and the plains, enjoy, as we have seen, much greater freedom. Save among the Mirdites, social intercourse with members of the other sex is not denied to them; and, like the Greek and Vlach maidens, they tend the

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flocks on the hills, fetch water from the fountain, and lead generally a life of healthy industry.

Social morality is pushed to its extremest limit by these Mirdite mountaineers. Though their women enjoy, in many respects, the greatest freedom, an unmarried girl cannot, out of doors, speak to a man not a relative without risking the loss of her reputation, a calamity which few would care to survive. The Albanian code of honour makes it impossible for a man to raise his hand against a woman, be she armed or not. The sacredness attached to their persons extends also to those whom they take under their protection. Escorted by a girl only, travellers may pass with safety through the wildest parts of the country; and a man may cross without fear the lands of one with whom he is at feud, if he have the safe-conduct of a woman belonging to his enemy's family. To such an extent, indeed, is respect for women carried by the Albanians, that it is contrary to their notions of propriety even to make them the subject of jokes or humorous satires, the slightest insult or annoyance offered to a maiden invariably resulting in bitter feuds between families, or fierce battles between tribes.

Vendettas, or blood-feuds, are, indeed, very common among the Albanians. Though often originating in some trifling cause, they result in great loss of life, and are handed down from generation to generation. Sometimes these feuds

exist between individuals only; at others, whole villages or clans are concerned. In maintaining them, however, certain traditional rules are punctiliously adhered to; and occasionally those engaged in these feuds, finding the state of continued hostility irksome, agree to observe a *bessa*, or truce, for a stated period. When entire clans take part in a feud, each keeps strictly to its own wells or fountains, its public ovens, and its markets. Such dissensions, however, rarely interrupt the usual occupations of a district, the land being tilled and the flocks pastured as usual in the daytime, the combatants assembling in the evening for the fray on the common adjoining some neighbouring town or village. When a few men have bitten the dust, the rest withdraw, and the battle is over for the time. Though women are not the principals in these vendettas, it is no uncommon thing for them to take part in the bloody frays to which they give rise, and for which their custom of carrying arms makes them always ready. It is said, however, that even under such circumstances the men refrain, as far as possible, from striking or wounding their female opponents.

The dwellings of the Albanians are quite in keeping with their character and mode of life. Even at Ioannina, where social customs approximate more closely to those of the Greeks, the houses have a gloomy appearance from without,

being shut in by ponderous courtyard gates, and having no windows to the street on the ground floor. Like the generality of Oriental houses, they are of two stories only—the upper, which contains the living-rooms of the family, being reached by an outside staircase of wood, under cover of the broad pent of the tiled roof projecting over the open landing, or gallery, on which all the rooms open. The furniture of each apartment consists chiefly of a low divan with very hard cushions, a few chairs, and a mirror. There are no bedsteads, the mattresses and coverlets which are spread on the divans at night being in the daytime piled in the great wall-cupboards. The walls are limewashed, and adorned for the most part only with the rich assortment of arms of all kinds which form the pride of the family. In the mountain districts the houses of the chieftains are perfect fortresses, being surrounded by high walls pierced with loopholes for musketry. Only in times of open hostility, however, is it necessary to take any precautions against possible foes, for an Albanian's notion of honour does not allow him to slay a man in his own house, deadly as may be his feud with him. The villages of these districts are generally remote from each other, perched in high and seemingly inaccessible situations. Each has, however, its green, in one corner of which is the paved threshing-floor, where the grain is trodden out by horses.

A considerable number of Albanians, finding in their own country insufficient scope for their energies, emigrate to other parts of the Empire in search of employment. Some attend the Greek and Turkish educational establishments, and qualify as doctors, lawyers, and schoolmasters. Many attain high rank in the Government service and the army, while the lower classes generally work as masons, carters, butchers, dairymen, etc. The Mohammedans, however, prefer as a rule either military service, or situations as guards or *cavasses*, for which a good presence but no special training is required. The wives and children seldom accompany the head of the household to his foreign abode, but remain to look after the family interests in the ancestral home, contenting themselves with an occasional visit from the bread-winner.

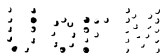
Infant betrothal is very common among the Albanians, this usage being in the middle and lower classes intended to prevent the young men marrying in the towns to which they may resort for employment, and thus forming connections and interests unconnected with those of the family generally. A refusal on the part of a *fiancé* to fulfil an engagement thus made for him by his parents would inevitably result, not only in a vendetta with the relatives of the discarded bride, but in social ostracism, and such cases are, as a matter of fact, extremely rare. As soon as







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a young Albanian has amassed sufficient money to enable him to do so, he returns home and marries the girl chosen for him by his parents, in order to prove himself a respectable member of society. After a brief sojourn in the bosom of his family, he returns to his employment, leaving his young wife in charge of his parents; for here, as well as elsewhere in Turkey, patriarchal customs still survive, and all the sons bring home their brides to the paternal roof, there to remain in subjection to the parents-in-law until they shall themselves become heads of families.

Solidarity is a distinguishing trait of the Albanian abroad. All Skipetars are "brothers"; and those settled in distant towns will, when necessary, assist pecuniarily or even maintain new-comers until they obtain profitable employment. Gay, reckless, and improvident, the Albanian is generally short of money, and usually carries his fortune on his person in the shape of richly embroidered garments and valuable arms. Should fortune be adverse, and the generosity of his friends in time be exhausted, he will first sell his small arsenal of pistols and daggers, and perhaps his embroidered vest and jacket may follow suit. But the son of the mountains, even when reduced to the condition of a tattered *chiplak*, loses nothing of his characteristic swagger and self-assurance. And when things are at the worst with him, he not infrequently mends them

by taking to the road and replenishing his purse from that of some one less at odds with fortune.

Gheg and Tosk have about an equal reputation for bravery as well as for rapacity, but for fidelity and honourable dealing the Moslem Gheg has the more enviable reputation. If short of cash, or merely for the sake of adventure, he certainly has no hesitation about turning brigand, and if any traveller on the highroad has the temerity to disregard his summons of *Des dour* ("Stand and deliver!") he thinks nothing of cutting his throat or despatching him with a pistol-shot. If, however, a Gheg enters your employment, or is indebted to you for a service, however small, all his alarming characteristics retire into the background, and he becomes the most faithful of friends and servants. These qualities of the Gheg are so generally recognised that European consuls, merchants, and others, who need retainers on whose bravery and fidelity they can rely, are glad to secure their services, in preference to those of men of any other nationality, for the post of *cavass*—a combination of armed guard, orderly, and doorkeeper. The code of honour of an Albanian does not, as a matter of fact, allow of his betraying a trust reposed in him; and of his moral attitude in this respect the following little incident, related in my hearing at Salonica, offers a striking illustration: The tithe farmer of a district in Epirus had as his body-

servant an ex-brigand, who for years accompanied him on his journeys about the country. On one occasion, when they were in a remote village, the Albanian presented himself before his master, and, after saluting him politely in native fashion, informed him that he desired then and there to leave his service. The collector, much surprised, asked the reason for this sudden and inconvenient proceeding. "Well," replied the Arnaut, "I am leaving you, Effendi, because I have agreed to join some other fellows who propose to rob you on the road. To do this while I eat your bread and salt would be dishonourable, so I leave you. Take what precautions you like, for it is now fair play between us." Thus forewarned, the Effendi provided himself with a strong escort, and the attack of the brigands, who duly waylaid him on the road, was successfully repulsed.

It has been said that the Albanians are "without a literature, without art, and almost without a history." Their language, which is difficult to learn and difficult to pronounce, is a complete mosaic of fragments borrowed from many sources, though the native element naturally predominates. Greek and Turkish words abound, and many of Slav and Latin origin have become part of the vernacular. The language of the Skipetars is also divided between the dialects spoken respectively by the Tosks, Ghegs, and Khams,

though there is no well-defined line of demarcation between them. The purest Albanian is said to be spoken in Elbassan, the inhabitants of which town—according to the native saying, “Go to Stamboul for a Turk, to Elbassan for a Skipe”—are looked upon as representative Albanians. The total neglect of the mother tongue has been due chiefly to the profession of three distinct creeds, Turkish alone being taught in the Moslem schools, Italian in the Roman Catholic, and Greek in those of the Orthodox Christians. The only section of the nation that can boast any degree of culture are the Albanians of Epirus, more especially those professing Christianity, who, owing to their intercourse with the numerous Greek communities in this province, and their adoption of late years of Greek methods of education, are much more civilised and enlightened than either their Moslem or Roman Catholic compatriots.

Although the Albanians cannot be called a musical people, singing is the favourite pastime of both sexes. Their airs have but little variety, being for the most part monotonous recitations, and the singer's merit depends upon his success in rivalling the violin, mandolin, or flute, by which his song is accompanied, in the prolongation of the final note. The songs are generally long ballads, recounting the victories of the tribe, the doughty deeds of famous ancestors, or the exploits of some national hero, such as Skander-

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beg or his father, George Castriot. For in the songs of the Skipetars, as in those of the Greeks, the later history of the country is preserved, and in those of the Ghegs, more particularly, may be found the record of how they obstinately resisted, yard by yard, the Turkish advance into their mountains, and were only subdued at last by the overwhelming numbers and equal pertinacity of the foe. The record, too, of civil broils, and of every insurrection—and they have been many—has thus from 1572 downwards been orally transmitted from generation to generation, keeping alive in the national memory the exploits of heroic ancestors, and inciting to similar deeds of daring.

Survivals of ancient nature-worship, which neither Christianity nor Islam has succeeded in eliminating, may be found in the form of the oaths still in use in the Albanian highlands. Contact with the outer world has taught the dwellers in towns to call indiscriminately upon the Virgin and saints, or Allah and Mohammed, as witnesses to their word. But the oaths of the pastoral Skipetar are still "By sky and earth," "By sun and moon," "By mountain and plain." The curious ceremony of taking the "oath of the stone," which is said to have been a Pelasgian custom, is also made use of by the Albanian highlanders generally, and is sworn by the elders of the *phars*, or clans, when settling

questions of public importance, such as those concerning disputed boundaries of village lands, or other communal matters. This oath, in another form, also enters into every-day speech. When a Gheg wishes to emphasise what he is saying, he takes up or points to the nearest stone with the words, "By the weight of this stone."

The numerous "bogies" of all kinds with which the Albanian women terrify themselves and their children appear to be, like those of their Greek and Bulgarian neighbours, but personifications of the powers of nature. Of these imaginary beings some belong exclusively to the "Land of Rocks," while others may also be found among the superstitions of Slavs, Greeks, and Turks. The *Vilas* seem to approach most nearly to the fairies of the West, though, like the Nereids of the Greeks, they are of the full stature of mortals. As with our fairies, too, it is unlucky to mention them by name, and they are generally referred to by such terms as "Those Outside," "The Happy Ones," "The Brides of May." As a rule they are harmless, if not offended, and merely amuse themselves with elfish tricks. Omens and auguries, too, both good and evil, are drawn from all the trifling occurrences of daily life, as well as from observation of the phenomena of nature, besides being sought for in the bones and entrails of slaughtered sheep,



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and the flight of birds. And in addition to the every-day observances with respect to auspicious and inauspicious actions and events, so many are attached to special seasons and days of the year as to form quite a calendar of superstitions.





## CHAPTER XI

### THE MACEDONIAN NATIONALITIES

THE Christians of Macedonia, whose mutual jealousies and political and ecclesiastical intrigues, added to their general desire for emancipation from Ottoman rule, have during the last quarter of a century kept that province in a state of ferment, belong to four different nationalities, Bulgarian, Servian, Greek, and Vlach, or Wallachian. In no part of Turkey is it an easy task to draw a hard-and-fast line between the various races one comes into contact with, and this difficulty is perhaps greater in Macedonia than elsewhere. A Greek-speaking community may prove to be Wallachian, Albanian, or even Bulgarian, and the inhabitants of a Slav-speaking village may claim to be of Greek origin. As a general rule, the Slav language predominates in the villages throughout the greater part of Central Macedonia, while Greek is more frequently heard in the towns. But all these various ethnical elements are, in many country districts of Macedonia, as well as in the towns, so hopelessly

fused and intermingled that it will be a difficult matter, if the time should ever come for the Turks to depart "bag and baggage," to divide this province equitably among the neighbouring States which, in virtue of racial kinship with one section or another of its inhabitants, respectively lay claim to its possession. Take, for instance, the state of affairs in Djoumaya, a little town between Salonica and Serres, with a population of some six thousand souls, out of which perhaps five thousand are Christian and the rest Mohammedan. The former community is chiefly made up of Bulgarians and Vlachs, all calling themselves Greek, supporting several Greek schools attended by pupils of both sexes, and owning allegiance to the Orthodox Greek Church. The Bulgarian Exarch's propaganda, however, which is working hard to gain over this district, has established here a school—but so far without pupils, save a score or so imported from other districts.

The charmingly picturesque town of Serres forms also a sphere for all the various political and religious propaganda, Servian, Roumanian, and Greek, which, during the last quarter of a century, have striven to establish claims to the possession of Macedonia, each and all of them intent on persuading the inhabitants of the district that they belong to one or other of these nationalities. To put the position briefly, each

of these nationalities is pitted against the rest, and all are equally antagonistic to their common tyrant, the Turk, against whom, however, their mutual jealousies will not now, any more than at the period of the Ottoman conquest, allow them to combine.

Though living in close contact with each other, and with the Turks and other Moslems of the country, each of these Christian nationalities has its own separate existence, its separate internal government, churches, customs, costume, and language; and in the towns, its separate *ma-hallah*, or quarter, outside of which the houses of its members are seldom found. The Porte, as already mentioned, exercises no jurisdiction in the internal affairs of its Christian subjects, which are regulated in each diocese by a council of the chief inhabitants, presided over by the Bishop or Archbishop, who also acts as intermediary between their flocks and the Turkish civil authorities when they have any disagreement with Moslems.

