

THE ENGLISH GOVERNESS IN EGYPT.

HAREM LIFE

IN

EGYPT AND CONSTANTINOPLE.

BY

EMMELINE LOTT,

FORMERLY GOVERNESS TO HIS HIGHNESS THE GRAND PACHA,
IBRAHIM, SON OF HIS HIGHNESS ISMAEL PACHA,
VICEBOY OF EGYPT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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H A R E M L I F E .

CHAPTER I.

NOTWITHSTANDING the sudden demise of Ismael Pacha's daughter, and the intense heat of the season, we passed the festival of the Grand Bairam (*Courban*), held in celebration of the three days' pilgrimage to Mecca, in the Harem at Gehzire. I should have observed that there are two festivals called *Bairam*; the other, named *A'idjitr*, corresponds to our New Year's Day. On the former occasion, and the festival I am about to describe, all the shops kept by Turks are invariably closed, and both they and the Egyptians dress themselves in new attire, feast most immode-

rately, sacrifice lambs (the scraps of which, after they have finished their repast, are given to the poor), pay visits to one another, as also do the inmates of the Harems.

Well, this festival, so anxiously looked forward to by the Peris of the Viceregal Harem, began on the Monday, and continued until the following Wednesday until sunset; during the whole of which period the sound, the sight, of fez, girdle, robe, and scimitar, and tawny skins awoke contending thoughts of surprise, astonishment, and wonder in my mind.

On the Sunday night, three large fat sheep, which would have done credit to the show of cattle in Baker Street at Christmas time, with their horns gilded and blue ribbons tied round their necks, were brought into the courtyard of the Harem. Early on the Monday morning, between three and four o'clock, they were killed, and their blood besprinkled on the posts and thresholds of every outer door. The sight made my heart heave again. Then they were cut up and cooked, the greater portion of them being cut into steaks, and broiled upon live charcoal, portions of which were

distributed to every person in, about, and in the vicinity of the Harem.

At the doors of each apartment were placed Sèvres china bowls of sour milk, and custards on trays, when every one as they entered took some of them, and helped themselves to the Turkish sweetmeats, *boubons*, cakes, fruit, &c.

In fact, the whole time from morning to night was one continual scene of gourmandizing and paying visits. At five o'clock in the morning the inmates of the Harem arrayed themselves *en grande toilette*, and went to pay their Highnesses the Princesses, the three wives, a visit, at the same time presenting each with a gift, the value of which they returned tenfold by bestowing baksheesh, in the shape of sums of money, jewellery, and dresses, upon them. When dresses were given, they invariably comprised three muslins and a silk one. Upon this occasion I took the Grand Pacha with me into their Highnesses' rooms, when they all saluted her with the expression, "*Bairum Madame*," and each handed me a small packet of *paras*, gold coins as baksheesh.

Her Highness the Lady Paramount wore upon this occasion a pink satin robe, trimmed with black lace and silver thread ribbon, with full trousers of the same material. Around her head was a white gauze handkerchief embroidered with gold. On her forehead she wore a tiara of large pansies in diamonds; round her neck was a costly necklace of the same flowers with emerald leaves, and large pear-shaped pearl drops, as big as pigeon's eggs, were suspended from the centre. Her arms were ornamented with two massive gold bracelets, on one of which, contrary to the express command of Mahomet, their Prophet, was the portrait of the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, dressed in his rich Turkish uniform with fez set in brilliants, which she very kindly took off and handed to me. I looked at them some time, and when I returned them His Highness inquired of me how I liked them? To which I replied that they were *Guzel! Guzel!* "Beautiful! beautiful!"

Her armlets were of large pear-shaped opals, which hung suspended like drops, between which was set a large diamond. On her little finger

on the right hand, she wore a magnificent sapphire ring, about the size of a walnut, and on the same finger of the left was a rose pink diamond ring. Her waist was encircled with a gold band fastened with diamond clasps, into which was tucked her gold watch encrusted with brilliants, the Albert chain of which, an inch broad, was composed of diamonds and emeralds. The watch was fastened to the side of the gold band by a gold watch hook, attached to which was a very small silk-bag, studded with brilliants, containing the keys of her cash-box and jewel-cases, with which she never parted by night or day. Her feet were encased in pink silk stockings and high-heeled embroidered white satin shoes. In her left hand she carried a richly gold embroidered muslin handkerchief, and in her right hand she held a pink satin purse, more like a bag than anything else, richly embroidered with pearls, containing small gold Egyptian coins for bak-sheesh..