The typical Greek is a dweller in towns, and is, as a rule, only found in Macedonia as a tiller of the soil in the eastern districts of that province. There are comparatively few Greek country gentlemen or large landowners, and the unsettled state of the country makes it difficult for them to reside on their estates, which, like those of the Turkish Beys, are generally man-

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aged by a bailiff, and only visited occasionally by their owners. The majority of these gentlemen have been educated either at Athens or in France, Switzerland, or Germany, where they have made themselves acquainted with the newest methods of agriculture; and their estates are consequently much better cultivated and their peasants more favourably circumstanced than those either working as *yeradjis* for Turkish landlords, or tilling their own small holdings. But for the Greeks generally agriculture has no great attraction, unless they see in it an opening for enterprise and speculation, as in the cultivation of some special product, such as silk or cotton, which can be sold to advantage either in the raw or as manufactured goods. Nor is the whole family of a Greek peasant wedded to the soil as the one business of life. When the paterfamilias can dispense with the services of some of his daughters they seek domestic service in the towns, and his sons also frequently quit the homestead in pursuit of more lucrative employment at a distance. Endowed with a surprising energy and versatility, the son of a Greek peasant may become a doctor, lawyer, or schoolmaster, merchant, shopkeeper, servant, or artisan, in any of which spheres he will generally manage, by dint of energy, perseverance, and address, to realise a modest competence, if not make a fortune. Among others I may instance

the family of a Greek farmer in Eastern Macedonia. The eldest son remained to assist his father, while four of his brothers and a sister emigrated to Salonica. The latter, together with one of the youths, took service in a European family, and the two others apprenticed themselves respectively to a photographer and a painter of *ikons*, or church pictures, while the fourth learnt cigarette-making. By dint of industry and economy the four boys soon saved enough money to enable them to send for their youngest brother and to support him while he attended the local *gymnasium*, as the Greek schools modelled on those of Germany are termed.

The Greeks represent to a large extent the intelligence of Macedonia, as of other provinces of Turkey, but they are no longer recognised, as formerly, as the upper stratum of the Christian population, nor are they now largely employed by the Porte as officials. This change has come about since the creation of the Greek kingdom, of which it is a direct result. For, on the one hand, the political sympathies of enlightened Greeks are now with Greece, and to serve the enemy of the *patridha*, or fatherland, is held by every right-thinking Greek to be unpatriotic. I have, indeed, known of high officials resigning their posts on this ground alone; and the Turks, on their side, not unnaturally look upon Greeks occupying official positions with a certain degree of distrust.

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Greek family life in many parts of Turkey, even at the present day, generally strikes the stranger as a curious mixture of East and West. The better-class families copy European manners, and speak French more or less fluently; but, as a matter of fact, their existence, like that of their Turkish neighbours, is still to a great extent, and especially in the towns of the interior, divided practically into harem and *selamlık*—a separation not only between the men's and women's apartments, but also between formal and domestic life. When visiting a well-to-do Greek family, one may not at first observe any signs of Oriental manners, save in the customary refreshments offered, namely, preserves, accompanied by tumblers of water, and followed by Turkish coffee. The furniture is European, and the costumes of men and women are quite correct, and abreast of current fashions—most likely direct from Paris. But this is probably mere outside show, and if we penetrate beyond the reception-rooms where we have been entertained by the younger generations, we may find the patriarch of the family in pelisse and fez, seated cross-legged on the divan in Oriental fashion, and waited upon by the elderly black-robed women relatives who attend to domestic affairs and do not appear before strangers.

The life of women of the shopkeeper and artisan classes in the provincial towns is also still

very secluded, as it is considered an impropriety to be seen much out-of-doors, especially for young girls, who must always be accompanied by their mothers or some elderly relative. Occupation in shops is not open to them, nor, unless compelled by sheer necessity, will they leave home and take service with others. Some occupy themselves with needlework, lace-making, embroidery, and the home manufacture of various small articles; but it is only in the silk- and cotton-growing districts of Asia Minor that they are employed in factories.

Greek peasants, whether *yeradjis* or small proprietors, seldom occupy the same villages with those of other races. Their women, though not employed in field-work to such an extent as the Bulgarians, take an active part in much of the labour connected with the farm or vineyard, and their household duties are many and varied. To the Greek peasant girl is committed the care of her father's flock, which she must lead to the pasture every day and to the fold at night. The *Voskopoula*, or shepherdess, is one of the most prominent characters in rural folk-song, and many a charming idyll has been composed in her honour by amorous swains. But she has little time for sylvan dallying, for the sheep and goats have to be milked, and the milk converted into cheese and *yiaourti*, a delicious and wholesome sour curd, which is in great demand in the



towns. The cotton and flax grown on the farm are also gathered by the women in their seasons and prepared for use. A certain proportion is reserved for knitting, and it is most pleasing to watch the graceful motions and picturesque poses of the women and girls as, standing on their little wooden balconies or terraced roofs, they send the spindle whirling down into courtyard or village street while twisting the thread for this purpose.

But, laborious as the lives of these thrifty peasants may appear, Sundays and saints' days are holidays duly observed and thoroughly enjoyed. The working dress of plain homespun is then laid aside, and the picturesque gala costume donned; for though the Greek women in the coast towns of Turkey have almost entirely discarded their picturesque native dress, it is still worn by the peasants of the interior. It consists generally of a skirt of brightly striped stuff or silk, an embroidered apron, and a short-waisted cloth vest, also embroidered; while for out-of-door wear a fur-lined jacket is added. The hair is braided into numerous tresses, and surmounted by a small red cap decorated with gold and silver coins similar to those worn as a necklace. The dress of the men, being of sombre hue, sets off to advantage the splendour of the feminine holiday-makers. After attending Mass in the little whitewashed church, to which they are

summoned by the sound of the primitive *syman-dro* (a board struck with a mallet), the simple morning meal is eaten, the cattle and poultry are fed, and the rest of the day is given up to well-earned repose and amusement. In the afternoon the peasants resort *en masse* to the village green. The middle-aged and elderly men take their places in the background under the rustic vine-embowered verandah of the coffee-house, the matrons, with their little ones, gather under the trees to gossip, while their elder sons and daughters perform the *syrto*, the "long-drawn" classic dance. Each youth produces his handkerchief, which he holds by one corner, presenting the other to his partner; she in her turn extends her own to the dancer next to her, and, the line thus formed, "Romaika's dull round" is danced to the rhythm of a song chanted in dialogue form, with or without the accompaniment of pipe and viol, until the lengthening shadows of evening send the villagers home to their sunset meal.

The advantages of education are at the present day by no means restricted to the upper class of Greeks, for not only in the towns, but in almost every village where there is a Greek community, schools have been founded in which the instruction given to both girls and boys is of a very high order. Here the children of rich and poor sit side by side in the same class, a practice which, I have often been assured, tends rather to elevate

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the tone of the children of the people than to deteriorate the manners of the better-bred. Many of the women teachers in these often remote rural schools are young women from Athens, who have left home and country to improve the condition of their less favoured countrywomen in Turkey, and are in return idolised by the scholars and their mothers.

Family affection is, perhaps, the noblest trait in the Greek character. Nowhere else, I think, does one see fraternal love so strongly developed, or the women of a family so tenderly cared for. Should the father die, the brothers take his place; and so long as a sister of marriageable age remains unportioned and unwed, they will refrain from taking a wife themselves. Considerable remains of patriarchal customs have also survived even among the wealthy and educated classes of the Greeks as among other races of the country, and young men, on marrying, often bring their wives to the paternal home. The mother, on the death of her husband, is not, as in England, banished to the "dower house," but retains the place of honour in the household, and receives every mark of attention and respect, not only from her sons, but from their wives, who consider it no indignity to kiss her hand or that of their father-in-law when receiving their morning greeting or evening benediction. And in these irreverent days it is very refreshing, on visiting a

Greek family, to see the widowed mother at the head of the table, and to mark the deference paid to her by her son and her daughter-in-law.

It is customary among the Greeks for a girl's parents or guardians to seek a suitable husband for her, either personally or through the agency of a professional match-maker. The bride receives a portion in money, according to her station, and is presented also with an ample trousseau, stock of household linen, and other supplies, which have been in preparation for her for years past. Betrothal is a formal ceremony which takes place in the presence of the relatives of the contracting parties, and, being considered almost as binding as marriage itself, is almost as difficult to set aside. I remember one pretty Macedonian peasant girl, who, though in love with a youth belonging to her own village, had been betrothed by her mercenary-minded parents to a wealthy but somewhat elderly farmer, and, to avoid this marriage, had eloped with her lover to Salonica. A cousin of the girl was in service at the British Consulate-General, and by him the runaway couple were introduced to the Consul's lady, who at once communicated with the Archbishop. Presently the angry parents appeared on the scene in hot pursuit of the fugitives. But they were now under the archi-episcopal ægis; and his Holiness, having released the maiden from her *arravon*, and read the parents a lecture,

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obtained their promise to allow her to wed the man of her choice.

The wedding ceremonies of the Greeks, especially in the interior of Macedonia, are very numerous and elaborate, and are attended with quaint old customs and domestic rites, varying according to locality, which have evidently had their origin in the remotest antiquity. The ceremonies observed in connection with death and burial are, however, almost everywhere identical, and include many archaic customs and time-honoured traditions among the rites of the Eastern Church. The mourning worn by the Greeks of Turkey is of a most austere character, especially among the middle and lower classes. Ornaments are rigidly set aside, and all articles of dress are of the plainest black materials, cotton or woollen, and made in the most simple fashion possible. In South Macedonia the common people, on the death of a near relative, send all their linen, and even their pocket-handkerchiefs, to the dyer's, the result, as may be supposed, being funereal in the extreme. Women, too, frequently cut off their hair at the death of their husbands and bury it with them; men, on the other hand, allow their beards to grow as a sign of sorrow. Mourning is also worn for a considerable period. Girls, after their father's death, do not abandon it until they marry; and widows and elderly women invariably retain the

garb of woe as their permanent attire; for in many country localities custom does not allow women to enter a second time into wedlock, and a widow who ventured thus to violate public opinion would be treated with scant respect by her neighbours for the rest of her days.

Besides the shepherds who roam over the Balkan peninsula with their flocks in search of pasture, as described in the chapter on "Nomad Life," large numbers of Vlachs have their homes in the hill-country of Thessaly, Epirus, Albania, as well as Macedonia, where they are said to number some 500,000 souls. But even the Vlachs of the burgher class who are not flock-masters are often engaged in pursuits which require them to lead a more or less wandering life. The wealthier section of the community are merchants who trade in Russia, Austria, and Italy, as well as in other parts of Turkey, and are often absent from home for periods extending over many years—a mode of life which they seldom relinquish until compelled by age or infirmity to do so. The important town of Monastir, one of the strongholds of Greek influence in this province, contains a large colony of Greek-speaking Vlachs, who are hardly distinguishable, save in feature, from true Greeks. Many of them are very wealthy and enterprising, and have business connections with foreign countries. The inferior class of traders do not, however, as a

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rule, leave the Ottoman Empire, but travel with goods of all kinds for sale from one town or village to another, like the pedlars in England in olden time, when, as in Turkey at the present day, shops were few in small boroughs and non-existent in country villages. And there is another industrial class of Vlachs who go to the larger towns for the greater part of the year to work as tailors, embroiderers, gold- and silversmiths, or at some other occupation. Vlach *keradjis*, or carriers, may also be constantly met with on the road with their long files of pack-horses or mules conveying produce of every kind to and from the coast towns.

The village homes to which these wandering traders and mechanics return are, as has been said, chiefly in the mountains or hidden in hollows in the tops of hills, where they are comparatively free from Turkish oppression. Yet even in these high altitudes the thrift and industry of the Vlachs are conspicuous. Cornfields and vineyards clothe the hillsides, and the terraced and well-irrigated gardens produce an abundance of fruits and vegetables. The houses are for the most part small, and, like those of Greek mountain villages, roofed with broad limestone slabs, which require, in addition to their other fastenings, heavy stones to keep them from being displaced by the furious winds to which these elevated regions are exposed. Snugly furnished, according to Oriental

ideas of comfort, are many of these mountain homes. Tables and chairs there are certainly none, but the floors are covered with thick, richly coloured rugs, the handiwork of the household; and along the walls on either side of the hearth a range of comfortable cushions, covered with home-woven tissues, do duty for seats. The whole of the wall opposite the fireplace is occupied by an artistically designed and elaborately carved wardrobe, from which the additional rugs, quilts, and mattresses are produced at night for "spreading the beds."

The frequent and long-protracted absence from home of the men of the family naturally throws great responsibility and various duties on the women, and at the same time confers on them a degree of social independence and influence not enjoyed, as a rule, by their Greek neighbours. Far away as the men of the family may be, the field, vineyard, or garden attached to each cottage or homestead must be cultivated, its harvest reaped, and the produce converted into winter provisions; the domestic animals are tended, the sheep shorn, and the wool prepared for the loom, which occupies a corner of every dwelling. The daughters are from an early age accustomed to both domestic and outdoor labour, and a *Vlachopoula* may often be seen returning from the fountain or riverside, bearing on her back, besides a keg of water, the load of wet linen she has



washed, a metal basin poised on her head, and her untiring hands busy with the spindle. Nor does she lack time to embroider, in bright wools and silks dyed with her own hands, her picturesque native costume, or to knit and decorate in coloured cross-stitch the socks she sells to the shepherds, the proceeds of her industry being generally invested in the coarse silver ornaments with which she decks her comely person on Sundays and feast-days. It requires, indeed, a strong frame to support the weight of the heavily embroidered and braided gala dress when complete with belt, collar, bracelets, and head-gear of this alloyed metal; but such a frame is characteristic of these hardy daughters of the mountain, who are tall, well-knit, well-poised, and incapable of fatigue.

The Vlach women submit cheerfully to their laborious life, and the wives of the traders willingly add to their multifarious duties that of waiting on their fathers, husbands, or brothers during the short and rare periods which they are able to spend in the bosom of their family. No stranger can, however, command their services, for they have an invincible repugnance to leaving their homes, to which they are devotedly attached.

Although the Vlach communities in Thessaly and Macedonia maintain various social relations with the Greeks, they do not to any great extent

intermarry with them. Indeed, it is said that while Vlach men occasionally take Greek brides, no Vlach girl ever marries outside her own community. Nor do the wedding ceremonies of these people—with the exception of the religious rite, which they observe as members of the Orthodox Church—resemble at all those of the Greeks, but rather those of the ancient Romans.