I must here observe that I have often seen their Highnesses amuse themselves by sticking a number of these coins all over the Pacha's

face, and then sending him laughing out of their apartment, and, as a matter of course, they were eagerly picked off by the head nurse, whose perquisite they became.

Her Highness the Princess Epouse, the mother of my Prince, was attired in a rich blue figured silk robe, trimmed with white lace and silver thread, with a long train; full trousers of the same material, high-heeled embroidered satin shoes to match the dress. On her head she had a small white crape handkerchief, elegantly embroidered with blue silk and silver, and round it was placed a tiara of May blossoms in diamonds. She wore a necklace to correspond, having large sapphire drops hanging down on her neck. Her arms were ornamented with three bracelets composed of diamonds and sapphires, and an armlet entirely of sapphires of almost priceless value. This was *par excellence*, the veriest *bijou* I had yet seen amidst all the galaxy of jewellery of precious stones which adorned any of their Highnesses' persons, although at times my eyes, when looking at the bedizened Peris arrayed in all their gems, have become as dim as if I had

been fixing them on the gorgeous noonday sun in any eastern clime. In her bosom she wore a brooch containing the Viceroy's portrait in European costume, with—hear it not, ye Moslems!—a hat on, having two circles of diamonds around it. Upon looking at it, it recalled to my recollection Ben Jonson's celebrated lines:—

*“ This figure that thou here seest put,
It is for Ismael Pacha cut ;
Wherein the graver had a strife
With Nature to outdo the life :
O could he but have drawn his wit
As well in brass, as he hath hit
His face, the portrait would then surpass
All that was ever writ in brass :
But since he cannot, reader, look
Not on his picture, but in this book.”*

On the little finger on her right hand she wore a large bright yellow diamond ring, of almost untold value, and on that of the left an enormous white diamond. Her waist was encircled with an elastic gold band, having as clasps two crocodile heads in diamonds and emeralds. Her gold watch, encircled with brilliants, had appended to it an Albert chain composed of sapphires and diamonds ; to it was

attached a small gold bag, containing the keys of her cash-box and jewel-cases, and in her left hand she held a small sky-blue satin bag embroidered with pearls, containing the gold coins which she purposed distributing as baksheesh. The third wife was attired in a similar manner, except in a robe of different colour, as also were the young Princesses, but all were resplendently ornamented with precious jewels.

The ladies of the Harem, and the whole of the slaves, were dressed in the richest silks, and were adorned with jewels, almost as costly as those of their Highnesses.

It was to me rather a novel sight, to observe that the German laundrymaid and needle-woman had, upon this occasion, dressed themselves up as Turkish houris. It is almost impossible to conceive the nondescript figures they cut in their *bal masqué* costume; as, being naturally very bad shapes, they looked more like the scarecrow figures one is accustomed to see placed in corn-fields, to keep the crows away; and their awkward manner of imitating the *Turkish shuffle* was ludicrous in the extreme.

After I had paid my respects to them, I returned with the Grand Pacha, and handed him over to Shaytan, who proceeded to dress him over to Shaytan, who proceeded to dress him over to Shaytan, who proceeded to dress him *en grande tenue*. He wore black trousers, striped with red, with a narrow slip of gold-lace down each side. His coat was black, richly embroidered with gold-lace, and ornamented gold buttons. I then placed on each of his shoulders a massive gold epaulette, buckled around his waist a gold band, which was fastened with a diamond clasp, in the shape of a crescent, and from it dangled a diamond-hilted sword. In the heels of his patent-leather boots, were fastened gold spurs; and in each of his pockets was placed a purse, filled with *paras*, for baksheesh, which was invariably called *sish* by the inmates of the Harem.

I then led him into the Grand Eunuch's apartment, which was fitted up on that occasion as the Grand Audience Hall; the hangings of the doors and windows being of crimson silk; and the chairs and divans covered with the same material. There the Grand Pacha held a levee of the Ministers of State, the Consuls General, at which were present the

most distinguished military and naval officers, as well as a host of the *élite* of Turkish and Egyptian *noblesse* and the European community.

His Highness, the Prince Ibrahim, was seated on a divan, while I sat by his side, on the left, plainly attired, as not the slightest intimation had been given me that I should be called upon to take part in this ceremony, which was extremely fatiguing. All the Ministers of State, the highest in rank taking precedence, advanced towards His Highness, kissed his right hand, then placed their foreheads upon it; the next in rank kissed both his hands, and then, likewise, placed their foreheads upon it. To their Highnesses, the Princesses, *findjans* of the finest Japan china, placed in gold filigree *zarfs*, encrusted with precious stones, and filled with coffee, were handed round, and pipes were presented to those distinguished guests.

When this *Besa los manqs*, for it was tantamount to that ceremony at the court of Spain, was over, the Grand Pacha Ibrahim, attended by myself, the illegitimate sons of the Viceroy, and the Ministers of State, proceeded with a

brilliant escort of infantry and their band, to receive the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, at the landing-place of the Harem. Immediately on our arrival, the band struck up the Sultan's March, and the Viceroy landed from his yacht.

On the promenade, facing the Harem stairs, close to the edge of the hill, stood the Prince, myself, and His Highness's illegitimate sons, on the right hand, with a host of attendants behind, while the Ministers, &c. lined the left side. As the Viceroy passed up this line, he took the little Prince by his left hand, and saluted the Ministers with his right, then, dropping the Grand Pacha's hand, I took hold of it, and we walked by the side of the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, up to the entrance gate of the Harem, when the Ministers and officials saluted, and went their way.

Entering the Harem, the Viceroy stopped at the outer gate, to take a few *bonbons* out of the gold filigree-basket, in which they were placed, as also did the Prince and myself, as it is customary for all visitors on that occasion to partake of something on entering the precincts of the Harem.

Then the Grand Eunuch and his corps, dressed in new richly-embroidered uniforms, threw open the doors of the Stone Hall, that most useful of all the rooms in this "Mansion of Bliss," and there stood, ranged in double lines, like files of infantry, the whole retinue of slaves, much more superbly attired than has been already described in the transformation scene, on His Highness's first visit to the Harem after my arrival. In short, they constituted two such dazzling and brilliant lines of sparkling jewels, as perhaps it never fell to the lot of a European lady to behold. There stood upwards of two hundred women, with their persons decorated with the most resplendent precious stones which the mineral kingdom had produced, and then you have a photographic sketch of the appearance of these houris of the East. And as the Viceroy walked slowly on, according to his custom, between them, with the Prince and myself, all salaamed him, at the same time exclaiming, *Bairam Effendimiz!* "Bairam your Majesty!" at which His Highness smiled, and waved his hand.

The Viceroy was received at the foot of the

staircase by the Princesses, the three wives, to each of whom he presented his right hand, which they kissed. The steps of the grand-staircase were lined on each side by the ladies of the Harem; and *Ikbals*, who also salaamed the vicéroy as he ascended, and the Princesses as they followed. On His Highness reaching the Audience Saloon, he sat down on the divan, *à la Européenne*, while the Prince stood at his knee.

I had been particularly struck, on my first introduction into the Harem, with the repugnance which the Grand Pacha Ibrahim invariably manifested when called upon to make visits to the *Baba*, "father," as the Viceroy was familiarly termed in the Harem. Notwithstanding that His Highness showed him the greatest kindness and affection, still the Prince did not appear to return it. I repeat *appear*, for, as Turks are never very demonstrative, it is almost impossible to know when they are pleased or vexed; so that their sayings and doings are like those diplomatic avalanches which are constantly taking place in all parts of the Ottoman dominions. Whenever he

approached his august parent, he cast his eyes down upon the carpet. Sometimes the little Prince would hand things to him from off the *soofras*, at others nothing could induce him to do so. Whenever he addressed the Viceroy, he called him *Efemdimiz*, "Monseigneur," but the *Baba* designated his son as plain Ibrahim.