The Bulgarians of Macedonia are to be met with in scattered communities throughout almost the whole of the province, occupying in some localities only isolated villages, and in others forming the bulk of the population of a district. These people are of two distinct types, the Slavo-Tartar and the Slavo-Greek. The former are distinguished by high cheek-bones, broad faces, small, sunken eyes, wide, flat noses, eyebrows thick and prominent, and dark complexion. The other type bears a strong general resemblance to the rest of the mixed Christian population of the Balkan provinces, some of their women being extremely pretty.

The salient characteristic of the Bulgarian peasantry is their industry. The frequent Church festivals and holidays observed by the Bulgarians, in common with the Greeks, make it necessary for them to work doubly hard on other days in order to accomplish the year's work in twelve months; and during the spring and summer the whole family labour assiduously from sunrise

to sunset, the women and girls, as soon as their household duties are finished, going out to assist the men and boys in the fields. The spinning, weaving, and other home manufactures are carried on chiefly in the winter, when the female portion of the family is less called upon for outdoor work than in other seasons. Some of the men work as *yeradjis* on the large estates of the Beys and other landed proprietors, but the majority are peasant farmers, owning the lands they cultivate, which they can dispose of freely by sale or will, the only land held in common by the village being the pasturages in the neighbourhood, to which all have an equal right. The chief man in a Bulgarian village or township is called the *Tchorbadji*,—literally the “soup-maker,”—who is generally the possessor of many broad acres, and a man of considerable wealth.

The houses of the better class of peasant farmers are solidly constructed of stone, and are sufficiently comfortable. An average cottage contains three apartments—the common living-room, the family bedroom, and the storeroom. The floor is of beaten earth, strewn with coarse matting and home-made rugs. The furniture consists chiefly of cushions covered with thick woollen tissues, which also serve the family as beds. On the walls are a few engravings in very odd perspective which, though produced in Russia, are distributed to pilgrims by the monks of Mount

Athos, and perhaps a painted picture of some saint with a tiny oil lamp suspended before it. The shelves contain some articles of crockery, the brightly burnished copper cooking-pans found even in the poorest house in the East, and various odd articles. The bedding, rolled up, is tidily piled in one corner; in another is the *bulka's* spinning-wheel, and in the inner apartment is the loom on which she manufactures the tissues used for the furniture of the house and the clothing of the family. Outside are sheds for the cattle, pens for the pigs and the sheep, poultry house, oven, and perhaps a well, all enclosed by a wall or fence, and guarded by dogs.

Like all the peasants of Turkey, the Bulgarians are most economical, and even frugal, in their habits. They are content with very little, and live generally on rye bread and maize porridge, or beans seasoned with vinegar and pepper, supplemented with the produce of the dairy. On great festivals a young pig or a lamb is added to the usual fare, together with home-made wine and a heavy kind of cake called a *banitza*.

In Macedonia much of the harvest-work is done by women and girls, Greek and Bulgarian, who, as well as the men, hire themselves to the farmers for that season. On the 21st August (old style) the harvest home is celebrated with great rejoicings. Decked in their picturesque holiday costumes, crowned with flowers, and

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carrying miniature sheaves, the harvesters proceed to the nearest township, where they dance and sing before the doors of the principal houses and in the market-place. In this province Bulgarian women often undertake also, in addition to farm-work, such manual labour as would in most European countries be performed exclusively by men. One may, for instance, often see in the neighbourhood of Salonica a band of half a dozen women, short of stature, yet extraordinarily muscular, with swarthy complexions, small, twinkling Tartar eyes, and high cheek-bones, dressed in stout homespuns, and shod with foot-gear of undressed hide, plying their primitive spades and mattocks in garden, field, or vineyard, apparently incapable of fatigue; and after their day's labour walking long distances to their village homes among the rolling hills behind the city.

The Bulgarian, like the Greek peasants, have few amusements save the song and the dance. Unlike the Greeks, however, who dance only at appointed times and seasons, the Bulgarians are always ready for this national pastime. At the first discordant sound of the *gaida*—the native bagpipe—the young men and girls form a circle, holding each other by the girdle, and enter enthusiastically and untiringly into the dance. Dancing songs have in England completely disappeared, save, perhaps, as an accompaniment to children's games. But among the Christian peo-

ples of the Balkan peninsula they still constitute the principal social diversion, and the national poetry is taught in the school of the dance. The Bulgarian language is indeed particularly rich in folk-poetry, as proved by the voluminous collections made by native folklorists, nearly all of which, it may be remarked, were taken down from the lips of women.

Among the Bulgarians, as among other nationalities, old customs must be sought for among the peasantry, and the observances connected with marriage are not the least curious and interesting. A young peasant cannot marry until his parents for whom he has laboured can afford to give him a sum of money sufficient to buy him a wife. The price ranges from £50 to £300, according to the position of the contracting parties, and this as well as another and smaller sum called "head-money," which is paid to the mother, is settled by the proxies. The *godly*, as the betrothal is called, then takes place, a Wednesday or Thursday evening being considered the most auspicious time for the ceremony. It consists of the exchange of documents certifying, on the one hand, the sum of money to be paid by the bridegroom, and, on the other, the quantity and quality of the trousseau, or rather "plenishing," promised by the maiden's parents. Rings are also interchanged by the couple after being consecrated by the

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priest, who acts the part of notary on such occasions. A short blessing follows, the *fiancée* kisses the hands of the assembled company, and then retires with her friends to feast apart, unawed by the presence of the elders, for whom a table is spread in the principal room. The word "table" is, however, a misnomer, for such articles of furniture are found only in the dwellings of the wealthier farmers, and the cloth is generally spread on the floor, or, perhaps, for the elder and more distinguished guests, on the low circular stands, called by the Turks *sofra*. The young people afterwards dance outside the house and sing songs at intervals. The *fiancé* then produces his presents, which consist of various articles of feminine apparel, including several pairs of native shoes, a headdress, and necklace of gold and silver coins, a silver belt, bracelets, earrings, and other ornaments. The value of these gifts is freely appraised by the girl's father, and a bargain generally ensues, the suitor adding to the necklace or headdress coin after coin until the goodman is content. These treasures are bestowed in the *tekneh*, the wooden trough which serves equally for kneading the bread and cradling the little ones, and the festivities are resumed. On the following day the young woman proudly dons all this finery, and parades herself in the village as "engaged."

Religion, as understood by the Bulgarian peasantry, consists of an agglomeration of superstitious rites concerning times and seasons, fasts and feasts, and the other outward forms ordained by the Eastern Church, and by custom; and the various events of the ecclesiastical year are also inextricably mixed up with fragments of old pagan beliefs and practices. Their religion is, indeed, in great part a survival of the pantheistic worship of the ancient Slavs, which the invading Bulgarians adopted together with the language of the conquered people among whom they settled, and it teems with wild cosmogonic myths. For the Bulgarian peasant believes the mountains, valleys, rivers, and springs to be still haunted by the Slav nymphs of antiquity, the *Vilas*, *Samovilas*, and *Samodivas*, or by the fire-breathing *Zmoks* and *Ogeniks*, a kind of dragon; the *Youdas*, or Fates, still concern themselves with the affairs of humankind; and Bulgarian ballads — the oral and only literature of the peasants — are full of allusions to adventures of mortals with all these supernatural beings.

The social life of the wealthy class in the large towns is very similar to that of Greeks of the same standing, and the ladies, though perhaps less cultured, as a rule, than the Greek, are not deficient in manners and attainments. Education is, in fact, becoming more general



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year by year, and the political rivalry between the Bulgarian and Greek peoples has proved, during the last quarter of a century, a powerful incentive to intellectual progress.

There is, as a rule, no greater degree of social intercourse between the Christian and Turkish peasantry than there is between the Christian and Turkish townfolk, although they live together amicably enough as neighbours when fanatical feeling is not excited by war or other circumstances. The prejudice against mixed marriages is naturally very great, and no alliance of the kind can take place without perversion on one side or the other. The perversion must, however, be on the side of the Christian, for in Islam apostasy is a crime. But though one seldom hears of a Christian man embracing Islam for the sake of a Moslem love, it is by no means of rare occurrence that a Christian peasant-girl, prompted by vanity or ambition, renounces the faith of her fathers in order that she may marry a wealthy Turk who has flattered her by his attentions. She is not, however, allowed to do this hurriedly, or without due consideration. The usual mode of procedure is for the girl to run away from home and take refuge in a harem. She then appears before the *Medjliss*, or Town Council, and announces her desire to be received into the ranks of the true believers. Her parents and friends, supported

by the Greek Bishop, use their influence to prevent her taking this final step, and painful and sometimes tumultuous scenes ensue. If the girl persists in her determination, she is permitted to make a formal declaration of belief in the tenets of Islam, and she becomes to all intents and purposes a Moslem, endowed with all the social and legal privileges enjoyed by a woman of that creed.





## CHAPTER XII

### THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES

**T**HE Armenians, besides constituting the bulk of the population in Armenia proper, form large communities in Constantinople and Adrianople, at Broussa and Smyrna, and are also found in several of the smaller towns of Turkey. In the capital and at Smyrna the wealthier members of the Armenian communities are much more advanced in every respect than elsewhere, but in the latter city their adoption of Western manners and education dates even farther back than in the capital. Here, as elsewhere, the Armenians occupy a separate quarter of the town, which compares favourably, both as to the width and cleanliness of its streets and the architecture of its houses, with the other quarters of the city, not excepting even that occupied by the so-called "Franks," or Europeans.

Substantial proof of the comparative freedom from Moslem molestation now generally enjoyed by the subject races inhabiting the seaport towns, as compared with their position at the beginning

of the last century, is afforded by the difference in the style of houses of the better class built during the past twenty or thirty years. The older houses are externally somewhat gloomy in appearance, having often on the ground floor no windows overlooking the street, and the great double gateways are faced with iron and defended inside with heavy bars. The interior, however, even of these older houses, is the reverse of gloomy, for the spacious marble-paved entrance hall, furnished as a sitting-room, is divided only by a glass partition from a pleasant garden, and into this all the ground-floor rooms open. The upper stories far overhang the street, and in the narrower thoroughfares, as in the streets of old London, one can almost from the windows shake hands with opposite neighbours. This style of architecture presented many advantages when the dwellings of the Christians were exposed to the attacks of the insolent and lawless Janissaries, though it did not always effectually protect their occupants from violence.

The modern houses, both large and small, are much more cheerful in appearance. The wide doorways, being above instead of below the level of the street as in the older houses, are approached by handsome steps of white marble, and the spacious hall within is paved with large slabs of the same material. In the smaller houses—in Smyrna often of one story only, on account



MAIN STREET IN THE ARMENIAN QUARTER OF BROUSSA. ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH ON THE RIGHT

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of the frequent earthquakes—the drawing-room windows alone overlook the street, all the other rooms receiving their light and air from the hall. The far end of this apartment, which is used as a general sitting-room, often contains a fountain, and is converted into a species of conservatory, with creepers and choice shrubs in vases. The rest of it is furnished with a Turkish sofa, a few common chairs, and, in winter, a carpet. This, however, is but a middle-class dwelling. The abode of a wealthy Armenian is a palatial edifice, replete with European comforts and luxuries. Orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees blossom and bear fruit in his gardens, which are also fragrant with flowers all the year round. On the broad, raised footpaths, tessellated into graceful patterns with black and white pebbles, saunter the almond-eyed Mariems and Tarquis in loose Oriental garments and with slipshod feet, or in the latest fashions from Paris, according to circumstances and the time of day. The beautifully situated village of Buyukdéré on the Bosphorus is a favourite resort of the wealthy Armenians of the capital, many of whom pass the summer months in the elegant marine villas, which, rising behind each other up the steep hill, command a magnificent view of the wonderful waterway and its picturesque banks.

The dwellings of the poorest class of Armenians—the *hammals*, or porters, and the boatmen

and fishermen—though small, are not, as a rule, without a certain amount of decent comfort, suited to their mode of life. There is very little, if any, overcrowding among either the Christian or Moslem poor of Turkey, each family having its own separate cottage, generally approached by a little courtyard; and the exclusiveness of Oriental family life renders any subletting to lodgers extremely rare.

The houses in Armenia proper present a striking contrast to those above depicted. The traveller visiting these remote regions at the present day finds the inhabitants of the Armenian villages living in houses precisely similar to those described by the great Greek general Xenophon, in his *Retreat of the Ten Thousand*. These dwellings now, as then, are mere burrows in the ground; the front is formed by terracing the slope of a hillside for the space of a few yards, the room or rooms are excavated in the hill, and all the soil dug out is thrown against the side walls and on the roof, which is supported by strong wooden posts and beams. In some of the towns—Erzeroum, for instance, which is situated on the lower slopes of a mountain—the style of building is very similar. Each room is built like a separate house, with a flat roof, which communicates with those above and below it by means of steps. One may walk along these terraces from house to house over a great



part of the town, and when stopped by a street a moderate leap will suffice to clear the chasm, so narrow are the thoroughfares. The space of ground occupied by a rich man's house is consequently enormous, and the top, on which the grass grows luxuriantly, looks like a terraced field. On the broad, mushroom-shaped chimneys the storks build their nests unmolested year after year, winging their way to warmer climes at the approach of winter, and greeted by the children on their return with glad songs of welcome. During the brief hot season the family live chiefly on the housetop, and the whole family frequently bring up their mattresses and cushions, and sleep "at the moon's inn" in company with their many domestic pets.

The floors of all these houses are below the level of the roadway. A low, wide door gives access to a dark central passage, on one side of which is the ox-stable, or byre, and on the other are the kitchen, storeroom, and private apartments of the family. Each room has a rude stone fireplace, in which are burnt cakes of *tezek*, a fuel made from the sweepings of the byre, and largely used throughout Asia Minor. Some of the wealthier houses may boast a few chairs and tables; but, as a rule, the furniture consists of a low, wide sofa round three sides of the room, covered with beautiful stuffs of native manufacture, and some valuable Persian or Kurd-

ish rugs spread over the thick carpet of home-made grey felt which covers the floor. The walls are whitewashed, and the wooden ceilings are curiously carved and painted.