Between the Grand Pacha and his sisters there also existed a kind of restraint; as, owing to the Prince being the only legitimate son, the heir to the billionaire's vast wealth, but not to the Viceroyalty, (as that honour passes in a direct line to the descendants of Mahomet Ali, and therefore would fall to the lot of Mustapha Pacha, the Viceroy's brother, the surviving son of Ibrahim Pacha.) He made all the little Princesses show proper deference to him, in the demonstration of which His Highness was most exacting.

In a corner of the divan, but at some distance from the Viceroy, sat the Lady Paramount; and on another divan, opposite to the *Baba*, sat the other two wives.

Then their Highnesses rose, and offered him the coffee, sweetmeats, sherbet, and cheroots

which the white slaves had handed to them, after which the eunuchs entered the room, bearing several trays, covered with cloth of gold, containing His Highness's presents of gold coin and jewellery, of the most costly description, to the Viceregal family. After this a grand repast took place, at which the Princesses, according to their precedence in rank, received the dishes from the hands of the slaves, and placed them on the table, which was most elegantly laid out on that occasion in the European style. Then the Viceroy, and the Lady Paramount, accompanied by two of his daughters, went through the *muayédé*, that is, proceeded in state to the *Moosky*.

On the return of the Viceregal party, the Princesses went and paid visits to other members of the Viceregal family, who resided in the different Harems.

On the Tuesday following, at six o'clock in the morning, the Grand Pacha and myself, both dressed *en grand tenue*, proceeded to the Harem. The Viceroy had not yet risen; but, after waiting a short time, the *Baba* passed through the reception-room, into his dressing-room,

attended by his two *Ikbals*, and several other slaves, who assisted at his toilet. They had been preceded by the Lady Paramount, who has the privilege of handing the *Baba* his sword, (which is similar to that worn by the Grand Pacha, only of full size, and more thickly encrusted with diamonds,) and placing the broad blue ribbon that His Highness wears across his shoulder.

The toilette of the Viceroy being finished, he re-entered the apartment. He was dressed in full uniform, and appeared one mass of gold lace. When Ismael Pacha entered the Audience Hall, the Lady Paramount was standing conversing with me, holding the Viceroy's sword in her hand. At this moment the *Ikbal*, the reigning favourite of the day, came out of the dressing-room, pushed rudely up against the Princess, and touched her on the arm (their Highnesses have a perfect horror at being touched by any of the slaves); upon which she became crimson with passion, stamped her feet, and exclaimed, *Wallah! Wallah-el-Azeem!* "By the most merciful God!" (the Arabs' mode of swearing, for she was an Arab,) and raised

the sword, with the intention of striking her down to the earth.

Fortunately the *Baba*, whether designedly or not, had moved towards her, girded with his *trusty steel*, and the blade, for Her Highness had drawn it, fell mechanically into its glittering scabbard; while the *Ikkal*, with a smile beaming upon her countenance, which was not unlike that of an ordinary-looking English peasant girl, went her way unscathed, not disconcerted in the least by this display of Arab mettle. The appearance of the *Ikkal* was so totally different to that of any other of the slaves, that it struck me she might be of European origin, if not a European herself. I had seldom or ever heard her speak, and then it was in Turkish; but there was a bold, defiant, don't-care manner about her, that did not savour of Asiatic parentage.

A few days afterwards, when I was standing on the landing-place, arranging the Prince's sword, as we were going to take a promenade with the Viceroy, the *Ikkal* came running, (for she walked much better than any of the others,) out of the Reception Hall, and rushed

by me, in the same unceremonious manner in which she had passed by the Lady Paramount. But just as she approached, the *Baba* waved his hand, reproved her, point blank ordered her to return, exclaiming, "The Grand Pacha and Madame are always to take precedence." After that we had no more scenes, and she was amiable enough to me ever afterwards.