Meals are served on a *sofra*, or tray and stand, similar to that used by the Mohammedans, and this substitute for a table is also largely made use of by the labouring classes at Smyrna and in the capital. In fact, many of the domestic arrangements of this Asiatic people are identical with those of the ruling race, for there is a good deal of truth in M. de Moltke's observation that "the Armenian is but a baptised Turk."

The byre is the most curious part of an Armenian house. It sometimes contains scores of cattle, whose animal heat greatly contributes, during the long winter months, to the warmth of their human neighbours. One end of this room is occupied by a railed-in platform, used by the men of the family as a reception-room for men visitors. It is furnished with the customary divan and rugs, and on the walls and ceiling are suspended saddles, bridles, guns, pistols, and other weapons of war or the chase, while underneath the floor the dogs of the household have their abode.

The ancient patriarchal customs which have during the past half-century fallen into desuetude in the above-mentioned cities are still rigidly adhered to in the Armenian highlands; and the

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housefather gathers beneath his own roof-tree his married sons and their descendants to the third or fourth generation, one household often consisting of as many as thirty or forty persons, all of whom must necessarily be subject to his supreme authority. Early marriages are the rule, and in order that the peace and harmony of the household may not be disturbed by quarrels among the numerous young women brought one after another into a house as wives for these successive generations, a practice is resorted to which may be termed "the subjection of the daughter-in-law," the wisdom of which, under the circumstances, must, I think, be admitted; for, as an Armenian proverb says, "A house will not be found comfortable if more than one woman rules in it."

On the Saturday after a bride has been conducted to her new home, a little ceremony takes place. When the elder members of the family have seated themselves in state on the long rectangular divan of the reception-room, the young wife enters, wearing on her head a crimson veil which partly conceals her face, and, beginning with the head of the household, she kisses in turn the hands of all who are older than herself. Thenceforward she must not presume to speak to her husband's parents, or, indeed, to any of his relatives, save the unmarried children of the house; nor may she even address

her husband in the presence of his parents until this restriction has been formally removed. The privilege of addressing her husband's relatives may not be given for years, and has, indeed, often been permanently withheld, as in the case of the mother of a Smyrna acquaintance of mine, who, as the wife of a younger son, had never attained such a position in the household as to entitle her to this privilege.

A great many curious ceremonies are observed by the Armenians in connection with such family events as births, marriages, and deaths. A wedding takes a whole week to celebrate, and when a wealthy farmer dies all the inhabitants of the village are publicly invited by the priest in church to the funeral feast. They have also retained a great many strange superstitious practices, and believe in the existence of a variety of supernatural beings possessing propensities and powers both benevolent and malevolent. In the long winter nights, when the snow lies thick in the streets and on the housetops, the women fancy they hear in the howling of the wind the shouts and laughter of these tricky beings. And the young women and girls, when the day's tasks are done, gather round the grandmother, who relates strange, creepy stories of the pranks of the *djins*, or charming romances dealing with *peris*, magicians, and enchanted palaces, while the grandfather, sitting cross-

legged in his fur-lined pelisse in the corner of the divan, tells the boys tales of the Armenian heroes of old.

Sitting in their open doorways in summer, and at their windows in winter, is a favourite pastime with the Armenian women of the seaboard cities, as, indeed, with all their Christian neighbours. This practice, which is perhaps seen to greatest advantage at Smyrna, offers a strange contrast to the usual rigidity of manners observed in the East. For though custom forbids the young women to receive the visits of acquaintances of the other sex in the house save on special occasions, it allows them in the afternoons to hold levees at the windows, and during the carnival this licence is by many extended to the evenings, when gay parties of the *jeunesse dorée* of this Asiatic capital roam the streets in disguise, giving notice of their approach by music, or merely by beating the primitive *doubana*—an earthen jar with a piece of parchment tied tightly over the opening. The windows of the modern houses are about six feet above the street, and below them the masquers station themselves with offerings of flowers or bonbons for the fair ones, who, with elbows supported on the cushioned window-ledges, lean out above them, eager to discover their identity—no easy matter, unless the masquers choose to give some clue. Soon they pass on to mystify others, and are

succeeded by fresh groups still more fantastic, whose costumes represent wild Turcomans from the interior, Greeks from the Islands, Arabs from Mekka, or wandering dervishes from Khorassan. Watching these wild figures in the dark, narrow Oriental street, with its mysterious gateways and overhanging upper stories, it is not difficult to fancy one's self rather in the days of the great Haroun-al-Raschid than in the twentieth century.

Armenian literature, the most brilliant period of which was from the fifth to the seventh century, though long neglected, is at present in a transitional stage, and there is now more imitation than creation. Such European classics as the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and *Paradise Lost*, are already familiar in translation to the Armenian reading public, as are also the works of Hugo, Dumas, Ohnet, and other French authors, some of which have been translated into the vernacular by the ladies of the capital and Smyrna for the benefit of their less cultured sisters. Already, however, there are signs of a desire, at least, to revive the former glories of the national literature. Old traditions are being collected and published, and periodicals and societies established devoted to this patriotic and praiseworthy object.

Though the great majority of the Armenians are members of the ancient Gregorian Church, the Pope has had since the sixteenth century a considerable number of adherents belonging to

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this nation, and the labours of the American missionaries have resulted in the formation of numerous small Protestant communities, especially in Asia Minor, estimated collectively at some sixty thousand souls. The Armenians are an essentially thoughtful and serious people, and the Orthodox Gregorians are most punctilious in the performance of the ordinances of their Church. The fasts and feasts observed by them coincide with those of their Greek neighbours, save for the addition of ten national saints to that already very replete calendar. The fasts are, however, observed by the Armenians with much greater rigour, neither shell-fish nor olive oil being partaken of in Lent, and the first meal of the day during that period being deferred until late in the afternoon. In addition to the ordinary pilgrimages made to the shrines and churches of saints and martyrs, it is no unusual thing for both men and women to undertake the longer pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the accomplishment of which act of religious duty entitles the pilgrim to the Turkish title of *Hadji*, which is prefixed to his or her name.

The interior arrangement of the Gregorian churches differs somewhat from those of the Greeks and Latins. A great curtain hangs in front of the chancel, and, at certain parts of the service and during the whole of Lent, conceals both altar and clergy. A second and smaller

curtain screens the altar only, and is drawn during the celebration of the Eucharist and at the conclusion of the public services. There are no stalls in the choir, and, save in the town churches, no seats for the congregation. The bishops and other dignitaries only are provided with chairs; the inferior clergy sit cross-legged on carpets, while the congregation squat on the matted floor or sit on cushions which they bring with them.

The higher clergy of the Gregorian Church belong to the monastic orders, and number in their ranks many men of high intellectual attainments. The secular clergy, however, are hardly at all superior to the peasants and artisans for whose benefit they officiate. Their office is usually hereditary, and though a son of one of these parish priests may, before he is called upon to succeed his father, be engaged in a lucrative calling, he is obliged to relinquish it in order to take upon himself the sacred office, for which he is often unfitted both by education, or want of education, and by inclination. Very poor indeed are the generality of these secular priests, their incomes being drawn solely from the small annual contributions of their parishioners, the fees paid for special services, and such small gains as may accrue from the sale of tapers and other "articles of devotion." A few pence are also paid to the *Derder* at his periodical "blessing of the house," which takes place at Easter, and con-



sists of the recital of a collect, accompanied by the burning of incense and aspersion with holy water in the *sala*, or central room of the house. Wealthy families have this ceremony performed also at the New Year, and sometimes have every room in the house separately blessed, if, as my informant remarked, "they care to pay for this luxury." On one of these occasions, when I came in for a share of the benediction, the Derrer having sat down after the ceremony to chat with the ladies and partake of coffee, the youngest daughter of the house went off to the store-room, whence she emerged with a plateful of the sweet biscuits always prepared for seasons of festivity, with which she proceeded to fill the pockets of his rusty black cassock, saying to me in English as she did so, "These are for his little children; he is so dreadfully poor that I am sure they have none at home."

Roman Catholic missionaries, from the date of the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches, have ever been actively employed in making converts among the Christian subjects of the Sultan. There are, however, at the present day, comparatively few adherents of the Papacy in Armenia proper, save in Erzeroum and other large towns. The greater number inhabit Constantinople and Smyrna, where they form the higher and wealthier section of the Armenian community. These "Uniates," or "United Ar-

menians" as they are termed, have retained in their ritual the use of the mother tongue, and also certain forms of worship of the Gregorian Church. It must, however, in justice be admitted that the perversion of this section of the Armenians has in no way lessened their patriotism, but, on the contrary, has enabled them to confer immense benefit on the nation generally. By the exertions of one of the leading "Uniates," a monk named Mekhitar, a literary and educational propaganda was in the seventeenth century set on foot, and continues to the present day. This Armenian Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, whose headquarters are in two small islands of the Venetian lagoons, has during the past two centuries printed and disseminated an immense quantity of historical, educational, and religious literature among the Armenians of the East; the Armenian Bible, parts of which had been from time to time printed, having been first issued entire by this Mekhitarist press in 1805.

In the remoter provincial towns of Asia Minor there is still at the present day hardly more social intercourse between the sexes in the Christian communities than among the Moslems. The Armenian women there still live in great seclusion, and when out-of-doors are muffled in disguising cloaks and veils like their Turkish neighbours. In the localities, however, in which

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social conditions have been modified by external circumstances, the status of women has been raised in a corresponding degree. And the contrast between the manners and social life of the inhabitants of the chilly highlands of Armenia and the remote towns of Eastern Asia Minor, and those of the dwellers on the sunny coasts of the Ægean and the Bosphorus, is now as great as the difference in their physical surroundings. For the time-honoured customs above described are, in the cities of the Ægean, and in the towns of European Turkey, things of the past, and Western education and ideas are here with every succeeding generation more and more permeating every class of the Armenian communities.

From this contrast between the social life and manners of the various sections of the Armenian nation in Turkey naturally follows a wide difference in the degree of education to which they have respectively attained. In some localities Turkish has for centuries past entirely replaced the mother tongue, which has, during that period, been used only in the services of the Church, a fact which forcibly illustrates the state of denationalisation of the Armenians under Ottoman rule. The late reawakening of national sentiment and aspiration has, however, naturally resulted in a linguistic reaction, and the rising generation now everywhere learns at school its native tongue, which will, in all probability, soon

entirely supersede the use of Turkish by the Armenians, save as a foreign language. These Armenian national schools are all supported by voluntary contributions; for though an education tax is levied by the Government, the proceeds are applied solely to the support of the State colleges, open to all nationalities, and therefore hardly such an injustice as it is often represented by the Armenians to be. In the capital, and at Smyrna, considerable facilities have also for many years existed for the education of girls, but in the Empire generally, the proportion of girls' to boys' schools is still, notwithstanding the efforts of the various educational societies, but one to four.





## CHAPTER XIII

### THE HEBREW COLONIES

THE Jews of Turkey belong chiefly to the two sects of the *Sephardim* and the *Ashkenazim*. The former includes all the descendants of those who, on their expulsion from Spain in 1493 by Ferdinand and Isabella, found refuge in the Ottoman Empire; the latter, those of the earlier settlers in the country. The Jews form considerable communities in all the cities and larger towns of Turkey, but are seldom found established in the villages of the interior, agriculture not being here one of their industries. Their great centre is, however, Salonica,—the great seaport of Macedonia,—where they constitute the majority of the population; and here the life of these Hebrew colonists may perhaps be most fitly studied. The Judæo-Spanish idiom which the immigrant Israelites brought with them from their Western homes, and which is written in Hebrew characters, is now used both as the vernacular and literary language by the Jews throughout Turkey.

Morally, as well as intellectually, the Jews of Turkey may be said to be far more backward than any of the other native races. And perhaps in no country are they regarded with more antipathy, or treated with more contumely, than in the Ottoman Empire. All kinds of crimes, fictitious or real, are attributed to them, from the obligation never to transact business with Christian or Moslem without defrauding him, to the kidnapping of children for their Passover sacrifice—a wide-spread vulgar belief, common to both Turks and Christians, which has occasionally led to serious riot and bloodshed, as I have myself witnessed. The Christian populace generally allow no opportunity to pass of insulting the Jews, who, as a rule, submit humbly to their ill-usage, except at Salonica, where their superior numbers give them greater audacity—at least, where Christians are concerned, though even here they are as abjectly servile in their relations with Moslems as in other localities. The very mention of a Jew is prefaced by a Greek with an apology for naming the race, and the Moslems on their side treat this section of the subject population with unmitigated contempt, not manifested as a rule in acts of personal violence, but in scornful gestures and opprobrious epithets.

The Eastern Jews have, however, always manifested a greater partiality for their Moslem rulers than for their Christian fellow-subjects, and in

disputes between Turks and Christians they invariably make common cause with the former. For though the Turks, as just observed, regard the Jews individually with undisguised contempt, their attitude towards them collectively has always been more tolerant and lenient than towards the Christian nationalities. For this two reasons may be assigned, one religious and the other political. The pure monotheism of the Hebrews, on whose Scriptures the Koran is so largely based, is naturally regarded with greater favour by the equally monotheistic Moslem than the vulgar polytheism of the Eastern Churches, Armenian, Greek, and Bulgarian, could possibly be; and the Jews, being devoid of all political aspirations, are loyal subjects, and are in no way a source of trouble to their rulers. The wealthy Israelites are, indeed, as the Turks well know, always eager to help the authorities in any difficulty; while those of humbler standing will not only, in their servility, perform the basest and most degrading services that may be required of them, but, as was abundantly shown during the late Armenian atrocities at Constantinople, are ready to encourage, rather than deprecate, outbursts of fanaticism on the part of the Mohammedan populace.

If, however, the following anecdote may be considered a criterion, the real sentiment of the Turkish Jews for their rulers and Christian fel-

low-subjects is more impartial than the general attitude would lead one to suppose. A Turk, a Greek, and a Jew were one day crossing the Bosphorus in a caique rowed by the first. As a caique is a craft very easily capsized by any brusque movements of its occupants, the Greek suggested that it was a good opportunity for each to express the dearest wishes of his heart with regard to the others, and so it was agreed. Said the Turk: "Would that I might see as many Christians massacred as there are sheep slain at Bairam!" "Would that I might see as many dead Turks as there are red eggs eaten at Easter!" cried the Greek. "Now, Jew, what is thy wish?" "I pray Allah to grant the prayers of both," piously ejaculated the Israelite.

The native Jews may, however, be said to form two classes—the conservative and the progressive. The former, who constitute by far the larger class, are, generally speaking, ignorant, narrow-minded, and intolerant, holding themselves aloof from their neighbours professing other creeds, with whom they hold only business intercourse. They are cunning and avaricious, and although many among them are possessed of large fortunes, they rarely use their wealth for the benefit of the community. Strongly opposed to liberal education, the local influence they possess is always employed to counteract the projects of their more enlightened



brethren. The progressive Jews, who are becoming pretty numerous among the upper classes, naturally act in direct opposition to these principles, and also endeavour to shake off such of their old customs and traditions as they consider detrimental to the well-being of the community.

Until the latter half of last century, public education was practically non-existent among the Jews of Turkey. During the last forty years, however, the members of this more enlightened section of the community have succeeded, with the assistance of their European co-religionists, in removing this reproach, and good schools for both sexes have for some years past been established in all the large Jewish centres of the East. When the resources of these denominational schools are low, or some exceptional expenditure is necessary, funds are sometimes raised by means of an entertainment in which all the principal inhabitants of the city, both native and foreign, usually take part. For I need hardly say that the animosity towards the Jews above referred to is openly manifested only by the lower classes; and as the Jewish and Moslem notables honour with their presence and contributions the annual gatherings and other entertainments given for the benefit of the Greek schools, Turkish officials and members of the leading Greek families in their turn publicly patronise

the Jewish educational establishments. During the last years of my residence at Salonica, one of these entertainments took the form of a ball at the schoolhouse. Dancing went on in the lower rooms, the classrooms of the upper floor being reserved for smoking, cards, and conversation, while refreshments and supper were served under the brightly illuminated trees and among the flower-beds of the garden. The Governor-General and his son were present, and though, being old-fashioned Turks, they did not, of course, join the dancers, they moved about continually among them and appeared to take a great interest in the proceedings. The Greek Archbishop, in his tall cylindrical hat and flowing black robes, made a distinguished figure, seated side by side with the chief Rabbi in his fur-lined pelisse and ample parti-coloured turban. Ball dresses were, however, conspicuous by their absence, for, aware that the entertainment was to be partially *al fresco*, the European ladies had avoided low dresses, and many of the Salonica Jewesses, who had subscribed their *liras*,<sup>1</sup> presented themselves in their brilliantly coloured native costumes, profusely adorned with pearls, and sparkling with diamonds.

The chief occupations of the higher and middle classes of Jews in Turkey, as elsewhere, are banking and commerce. They excel in both to

<sup>1</sup> A Turkish *lira* is equivalent to about eighteen shillings.

such a degree that where a man belonging to another nationality can only realise a fair competence, the Israelite makes a fortune; while in positions in which a Gentile would probably starve, the Jew will manage to keep himself and his family in comfort. In but few countries is the contrast of wealth and indigence among the Jews so striking as in Turkey. On one side may be seen prosperity so great as to command undue respect for its possessors, and to give them a local influence superior to that of any of the other nationalities; while, hard by, one sees poverty and wretchedness of the most sickening nature. The principal cause of this state of affairs is the limited sphere of action allotted to, or rather adopted by, the artisan and labouring classes of this nation, who appear to evince a repugnance to learning any trades beyond those followed by their forebears from generation to generation. They are blacksmiths, glaziers, and boatmen, fishermen, porters, and scavengers, but never shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, cabinet-makers, grooms, gardeners, or farmers.

In places where the Jews form large communities, as at Salonica and in the suburb of Hasskeuy on the Golden Horn, their quarter is almost as overcrowded as a London slum, many families among the very poor occupying one house—a practice which is quite at variance with the habits of the other native races.

The Jewish *mahallah* of an Oriental town is naturally, under such circumstances, dirtier and more malodorous than the Christian and Moslem quarters. Yet notwithstanding the unsanitary conditions under which they so frequently exist, these Jews of the labouring class, at Salonica at least, are on the whole vigorous and healthy. The comparatively low rate of mortality among them is no doubt largely due to the fondness for out-of-door life at all seasons which characterises the community generally, every species of domestic work which can be performed *al fresco* being brought into the courtyard, or to the doorstep. There the women and girls do their washing, cooking, making, and mending; the mothers rock the cradles or comb their little ones' heads; the children play, quarrel, and indulge in their amiable national propensity of stone-throwing; and the men and youths lounge, smoke, and gamble, when the day's labour is done.

The Jews are admittedly the most oppressively noisy of all the nationalities of Turkey, the most ordinary conversation among this community being carried on in the loud tones of noisy dispute, all talking at once in such an elevated key as to be heard at a considerable distance. Of a gay and cheerful disposition these children of Israel certainly are, notwithstanding their poverty; and they thoroughly enjoy their Sabbaths and festivals, which they enliven with

their national music, vocal and instrumental—to a Western ear, horribly discordant.

The Jews of Turkey, both Sephardim and Ashkenazim, differ in their religious beliefs from the Jews of the West, not only in being the most bigoted adherents of the doctrines of the Talmud to be found anywhere, but also in observing many rites and usages peculiar to themselves. The Talmud is believed by its devotees to be the perfection of divine wisdom, the consummation of all moral and religious teaching, an emanation of the Divine Mind, the absolute and unchangeable law delivered to Moses, and transmitted, unimpaired and unabridged, through the mouths of holy men, who, in later times, and for its better security, finally reduced it to writing. The Rabbis are the masters of this sophistical and often cabalistical learning, which includes, intermixed with many beautiful sentiments, lofty moral principles, and apt illustrations, many degraded superstitions and meaningless futilities. The Talmud also inculcates belief in the Manichean doctrine of the existence of good and evil spirits, who regulate and control the affairs of men. The air is said to be peopled by a host of invisible malevolent beings, known by the name of *Shedim*, a word calculated to inspire fear and horror, and never pronounced, the euphemism, "those without," being used in its place.

In fact, one may truthfully say that the rabbinical writers have converted the pure monotheism of Moses and the prophets into a paganism equal, in its adoration of holy men and angels, its propitiation of demons and consequent magical practices, and its rigid observance of fast, feast, and Sabbath days, to that which is practically the cult of the most ignorant members of the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches.

As might be expected from the foregoing, the Jews of Turkey are, in the matter of "clean" and "unclean" food, particularly strict, and the preparation of every article of consumption is regulated by a variety of strange and complicated formulæ. Rules relating to the order in which certain kinds of food may be eaten are also strictly observed. Cheese, milk, or butter, for instance, must not be partaken of after meat until six hours have elapsed, though meat may be eaten immediately after such dairy produce. The Mosaic ordinances with respect to the fasts and feasts as contained in the Pentateuch are also supplemented by numerous other observances enjoined by the traditions of the scribes. This Oral Law requires, for instance, that every single day appointed as a holiday by Moses shall be supplemented by another, which is to be observed with equal strictness; it has added other fasts and feasts to the number

commanded by ancient law; and it regulates every detail of ritual by which all these ordinances are to be accompanied. No food which has not been specially prepared for use on a feast-day may be touched on that day, however great the necessity. Eggs laid on such days may not be eaten till the morrow, and, if inadvertently put in a dish or basket with others which have been so "destined" for consumption on the festival; the whole supply becomes forbidden food for that day, as it is difficult to distinguish one egg from another. The Sabbath is, of course, most rigorously observed by these Oriental Jews. Clothes which have been worn on working days can never again form part of the Sabbath attire, which must be uncontaminated by labour. Tobacco is laid aside, for to smoke would be to "touch fire," which is unlawful; pockets — or what may do duty for them on other festivals — are emptied of every article, even to the handkerchief, which, if not altogether dispensed with for twenty-four hours, is worn round the waist as part of the girdle, and so does not come under the category of "things carried."

The wide green expanse called the *Meidan*, or common, outside the western walls of Salonica presents on Friday evenings an animated and picturesque spectacle. Thither resort towards the sunset hour numbers of Hebrew men

and youths in their long pelisses of various hues, and, standing about in groups, they repeat in concert their evening prayers. The women take no part in these open-air devotions, but, dressed in their best, await on their door-steps the return of the men of the family. A curious spectacle may also be witnessed on the Day of Atonement, when, in addition to the customary affliction of their souls practised by the children of Israel generally on that day, those dwelling in this city repair in crowds to the quay, and there perform the ceremony of "casting their sins into the sea." A belief is also locally current among the lower classes that their Messiah will, after appearing at Jerusalem, travel to Salonica by water, and His coming is on this day of penitence more especially awaited by the multitudes thronging the long quay.

Regular attendance at public worship is not required of unmarried girls; but the mothers in Israel go regularly to the synagogue on Sabbaths and festivals, sitting apart in a gallery, and screened from view by a wooden lattice. The public service over, the remainder of the day is passed in feasting, and the usual amusements of lounging, promenading, and gossiping, with *jumboush* (music and singing) in the evening. Their promenades do not, however, exceed the prescribed "Sabbath-day's journey," namely, twelve thousand handbreadths, or two thousand



yards. So many and so minute are the directions given by the rabbinical writers for the scrupulous observance of the proper distance, that a whole tractate of the *Mishna* is devoted to this subject alone.

While in Europe, generally, and also in America, conformity with the civil laws of the country in which members of the Jewish nation are domiciled has led to some modifications of the Hebrew marriage law, in the Ottoman Empire, where each community regulates its own internal affairs without reference to the civil laws of the ruling race, the Jews have maintained their ancient marriage laws intact, and all the ceremonies attending their fulfilment are scrupulously observed. Their customs with respect to marriage and divorce have, indeed, much in common with those of their Moslem neighbours, but are, so far as the latter are concerned, more favourable to the wife. Early marriages are the rule among all Eastern Jews, though the obligation of a father to marry his children as soon as they attain what is considered a proper age is not elsewhere so rigidly enforced as at Jerusalem, where, if a youth of twenty remains unwed, he incurs the reproach of "causing the Sh'chinah to depart from Israel." Girls are usually married from the age of fifteen upwards, the youths often become husbands at eighteen. These early marriages naturally conduce to the maintenance of

patriarchal customs; for the young couple, being still in a state of pupillage, and unable to provide for their wants, must remain in the paternal home of the husband; and it is no uncommon thing to find several married brothers living with their wives under the roof of their father, who delights in seeing a numerous progeny growing up around him.

The Oriental Jews do not recognise the law of monogamy laid down by Rabbi Gershom in the twelfth century. Polygamous households are, however, rare, and, as a rule, an Oriental Jew weds a second wife without divorcing the first only if the latter is childless or but the mother of girls. The first wife is, on the other hand, entitled to refuse to receive the second into the house in which she has been in the habit of residing; and monogamy thus practically resolves itself into a question of domestic economy.





## CHAPTER XIV

### NOMAD LIFE

THE pastoral Vlachs, who, as mentioned in a previous chapter, form so large a section of that Macedonian nationality, are to be met with only in the Balkan Peninsula, where their name has become in the districts frequented by them a synonym for "shepherd." The passionate fondness of the pastoral Vlachs for a free and open-air life has given rise to a popular belief in the country that if a shepherd were to purchase land and attempt to turn farmer, he would speedily sicken and die of some horrible disease. These people pass the winter on the plains and in the valleys of Thessaly and Macedonia, but as soon as the snows have melted they make for the uplands, travelling in communities with their wives and children and their united flocks and herds, often traversing long distances in search of fresh pasturage. When on the road they make use of their tents of black goat's-hair cloth, and carry all their goods and chattels in capacious saddlebags of the same material slung across the backs

of mules or ponies. The place chosen for a temporary encampment is sometimes the common found on the outskirts of every town or large village in Turkey. I remember especially the arrival at Salonica of one of these wandering communities which remained encamped for a week under the picturesque old walls of the city, pending the settlement by the authorities of a dispute with reference to some grazing-ground. While the men pitched the cone-shaped black tents and set up the folds, the women and girls in their quaint costumes were actively employed in milking the flock, nursing the babies, unpacking the pots and pans, fetching water, and preparing the evening meal. Arrived at the pasturages, which they rent from the villages, or, in case of Crown lands, from the Inspector of Fruits, the nomads build themselves huts or "shealings" of branches, set up the *stania*, as their sheepfolds are called, and prepare for some months of dairy work, in which the women and girls perform no small share.

Over the extensive highlands of Asiatic Turkey wander for the greater part of the year, with their sheep, goats, horses, and camels, a variety of nomad races—Yuruks and Circassians, Tartars and Turcomans, Kurds and Gipsies—all nominally followers of the Prophet of Islam, but each adhering to its own language and its tribal manners and customs.

One of the most numerous and important of the races who roam over "the wild Karamanian waste" are the Yuruks. The origin of these nomads is still, notwithstanding the researches of ethnologists, an open question. The Yuruks themselves, strange to say, possess no definite traditions or legends of a former habitat, or of the occasion of their migration to Turkey, which might give a clue to their origin. Their name is merely derived from the Turkish verb *yurumek*, "to wander," while their language is but a dialect of Turkish. They are a fine, active race, insensible to fatigue and hardship, tall and strong, usually dark-haired, but with lighter complexions than most of their fellow-nomads, and a pleasing expression of countenance. As among the Kurds, each Yuruk tribe has its *Agha*, or chief, who is held responsible by the Government for the good behaviour of his subjects. His judicial decisions are accepted as final, for no Yuruk would think of referring any matter in dispute with one of his fellows to a Turkish tribunal.