Then Her Highness, the first wife, whose peculiar privilege it was to wait upon her liege lord on this grand occasion, hastily snatched out of the belt of the slave who officiated as light bearer, a small pair of silver tongs, similar in size to a pair of grape-scissors, as used at *dessert* in Europe, quitted the room, but returned almost in a moment, holding between them a piece of live charcoal, which she held up to the Viceroy, who lit his cheroot with it. After the lapse of a few minutes, the *Baba* made a move, and, attended by the Grand Pacha and myself, left the Harem, unaccompanied by any suite, proceeded on board the yacht, which landed us at the Palace at Boulac, which is a magnificent structure, superbly furnished, but still in an unfinished state. Here it is that

audience is generally given, as was done on this occasion, to the Ministers, Foreign Consuls-General, and where His Highness's men of business privately arrange all commercial matters with the *Baba*.

On our disembarkation a double file of troops was drawn up, through which we passed into the Grand Audience Hall, while the band played the Sultan's March. There all the officers stood ranged in two rows, who presented arms to His Highness, at the same time exclaiming, *Allah umerlez were Effendimir!* "May God grant our Lord a long life!" Upon receiving the announcement that His Highness the Grand Pacha's carriage was drawn up, I, together with the Prince, salaamed. The Viceroy left the Palace, and we were driven along at a most furious pace through the narrow streets of Cairo, lined with old, dilapidated, Oriental-looking houses, having wooden balconies and projecting windows, absolutely encrusted with dust, near one of which the horses kicked a poor Arab off his donkey: but whether he was killed or not I know not, as the carriage dashed along at a most terrific

rate. Soon afterwards we entered the gates of the Harem in the citadel, the residence of Her Highness the Validè Princess, the Viceroy's mother.

There we were received by seven cunuchs, who conducted us through a small stone hall covered with matting, which led into a marble-paved walk, open on the side facing the gardens. It was covered with a verandah which formed the winter promenade, at the extremity of which we were ushered into a large stone hall also covered with matting, and having divans ranged around it. Then we passed up four steps covered with matting, and entered a large uncarpeted apartment, containing no other furniture than a divan covered with faded straw-coloured satin, ranged under the three large windows overlooking the lovely, well-kept gardens. After this we descended some steps, and entered into another uncarpeted room on the right-hand side, quite destitute of furniture. All presented the picture of misery and discomfort; all looked most disconsolate and empty; just such rooms as you would imagine the widow of a usurer, who, by dis

counting bills, exacting most exorbitant rates of interest, and thoroughly understanding the art of buying and selling rupees, would delight to occupy.

A divan was ranged underneath the windows; but seated on a cushion on the floor was a lady dressed in Turkish costume, whom I immediately recognised as a European, and when her history was subsequently told to me in Italy, near Pistoja, by a gentleman who knew her, it brought to my recollection those Europeans whom I had passed at Tantah, looking out of His Highness the Viceroy's private despatch-train; and I could not help wondering to myself how many more European women were "caged up" in the chambers of the *Baba's* other Harems situated on the banks of the Upper Nile. I learned that she was a Belgian, that her name was Caroline, and that she was the mother of the illegitimate sons of the Viceroy; and it is not improbable but that the Princess, whose death I have narrated, was also her daughter.

She was a very handsome woman, rather stout, and between thirty and forty years of

age, and dressed in black, *à la Turque*, but unveiled, as all are when within the Harem. When we entered she was smoking a *Tchibouk*. She rose off the *divan*, took the Prince by the hand, placed him by her side, kissed him, bowed to me, then clapped her hands, and handed the Grand Pacha over to the slave, who had responded to her call, to carry him about. Then we all proceeded up the broad staircase, which was covered with matting, at the top of which, on the landing, as it were, we found several of their little Highnesses, his sisters, who had preceded us, in charge of the eunuchs, sitting down (squatting would be the most correct expression) awaiting his arrival, close to the door of the chamber of the *Validè Princess*. She was a Princess by birth, the mother of Ismael Pacha, the widow of the gallant yet avaricious Ibrahim Pacha, and who, by some deep researches into the genealogical records of the sultanas of Turkey, has lately discovered that she is closely related to the *Validè Sultana*, the mother of His Majesty Abdul Aziz, the present Sultan.