These nomads divide the year into three seasons only, spring, summer, and winter, which with them is reckoned as three months. During this season many of these nomads adopt a semi-sedentary life among ancient Greek ruins, in huts built of reeds or wickerwork, or in their own black tents pitched on one of the many wide plains of Asia Minor. Their furniture is as

simple as it is portable. The high wooden pack-saddles of their camels are ranged round the walls, and within are the mattresses of the family, which are rolled up in the daytime and spread on the ground at night. Most of their domestic utensils—such as water-jars, mortar for pounding coffee, plates, and bowls—are of wood, though each tent generally possesses in addition a few copper cooking-vessels, which are handed down as heir-looms from generation to generation. Their diet is most frugal: bread made into a sort of bannock baked in a copper platter over a few embers, with vegetables, milk, cheese, and very little meat, constitutes their usual fare, and wine they altogether abstain from. Coffee is their favourite beverage, and when the real berry is not procurable they make use of the seed of a native plant, the *Gundelia Tournefortia*, possessing aromatic and stomachic properties.

The Yuruks are an exceedingly polygamous race, the number of their wives often exceeding the limit of four fixed by Mohammed. A man of average wealth marries at least seven help-mates, and he must be a poor man indeed who does not possess three. For though a plurality of wives is to a Turk an expensive luxury, it is to the Yuruk a necessity of existence. He requires a certain number of female "hands" to enable him to pursue his calling of flock-master, camel-breeder, or other pas-

toral vocation, and as social usage does not permit him to hire such "hands," he secures their services by marrying them. Each wife, has, however, her separate tent, and her special occupation. The care of the flock will be divided between two or three, each tending a certain number of goats or broad-tailed Karamanian sheep; a fourth looks after the camels; a fifth collects fuel and fetches water for the family; a sixth makes the butter and cheese; while the seventh weaves, on a primitive loom, the brightly coloured and substantial rugs, many of which find their way to this country under such names as "Kelim," and "Karamanian." These tribesmen are, as a rule, endogamous, marrying outside the tribe only when compelled by circumstances to do so. For, though the female population greatly exceeds the male, it does not always suffice to meet the demand for wives, and a Yuruk will not scruple, at a pinch, to steal a woman from some neighbouring tribe, and marry her. It is customary for a Yuruk paterfamilias to receive a price for his daughter, paid either in coin or in cattle—a survival of the ancient widespread practice of bride-purchase which still prevails in many localities where patriarchal customs and economic conditions render a woman's labour of value to her family. At the betrothal ceremony a lamb is killed and eaten, and embroidered handkerchiefs are exchanged by the

contracting parties, the rejoicings observed on such occasions consisting chiefly in tambourine playing and in the peculiarly Oriental diversion of firing off small arms. The wedding festivities, however, extend over several days, and are enlivened with music and dancing, while the youths of the community vie with each other in wrestling and other athletic sports. But a ceremony so often repeated must, for the husband and his family at least, one would think, lose in time much of its zest.

Owing to the rude lives led by the Yuruks infant mortality is very great among them. Nearly every woman has a large family, but seldom succeeds in rearing more than two or three of her children. Hence we have the survival of the fittest; and the healthy outdoor life of the tribesmen contributes to the high physical qualities of their race. Morally, too, the Yuruks rank high among their fellow-nomads. They are an exceedingly peaceful and law-abiding people, forming a great contrast to their neighbours, the Afshahs, Kurds, and Circassians; and the Turks look upon them as the policemen of the mountains, finding them always ready to give information concerning the malpractices of the more predatory tribes.

Notwithstanding the wild, wandering life led by the Yuruks, they are by no means cut off from all intercourse with the outer world, and



while on the mountain grazings they have their regular visitors, who arrive at stated times. The dealer in goats and sheep comes in the spring, pitches his tent in a central position among the encampments, smokes his *narghilé*, with the chief men seated around him on cushions, the coffee-pot simmering meanwhile among the *tezék* peats, and buys from all who are willing to sell. The travelling tinker, too—the great importer of news—makes his regular summer round among the tribes, settling for a few days at each encampment, with his mule, his bellows, and his apprentice, and mends with nitre the quaintly shaped coffee-pots and household copper utensils, receiving in return butter and cheese. Visits are also periodically expected from the wool merchants, skin dealers, and the public circumciser, who performs on the young Yuruks the rite which admits them into the ranks of the faithful. And, lastly, there arrives also a less welcome visitor, the tax-collector, to gather in the cattle-tax. He also pitches his tent, and is courteously received by the leading men. As often as not, however, he has considerable trouble in levying the legal dues; for when the shepherds have warning of his advent they hide a portion of their flocks in caves and mountain hollows.

It is also no unusual thing for a trader in some provincial town within reach of their pasturages to furnish a band of Yuruks with flocks on an

agreement to supply him with a fixed quantity of milk, cheese, and butter, the shepherds retaining for themselves, besides the remainder of the dairy produce, the wool, and certain other products. Under such an arrangement a nomad band soon gets together a flock of its own, and in time pays back the lender. The Yuruks are also great camel-breeders, and produce a cross-breed known as the Toulon camel, from the Bactrian and Syrian strains, highly esteemed for mountaineering work, as it is able to withstand equally the great heats of the plain and the snows of high altitudes.

Attempts have been made by the Turkish authorities to induce the Yuruks to settle in villages of their own on the lower slopes of the Taurus, where mosques have been built for them, and *hodjas* appointed to minister to their spiritual needs. But, though nominally Moslems, the Yuruks disdain both mosque and *hodja*. Their religion is purely pastoral, and they worship only in the open air. Sacred trees by the wayside are hung with votive offerings, such as wooden spoons and coloured rags, for the cure of diseases, and close by is a heap of stones, to which every passer-by contributes a pebble. When a Yuruk dies, his relatives carry his body to one of these open-air temples, recite over it a passage from the Koran, and take from the pile a few stones to place above the lonely grave of

their fellow-tribesman, which is generally dug near a path in order that the deceased may have the benefit of the prayers of passers-by.

The superstitions of these simple people are few, and are not of a gruesome character. They believe in the existence of *peris*, who inhabit streams and mountain ravines, but in no supernatural beings of a harmful character, and manifest no special dread of the classic ruins held by other races to be haunted. They repose, however, unbounded faith in the efficacy of magical rites, and have among them sorcerers who practise divination, and who by "water-gazing" and other methods are able to ascertain the whereabouts of a stolen sheep or goat. They also cherish a firm belief in the power of the evil eye, and an equally deep-rooted conviction of the antidotal action of a bunch of garlic hung up in the tent to ward off its malign influence.

The Tartars now inhabiting Turkey belong to two classes — the tribes who have wandered for centuries past over the highlands of Asia Minor, and the immigrants into European Turkey from the Khanate of the Crimea on its annexation by Russia. Among the former tribes, not the least interesting are the Afshahs and Bosdans, who are scattered throughout Eastern Turkey and Northern Persia. They are a short, swarthy-skinned people of Mongolian type, with round, beardless faces, high cheek-bones, and small,

narrow eyes. The dress of their women, who are somewhat fat and dumpy, is, in some of the tribes, very gorgeous, and of the usual Oriental style—baggy trousers, embroidered coats of various lengths, earrings of gold, and frontlets of coins. They are, however, unveiled save during the first twelve months of their married life. The great peculiarity of their costume is the long thick tail of false hair, or, rather, of plaited silk or cotton dyed the colour of their natural locks, which is fastened to the head-dress, and hangs below the waist. On these tails they hang a variety of little ornaments, generally of silver, and they also pierce one of their nostrils, and wear in the hole a clove or metal stud, which gives them a very odd appearance. The Afshah women, like the rest of their nomad sisters, are extremely industrious. They are also great beekeepers, and carry their hives, which are long segments of tree-trunks hollowed out, with them in their mountain wanderings. The wax and honey, after being boiled together, are made into cakes and used as food.

The encampments of these Tartar tribes, which, like those of the Yuruks and Turcomans, are often among ancient ruins and tombs, are guarded by magnificent dogs of a breed resembling the St. Bernard. Though fed chiefly on buttermilk, they are extremely ferocious, and will allow no stranger to approach their posts.

The reed huts, for which in winter the Tartars often exchange their tents, are very ingeniously contrived, and consist of two rooms, with a byre between, in which the calves are kept at night. The interior of the walls, after being plastered with *tezeh* and limewashed, are decorated in rude patterns with a preparation of the henna with which the girls adorn their fingers and toes.

The Kurds are to be found scattered all over the eastern highlands of Asia Minor, from the Taurus to the Caucasus, as well as in Kurdistan proper, where the population is equally mixed. Under the name of Kurd, however, two distinct races are included, who form as great a contrast to each other in physiognomy as in character and mode of life. The one race is warlike, full of vivacity, and for the most part nomad; while the other is agricultural, pacific, and not remarkable for intelligence. The peasant Kurds are said to outnumber the warrior in the proportion of four or five to one. The latter are estimated at about thirteen thousand families, of whom ten thousand are nomad, the remainder being settled in the towns and villages. All these warrior Kurds are divided into tribes, each of which consists of the family of the chief and a number of other families more or less intimately connected with it. In their encampments the tent of the chief is conspicuous among the others by

its greater size, for it constitutes the council-chamber, court of justice, and usual meeting-place of the elders of the community, and in it general hospitality is exercised. Clan feeling and devotion to their chief are the leading characteristics of these wild people. The head of the tribe is not, however, an arbitrary ruler; for the voices of the elders have great weight in the councils of the clan. The women also take a lively interest in the social and political affairs of their own clan, and are acquainted with all that concern it—its feuds, plans, and conspiracies, in which they are, indeed, often the moving spirits. As enterprising and indefatigable as the men of their race, they are ever on the alert, and ready to leap to the saddle, where, though not elegant riders, they are quite at home, and able to keep up with their husbands in their adventurous wanderings. Kurdish women do not, like the generality of Moslem women, veil themselves when out-of-doors, or in the presence of the other sex, though when on the march they may partially screen their faces with a kerchief. But notwithstanding this, which for an Oriental people, is great freedom of manners, these nomad women conduct themselves with the utmost dignity and propriety, and their standard of morality is exceptionally high among the races of the country.

A tribe on the march to a fresh camping-

ground conveys its baggage on the backs of bullocks, which often carry in addition two or three children and the cradle, if the mother has not strapped this, with its latest inmate, to her own back. Accompanying the other women may be seen several Amazonian figures apparently in charge of the party, and much more responsible for its safety than the men, who ride or saunter along carrying only their arms, a heavy mace and sword hanging from their girdles, and a leathern buckler at their backs. For beyond guarding their sheep on the mountain pastures, the men of the tribe take no part in the work connected with them, all of which devolves upon the women. Kurds seldom eat the flesh of their flocks, which they consider too valuable for consumption, but content themselves for the most part with the dairy produce, milk, cheese, butter, and curds, with thin cakes baked in the embers, and a kind of *pilaf* made from wheat instead of rice. Butter is churned in very primitive fashion by the Kurdish nomads. A large sheep-skin filled with milk is suspended horizontally by two cords, and to this apparatus the girls impart a regular swinging movement, which in time converts its contents into butter. Their cheese, which is called *djadjik* and is much relished, contains some savoury herb possessing a flavour not unlike that of onions.

The Kurds generally, both sedentary and

nomad, have the reputation of being but lax followers of the faith they nominally profess; so much so, indeed, as to have given rise to the proverb that "a saint cannot come out of Kurdistan." Indifferent, however, as they may be to the dogmas of Islam, they are, like all highlanders, extremely superstitious; and besides the *djins* and other magical beings in whose existence they, in common with their neighbours of other races, implicitly believe, another class of uncanny visitants whom they term *sheyts* (the Turkish *shehid*, "martyr") excites the awe and dread of these mountain people. These *sheyts* are the apparitions—I will not say ghosts, for, like all Oriental "bogies," they rise in the body—of Moslems who have died fighting for Islam, and at whose tombs, as at those of Mohammedan saints generally, miracles are believed to be wrought. When "martyrs" rise from their graves and appear thus to mortals—which they are said occasionally to do in crowds—it is looked upon as a sign of some important event. The Kurds appear, too, to credit them with habits similar to their own, and look upon them as a kind of fluctuating population as nomadic as themselves.

Besides the Turcoman tribes, whose wandering lives differ little from those of the races above described, numerous bands of Circassians are to be met with in the northern and eastern





AN ENCAMPMENT OF NOMAD GIPSIES



provinces of Asia Minor engaged in pursuits either pastoral or predatory, and enjoy a somewhat evil reputation among their fellow-nomads. Being less under surveillance than their brother immigrants settled in European Turkey, they are able to evade with impunity the law forbidding the sale of their daughters, and numbers of girls belonging to these tribes are said to be purchased every year by the dealers always on the lookout for such merchandise.

The Gipsies may be said to form a sort of connecting link between the nomads of the Balkan Peninsula and those of Asia Minor, as they are to be found in every part of the Ottoman Empire, over which some tribes wander from end to end. The physical features, character, and occupations of the Turkish Gipsies are much the same as those of their brethren of Western Europe, while their evil propensities are, perhaps, for the most part, even more conspicuous. Although they are nominally Moslems like the Turks, the Turks entertain for this certainly least worthy section of their nomad neighbours sentiments of the profoundest horror and disgust; and the contempt in which they are held by pious Mohammedans is, indeed, such as to debar them from the charity so largely practised by the followers of the Prophet, and never refused to either Christian or Jew. A tradition is current among both Turks and Bulgarians that,

when religions were distributed to the various nations of the earth, the recipients engraved their respective creeds on wood, stone, or metal, or wrote them in books. The Gipsies, however, with their characteristic thriftlessness, wrote their canons on the leaves of a cabbage, which was shortly afterwards found and eaten by a donkey. "And this," say they, "is why the *Chenguins* have neither religion nor God of their own."





## CHAPTER XV

### BRIGAND LIFE

**B**RIGANDAGE has from time immemorial, and more especially perhaps during the last century and a half, played an important part in the social and political life of Turkey, and the present anarchic condition of Macedonia offers every facility for the pursuit of this adventurous calling. The brigand bands that infest many districts of Turkey, both Asiatic and European, are, strange to say, hardly at all recruited, as might be expected, from the nomad tribes before described, but present a motley gathering of outlaws of all the races of the country, Moslem as well as Christian, one band frequently containing representatives of three or four. Some adopt the profession because they find it congenial, or from political motives; others take to the hills to evade the strong arm of the law or the tyranny of the Turkish authorities, or it may be to carry out some private scheme of revenge. Disbanded Albanian

Bashibazouks, too, during or after a campaign frequently adopt this calling. The transition from shepherd to brigand is also by no means difficult; and not infrequently a young Macedonian or Albanian peasant, weary of the monotony of field-work, will, just for the sake of a little change and adventure, join a brigand band, returning home again with a small nest-egg transferred from the pocket of a Turkish *Effendi* or wealthy Bulgarian *Tchorbadji* to his own. But woe betide him if he is discovered, and the authorities want some one to make an example of! To the bloody tower at Salonica he is forthwith conducted, to remain indefinitely in that old Genoese prison, so cheerful of aspect without, so dismal within.

Various instances are on record of women, Greek and Bulgarian, having also adopted the hard and perilous life of brigands. Dressed in masculine garb, they for years successfully concealed their sex from their comrades, and took part in all their exploits. About thirty years ago a Greek woman of Lower Macedonia, under the name of Spanò ("the Beardless") Vangheli, was for a considerable time at the head of a notorious band of freebooters, and held out stubbornly long after the majority of the brigand bands in her district had given in their submission. To quote the words of a contemporary folk ballad —

Spanò Vangheli still holds out, and will not pledge his word,  
For with his arms girt he would die, and wielding his good  
sword;

But he at length submitted too, and 'fore Mehmet Pasha,  
Up there within the fortress made his humble *temaná*,

*i. e.*, made his obeisance. . A photograph of this heroine in my possession represents her as a sturdily built woman, plain of feature and of swarthy complexion, dressed in the usual outlaw's garb of dirty calico kilt and shirt, cloth vest and leggings, and wearing, suspended round her neck by silver chains, the insignia of chieftainship—a large silver disk with the St. George and Dragon pictured on it in relief. The wives of Bulgarian brigands have also often accompanied their husbands to the mountains in man's attire, fared like the rest of the outlaws, and often shared their fate; and love of adventure seems occasionally to have led unmarried women of this race to adopt this calling, which is by no means in greater disrepute among the Bulgarian than among the Greek peasants. After a few years, if they escaped capture or death in their encounters with the Turkish troops, these heroines, whose exploits are celebrated in numerous folk-ballads, usually returned home, married, and settled down to domestic life.

A considerable section of the folk-literature of the Balkan peoples, both in prose and verse, deals with the exploits of the more famous—

or infamous—brigands under their various aspects of patriots rebelling against Turkish tyranny, rapacious cut-throats, or jovial and humorous Robin Hoods; though the qualities attributed to many of these robber chiefs and their following would seem in many instances to be somewhat at variance with their actions. But in one's estimate of brigands, as of other historical characters, much depends, no doubt, upon the point of view.

In European Turkey, at least, brigandage still retains something of its former political character, and is most in evidence when events threaten to lead to hostilities between Turkey and her Christian neighbours. It is, indeed, often difficult to draw the line between political insurgents and *bonâ fide* brigands, these rôles being easily interchangeable, and consequently frequently interchanged. The band, for instance, which captured Miss Stone in the autumn of 1901, appears to have been comprised chiefly of Bulgarian desperadoes well supplied with modern arms and ammunition, and their object in holding that lady to ransom, at such inconvenience and danger to themselves, far into the winter, was evidently to obtain funds for the Bulgarian Revolutionary Committees.

The *kheradjis*, as the owners and drivers of the pack mules and horses are termed who convey goods and also travellers by road from



town to town, and the Tartar couriers who in some districts carry the mails, and are entrusted with the transport of sums of money, offer great temptations to brigands, and are specially liable to their attacks. The former enjoy generally a reputation for trustworthiness, and often risk their lives in defence of the property entrusted to them. Occasionally, however, they no doubt find it advantageous to themselves and their customers, if not, indeed, necessary to the conduct of their business, to be on good terms with the mountain gentry, and pay for immunity from interference by supplying them with ammunition, tobacco, and other necessaries, and perhaps also occasionally by playing into their hands, as in the case of Miss Stone, whose *kheradji* appears to have been in league with her captors. Brigand bands have also their spies or accomplices among the peasants, or even residing in the towns or cities as reputable burghers, who keep them informed as to the movements of persons of importance, and also give them timely notice of any projected military or police expedition against them. Their frequent change of domicile, however, often makes it necessary for them to do their own reconnoitring, and they venture disguised, even as women on occasion, into the towns and villages. Not infrequently, too, they find protectors in high places, who, for various reasons, assist them

to evade the arm of the law. On one occasion a brigand band had taken up its quarters at an isolated farm situated at the foot of Mount Khortiach, a few miles from Salonica, with the object, it was supposed, of carrying off a member of one of the wealthy families then occupying their country residences at Kallameria, the bathing suburb of that city. The presence of these suspicious characters was observed and reported to the authorities, who sent early on the following morning a force of *çaptiehs* to arrest them. They, however, found the birds flown, the Albanian owner of the farm — a member of the *Medjliss*, or municipal council, and consequently privy to the intentions of the authorities — having, it was generally believed, found means in the interval to warn his guests of their danger.

The troops specially engaged in the suppression of brigandage are also, indeed, by no means free from suspicion of frequently establishing a *modus vivendi* with the brigands, and participating in their ill-gotten gains. Men whose pay is chronically at least six months in arrear can hardly be expected to be incorruptible, and officials, civil and military, are themselves more or less in league with criminals, as the following illustration will show. A brigand chief who, some years ago, had made himself master of the road between Vodhena and Monastir had

previously been an inmate of one of the prisons of Salonica, from which he was allowed to escape with a sufficient number of comrades to form alone a very respectable band. A little fable, related by an old Turk to a friend of mine in this connection, also well illustrates the point of view of those whose business it is to suppress these freebooters. A certain tom-cat, when about to set out on his pilgrimage, appointed his son deputy rat-and-mouse-catcher to the establishment of which he had been for some years a highly regarded inmate. On his return from the holy cities, the old cat was met on the road by young Tommy, who presented an emaciated and wretched appearance. "How is this, my son?" inquired his shocked parent. "I left thee in a comfortable home with a goodly supply of rats and mice; thou hast now the air of a homeless beggar." "My father, anxious to prove myself thy worthy successor, I speedily destroyed every rat and mouse in the neighbourhood, and the people of the house, having no further use for me, turned me adrift, as you see." "Ah, my son," sighed the old cat, "I in my time killed only enough vermin to justify my existence in the *konak*; thou hast destroyed our livelihood. Let this be a lesson to thee in future, to beware of too much zeal, and to 'live and let live.'"

Now and again, however, when these ma-

raiders appear to be more numerous and more audacious than usual, a military brigand-hunting expedition will be organised by some energetic commander-in-chief, and war against them carried on in grim earnest. A large force is then put in motion, no fewer than one thousand infantry and two hundred cavalry being sometimes considered necessary to surround and capture a numerous and desperate band. In barbarous times barbarous methods must be used, and the heads of the outlaws are invariably cut off and carried to headquarters. When out for a Sunday afternoon walk on the road between Salonica and its bathing suburb, I have more than once met vehicles full of soldiers carrying by the hair, or in sacks, to the residence of the Military Governor, these bloody trophies, which would subsequently be exposed to view on the gate of the Government House, or the Citadel, as a terror to evil-doers.

The hiding-places of the brigands, which the Greeks call *leméria*, are usually caves and hollows among rocks, or, if these are not available, they build themselves rough shelters with branches of trees. This term, *leméria*, is derived from two Greek words signifying "all day," as it is in the daytime that they are chiefly occupied. In none of these do the brigands, as a rule, remain for many days together, but continually move from one to another, always by night,

avoiding all roads and frequented paths, and often covering great distances between sunset and dawn. "A klepht's march" is, indeed, proverbial in the country. When encamped, sentries are posted at a distance in all directions to give warning of the approach of enemies, and changed frequently; and vigilant watch is also constantly kept at the *leméri*. The discipline of silence is rigidly observed by the members of a band under all circumstances, especially when on the march; all unnecessary conversation is avoided, and communications are made in whispers. When a sentry is to be relieved at night, the brigand who is to take his place is wakened by being gently shaken by the shoulder, a low, hissing sound being made at the same time to remind him, on being thus summoned suddenly from dreamland, where he is, and what is expected of him. The brigands lie down to rest, if not like the warders of Branksome Hall "in corselet laced," at least fully dressed, and with weapons girt—pistols and poniards at their waists, and rifle by their side, blackened so as to reflect no glint of light from stock or barrel. Shod with heelless Albanian shoes, with pointed, turned-up toes, or with a kind of moccasin made from a piece of hide with the hair side inwards, the *klepht* glides noiselessly to his post. The rest of his garb is also rendered as inconspicuous as possible. The Albanian *kapa*, a cloak of white felt, much worn

by the country folk, is often discarded in favour of one made of black goat's-hair cloth, which serves also as bed and blanket; and a black or dark-coloured handkerchief is usually bound round the head in lieu of the red or white fez or sheep-skin cap of the peasantry. The *fustanella*, or full kilt—the starched rustle of which is music in the ears of an Albanian or Greek dandy—and the flowing sleeves of white calico of the Albanians and Greeks, if still worn, are limp, and of so grimy a hue as to be indistinguishable. “A regular dirty one” is, indeed, a phrase commonly used to designate one who is no novice at this profession, and the long hair and unkempt beards of the outlaws add to the general ferocity of their appearance. The chief of a Greek band is, however, like the Spanò Vangheli above mentioned, usually distinguished from the rest by wearing on his breast the “St. George.” As for food, the flocks of the Christian shepherds are at their mercy, and the peasant, trembling for the safety of his home, dare not refuse to comply with their demands for bread and wine, and whatever other provisions he may be able to supply. Orchards can easily be plundered of apples, pears, and plums, and vineyards of grapes; and wild fruits, such as cornel, arbutus, and strawberries, grow in abundance on the hills.

With a captive in their hands, however, the brigands usually retreat to one of their least ac-

cessible hiding-places, holding as little intercourse with the world as possible, and sometimes experience some difficulty in obtaining supplies. On Colonel Synge's return to Salonica from his month's captivity on Mount Olympus, we asked him how he fared in this respect. "Well," he replied, "we lived chiefly on bread and goat; but very often it was either bread and no goat, or goat and no bread." The band who held Mr. Suter to ransom in the following year were, however, so completely masters of the situation that neither they nor their captive suffered any inconvenience in this respect, all the troops being withdrawn within a radius of some miles from the *leméri* at the command of the brigands, who threatened to cut off their captive's head were even a *çaptieh* seen in the neighbourhood. And during the long captivity of Miss Stone and her companion, the band, notwithstanding their incessant change of quarters, appear to have experienced no difficulty in procuring the necessaries of life, even a "Thanksgiving Day" turkey being provided at very short notice. A lamb of the year roasted whole *à la pallikar*—"brigand fashion"—constitutes, indeed, one of the national dishes of the country, and is always the *pièce de résistance* at picnics, though when cooked in a brigands' den the regulation stuffing of rice, currants, and pine kernels probably lacks occasionally some at least of its ingredients. Two

forked sticks are fixed in the ground on either side of a wood fire, and the spitted lamb is suspended between them, and kept revolving until "done to a turn," when it is placed for dissection on the grass, each *klepht* cutting off with his dagger a portion, which he places on the grimy and greasy lap of his *fustanella* in lieu of a platter, for in the mountains man returns easily to the habits of his remote forefathers.

When circumstances appear to render it safe to do so, the brigands indulge in such amusements as are practicable to them in their situation. A game somewhat similar to what is known in Scotland as "putting the stone" is played with large stones from the bed of a mountain torrent, worn smooth by the action of water. Wrestling is naturally also a favourite diversion of the lithe and hardy *pallikars*; and a variety of dances—the Greek *syrtò*, the Bulgarian *hóra*, and the peculiar, wild dance of the Albanians, which is supposed to be a survival of the Pyrrhic measure—are all in turn indulged in by the members of these mixed fraternities. Not, however, by the sounds of the native bagpipe, as at a village feast, are these terpsichorean performances accompanied, but usually by the low hum of a klephtic dancing song, celebrating the deeds of some famous national freebooter, such as the following, the refrain of which is sung by all the performers:



(*Strophe.*) Lepéni 's trodden under foot,  
 (*Antistrophe.*) *Antóni, Antóni !*  
 They 've made of it a highway!  
*Tsoúngka, that thou hadst ne'er seen day!*  
 They 've taken silver, taken gold,  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 And pearls, too, have they taken;  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepéniot !*  
 They 've taken Nikolákaina,  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 The chief pasha's fair lady;  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepéniot !*  
 They 've seized and hurried her away,  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 High up to the *leméri* ;  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepéniot !*  
 And the Lepéniot, born fool,  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 Her by the hair now seizes,  
*And to the ground throws her.*  
 " O let me go, Lepéniot—  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 And tear not from my head my hair!  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepéniot !*  
 But write ye for the ransom now,  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 Write ye nine thousand piastres,  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepéniot !*  
 And that twelve *fezes* you they send,  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 And drinks fifteen they send you,  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepéniot !*  
 And send you, for the scribe's reward,  
*Antóni, Antóni !*  
 An inkstand all of silver;  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepéniot !*

And send for each soul-son of you  
*Antóni, Antóni!*  
A drinking-cup of silver."  
*Tsoúngka and the Lepénio!*

Occasionally, too, when the payment of a ransom is long delayed, and time hangs heavy on the brigands' hands, they amuse themselves in somewhat gruesome fashion by making their captive's blood curdle with accounts of their treatment of former hostages whose friends had been dilatory, and with rehearsals of the final scene which would be enacted in his case should the patience of the band be much further tried.

There are different traditional methods of execution in vogue. In some brigand communities, when the death of a hostage has been decided upon, it is considered of the greatest importance that every member of the band should deal a blow at the victim, failure in conforming to this custom being held to be highly unlucky, and invariably followed by the death, in the next encounter with troops, of any brigand who has thus withheld his hand. In others, one man is chosen by lot to fill the office of executioner, and with these it is held to be of good augury when a single stroke of the short, curved sword used for the purpose severs the head from the body. For brigands are extremely superstitious folk, and in addition to the many peculiar beliefs generally current among the peasantry, these

gentlemen of the mountain, both Christian and Mohammedan, cherish a goodly number peculiar to themselves, and more directly concerning their profession. These vary somewhat, according to locality, but, in the main, are very similar all over the country. Before engaging in any important enterprise, for instance, a sheep is sacrificed by the assembled band, and a careful examination made of its entrails. Certain appearances these may present are construed as indicating the success of their plans, while others denote an attack by soldiers. If the marks or signs are interpreted as decidedly adverse, the hardest band will abandon a projected undertaking, however tempting. Another favourite form of divination is by means of the shoulder-blade of a sheep or lamb. The thin bone is scraped clean, and held up to the light, and the lights and shades exhibited on its surface are interpreted according to certain rules known to those who consult this augury, or according to the pictures they appear to represent. It is, for instance, related of Kapitan Tsapos that

A shoulder he for portion took, and as the blade he studied,  
There came a paleness o'er his face, and low his head he  
bended,  
For he had seen two open graves fresh dug within his  
courtyard.

On the occasion of a marriage which lately

took place in Macedonia between the son of one brigand chief and the daughter of another, notice was sent to a village in the neighbourhood of the *leméri* that the brigands intended to honour it by having the ceremony performed there. Promises of protection were made if the villagers maintained silence with regard to the intended visit, and dire threats of vengeance if they betrayed them to the Turkish authorities. On the appointed day the wedding party arrived, accompanied by a Greek priest, and the ceremony was performed according to the rites of the Orthodox Church. This concluded, the two brigand bands formed a circle round their chiefs. The latter then bared their left arms; an incision was made in each, the blood that flowed from them was allowed to mingle, and a solemn vow of brotherhood, administered by the priest, was sworn between the two Kapitans. Festivities of various kinds followed, sheep and goats were roasted, and the villagers were invited to join the feast. Then, amid many mystic ceremonies, a sheep was sacrificed, and libations of wine were poured out. The customary auguries were drawn from the appearance of the intestines, which indicated early pursuit by Turkish troops; but the villagers were assured that, should they be molested by the soldiers, the bands would come to their rescue. Three days afterwards a detachment of soldiers, commanded by an of-

ficer, arrived, and began to ill-treat and arrest the peasants, according to their custom in such cases, besides demanding money from them. Signals were made to the brigands, who had remained in the vicinity, and descending from the hills they attacked and drove off the soldiery, several of whom were killed.

On the formation of a new band, the members meet in solemn conclave and take the customary oaths. A few drops of blood from the arm of each outlaw are mixed with flour and made into pills, and as each man swallows this emblem of unity he pronounces a solemn oath on the Gospels and Cross, or on the Koran, according to his faith, and sometimes also on sword and gun, to obey the chief in all things, and to be faithful to his comrades to the death. When brigands are desirous of possessing themselves of money or treasure which they suspect to have been hidden out of their reach, they kill or mutilate the person supposed to have concealed it. A portion of his body is taken to some crafty old hag who follows the calling of village witch. The fat is extracted, and, mixed with wax or tallow, made into a candle, armed with which the brigand commences his search, in the belief that the light of his taper will be extinguished when he approaches the spot where the treasure is secreted. This superstition accounts for the fingers of captives having been cut off even when they were

not required to send to their friends to stimulate their zeal in procuring the ransom. One of the murderers of a family of seven persons was detected by his applying to an old witch to have one of these candles made. The crime had been committed for the sake of plunder; and as the sum found in the house was smaller than the murderers had expected recourse was had to supernatural aid to discover the remainder.

Almost every brigand wears an amulet. If a Greek, it is frequently an old copy, or a few pages, of the Gospels. A once notorious, but now pardoned, brigand always attributed a serious misfortune which befell him to his having laid his aside for a few minutes, — a very old copy, which he carried in an elaborately chased silver case, suspended round his neck by a chain. Moslem Albanians carry an amulet in a small metal case attached to a strap, which is worn on the upper part of the left arm. Very numerous, too, are the ceremonies observed with the object of ensuring good, and averting bad luck.

The methods adopted by brigands for obtaining possession of a captive vary greatly. Whenever possible, they are waylaid on the road or in the fields, as offering less risk to the captors. But should this be impracticable, the bandits will not scruple to attack not only solitary *tchiftliks* and farmsteads, but houses situated in

the centre of villages. Even the dwellings of wealthy burghers in such considerable towns as Vodhena have within recent years been made the objects of repeated sieges by these audacious outlaws. Captives have, indeed, been carried off under the very eyes of Turkish guards, quartered in a neighbouring house for their special protection, as in the case of Mr. Suter, when three captains and their united bands took possession of the village of Isvor, in which he was residing, the military either not daring, or not caring, to interfere. Nor is it always for greed of gain that such outrages are perpetrated. As mentioned in a previous chapter, vendettas are rigorously observed by the Albanians, and vengeance is invariably executed by brigands of this race on opponents or their kinsfolk who have directly or indirectly caused the death of any of their number. Harrowing are the stories told—only too well founded, alas!—of innocent victims of this terrible blood-feud. To take a few instances only: A youth, the only son of his mother and she a widow, is carried off and never more heard of, because his father, himself slain by brigands, had caused the death of one or more of his enemies. Passing the ruins of a farmstead on the outskirts of a populous village, one is informed that its former occupants, after having been repeatedly plundered by brigand bands, have, some been killed, and the rest, reduced to

penury, have been compelled to seek a refuge elsewhere. Here and there whole villages are found to have disappeared, their former sites indicated only by the decaying tombstones of a weed-choked burial-ground. Occasionally, a band will descend upon some hill-village, remote from any military station, and quarter itself on the unfortunate inhabitants. The latter may, perhaps, find means to send notice to the nearest town of the presence of their unwelcome guests. But if the birds should be flown when these arrive, as will most probably be the case, the notables of the village run the risk of being charged with complicity with the brigands and subjected in consequence to intolerable persecution at the hands of the authorities.

After carrying off a captive, the usual mode of procedure is to send a letter, after the lapse of a few days, to the prisoner's relatives, stating the amount of the ransom demanded for his release, and also enumerating a number of articles which they usually require in addition, such as watches, shoes, fustanellas, fezes, bread, wine, and raki, and fixing the time and place for its payment. The missive is sent by hand, entrusted perhaps to a *keradji*, waylaid on the highroad for this purpose, or to some peasant who dare not refuse to do the brigands' bidding. Two or three members of the band will be entrusted with the business of receiving the ransom, and on their



return to the *leméri*, the captive is sent under escort to the rendezvous. The etiquette observed under such circumstances between the authorities and the outlaws is that the former will allow the emissaries freedom to fulfil the mission entrusted to them, and that neither in the meantime nor for some hours after the release of the prisoner will the band be pursued by *çaptiehs*, or the soldiery, any breach of this understanding invariably resulting in the death of the captive. A foreigner's ransom nowadays is generally, in European Turkey at least, fixed at from £10,000 to £15,000; that of a native, according to the wealth and position of his family, from fifty pounds to a thousand or two. It may be added that a Macedonian farmer or burgher, not hitherto suspected of being too well-to-do, on being released from captivity at a great sacrifice of worldly wealth, not infrequently finds himself liable, on various pretexts, to still further imposition at the hands of the local authorities. In addition to the danger of surprise and attack by troops, a band holding a captive to ransom is also occasionally menaced by the hostility of rival brigands desirous of appropriating their prey; and fierce encounters of this kind have not infrequently taken place on the mountains, though seldom resulting in the hostage's changing hands. When the approach of winter compels the brigands to abandon their

mountain fastnesses, they disperse, after settling upon a rendezvous for their spring meeting; and, exchanging the black kerchief and dirty white kilt of the *klepht* for the white fez and baggy breeches of the peasant, seek harbourage in the lowlands. Graphically described in the following Greek folk-song is the *klepht's* wintering:

The trees are faded, withered all; the hills with snow are glistening.

The Vlachs into the lowlands go—they go for winter pasture.  
The Klepht, where shall he shelter find? He leaves the mountain ridges,

His garb he changes, through the woods all silently he's stealing.

No smile is there upon his lips; with head bent low he's striding.

He counts the passing days and nights, and waits the hour impatient,

When spring shall open, beeches bud, and he gird on his weapons;

With gun on shoulder, run again along the rocky ridges,  
And climb into the mountains high, and reach the Klephts' leméri,

To mingle with his company, and ply again his calling—  
To slay the Turk wherever found, to strip bare every traveller,  
And wealthy captives seize upon, to hold them fast to ransom.

Albanian brigands, indeed, often pass the winter months comfortably and securely on the estate of some Moslem landowner, who, for various motives, will ask no indiscreet questions when one of his henchmen announces that a

“cousin” from a distance has come to pay him a visit, knowing how advantageous it is to put under an obligation a member of a race whose code of honour is so precise.







## GLOSSARY

- Abtest*—the ablution before prayer.  
*Adjemi*—a rustic, an uncivilised person.  
*Arnaut*—an Albanian.  
*Arravon*—a Greek betrothal.  
*Bakai*—a chandler.  
*Bakshish*—a present, a bribe. *a tip.*  
*Bashibazouk*—a Turkish irregular soldier.  
*Bektchi*—a night-watchman.  
*Beylikdji*—a tax-farmer.  
*Boktcha*—a bundle-wrap.  
*Bulka*—a Bulgarian housewife.  
*Cavass*—an armed orderly attached to consulates, banks, etc.  
*Chetola*—a notched stick for keeping accounts, a tally.  
*Chiplak*—an Albanian adventurer in low water.  
*Daira*—an establishment.  
*Divan-khané*—a reception-room.  
*Djereed*—a game played on horseback with sticks.  
*Djins*—demons.  
*Doubana*—a small drum.  
*Dua*—a prayer.  
*Dughun*—the festivities connected with weddings, etc.  
*Ebé*—a midwife.  
*Effendi*—gentleman, “Sir.”  
*Esnafs*—trade-guilds.  
*Ezan*—the call to prayer.  
*Fatiha*—the opening chapter of the Koran.  
*Feridjé*—a Turkish lady’s cloak.

- Firman*—an Imperial permit.  
*Giaour*—a non-Mohammedan, an unbeliever.  
*Goumronkdji*—a customs officer.  
*Hadji*—a pilgrim.  
*Hamal*—a porter.  
*Hammam*—a Turkish bath.  
*Hanum*—a Turkish lady.  
*Harem*—the female members of a Mohammedan family, a sacred enclosure.  
*Haremlik*—the women's apartments.  
*Havale*—an order on the Imperial treasury.  
*Hodja*—a teacher.  
*Imâm*—the minister of a mosque.  
*Kadi*—a civil judge.  
*Kadin*—a married lady.  
*Kahvedji*—coffee-maker.  
*Kaif*—ease, pleasure.  
*Kaïk*—a light boat with two prows.  
*Kaïkdji*—a boatman.  
*Kain Validé*—mother-in-law.  
*Kalfa*—a head-servant.  
*Kanoun*—a kind of zither.  
*Kebab*—mutton grilled on skewers.  
*Kena*—henna.  
*Keradji*—a muleteer, or carrier.  
*Khan*—a hostelry.  
*Kharatch*—the poll-tax imposed on Christians in lieu of military service.  
*Khatib*—a scribe.  
*Kiblah*—the direction of Mekka.  
*Kilerdji*—steward of the household.  
*Kismet*—destiny.  
*Klepht*—a Greek brigand.  
*Kodja-bashi*—a head man, or mayor.  
*Konak*—a provincial Government House, a mansion.  
*Leméri*—a brigand's hiding-place.

- Lira*—a gold coin worth 100 piastres, about 18s.  
*Mabeyn*—the master's apartments.  
*Mahallah*—a street, a quarter.  
*Medjliss*—municipal council.  
*Médresseh*—a mosque college.  
*Mekteb*—a parish school.  
*Memlouké*—freehold land.  
*Mesdjid*—a small mosque.  
*Mevlud*—a Moslem holy day.  
*Mezçlik*—a *hors d'œuvre*.  
*Mirié*—Crown lands.  
*Moavin*—a Christian vice-governor.  
*Mollah*—a judge, a preacher.  
*Mudir*—a justice of the peace.  
*Muezzim*—a caller to prayer.  
*Mufti*—a superior judge.  
*Musdadji*—a news-bringer.  
*Namaz*—the Moslem formula of devotion.  
*Namekhram*—the restrictions imposed upon women.  
*Narghilé*—the water-pipe.  
*Nekyah*—a Moslem marriage contract.  
*Rahat-loukoum*—“Easy mouthfuls,” “Turkish delight.”  
*Raki*—a native spirit.  
*Saka*—a water-carrier.  
*Saraf*—a money-changer.  
*Selamlik*—a reception.  
*Seraili*—a woman resident, or trained, in the Imperial Palace.  
*Shekh*—the principal of a community.  
*Sheriat*—the ecclesiastical code.  
*Skipe*—an Albanian.  
*Sofra*—the low table or tray-stand used for meals.  
*Softa*—a Mohammedan undergraduate.  
*Soubashi*—a land steward.  
*Sunna*—the Mohammedan “Traditions.”  
*Tandour*—a warming apparatus.  
*Tapou*—a title-deed.

- Tapou-memour*—a registrar of title-deeds.  
*Tcharshi*—a market, a bazaar.  
*Tchibouk*—a long wooden pipe.  
*Tchiflik*—a country estate, a large farm.  
*Tchirak*—an apprentice.  
*Tchit-tcharf*—the outdoor dress of Turkish women.  
*Tekkeh*—a dervish monastery.  
*Temená*—the Turkish obeisance.  
*Tezek*—fuel composed of cow dung and straw.  
*Turbek*—the mausoleum of a prince or holy man.  
*Vakouf*—church property.  
*Validé*—a dowager.  
*Yashmak*—veil worn by Turkish ladies.  
*Yataghan*—a long curved knife.  
*Yemek*—the evening meal, food.  
*Yeradji*—a Macedonian peasant working on a *tchiflik*.  
*Ziaret*—a pilgrimage to one of the lesser shrines of Islam.







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