CHAPTER II.

HER Highness, who takes precedence of all the wives, who stand in awe of her, had not yet risen from her downy couch, and so there the young Princesses waited like a band of slaves until their imperious grandmother had finished her toilette, as she never would receive them in her chamber. Why or wherefore I know not. Perhaps there were other visitors there, whom it did not suit the Validè Princess to allow her granddaughters to see; perhaps her Grand Eunuch, a shrewd, cunning, crafty individual, who was a very sinister looking personage, but who appeared thoroughly to understand the ways of his Viceregal mistress, was closeted with Her Highness, communing with her on affairs of state, or private matters. At all events there I found them squatting down at the door-sill.

But His Highness the Grand Pacha, (who was her pet—her Ibrahim—the very prototype of her lamented husband, the gallant yet cruel Ibrahim Pacha,) broke through all ceremony; and I soon found that this “dot of humanity’s” word was law here as well as at Ghezire; for, passing by the Princesses, he exclaimed, “Come along, Madame,” pulled aside the dismal funeral-looking black curtain, ornamented with a silver crescent in the centre, which hung across the doorway, and bounded like a gazelle into the apartment, where he remained some time with the Validè Princess, as I did not presume to enter her presence.

I stood talking to the young Princesses, all of whom were rather intelligent, tractable, and amiable girls, and would, had we remained longer together, have become considerably Europeanized, as I found them anxious to learn, and particularly attached to me, poor dear neglected creatures! a circumstance not to be wondered at, as, extraordinary as it may appear, neither Turkish fathers nor mothers seem to like having a posse of daughters. Perhaps it is from avaricious motives; for with

them they are obliged to give dowries suitable to their position in society ; whereas boys, so to speak, are made to shift for themselves. Thus the Viceroy, or their mother, the Lady Paramount—whose first child was a son, who had been dead many years, but who would have been eighteen years old had he lived—(for they were her children,) took not the slightest interest in them. Consequently they were allowed to grow wild and uncared for ; but as I thought it was a pity that such noble females should be brought up in that barbarous manner, I took an interest in them, and began to teach them English, and to cause them to adopt many European modes and customs.

As soon as the Viceroy's mother had finished her morning toilette, she came forth out of her chamber. She was a short elderly person, a most courtly dame, and perfect lady in the fullest acceptation of the term, with grey hair, and large piercing black eyes, but commanding in her manner, often too imperious and stately in her carriage. Her manners were courtly, at which I was surprised ; in short, I never beheld anything but what was ladylike in her behaviour.

She appeared to have sprung from quite a different stock to that of the *Baba's* three wives. Perhaps she was brought up at the Imperial Court of *Is-tan-bol*, "Constantinople;" but I never could learn anything reliable about her history, except that Ibrahim Pacha, when desperately in love with her, wrote some beautiful verses to her at the old palace of Bebek, a copy of which I have given elsewhere. That perhaps may account for the Sultan naming the Palace of Bebek as that Princess's residence during her visit to the Imperial Court in 1864, and which was considered by her as a very great compliment. About these grounds she must have rambled with infinite delight, but perhaps mingled with sorrow for the loss of Ibrahim Pacha, to whom she was devotedly attached; all appeared to be mystery, doubt, and conjecture. All I know is that at first I found her exceedingly imperious towards me; she even went so far as to expect that I should kneel at her feet and squat down at her door like a slave.

I had often, when a child, been found by Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen and the late Prince Consort playing about in the private

grounds at Frogmore and Windsor; and when I had encountered the royal pair, who took flowers from my basket which I had gathered in the grounds and smiled, I had stepped aside, stood still, and curtsied—no more. I did the same to the Validè Princess of Egypt, and I thought that was quite sufficient respect to show her, and I never did anything more; nay, I positively refused to do more.

Gradually, as we became better acquainted with each other, her haughtiness diminished; still there was a lack of that amiability and suavity of manner about her which most certainly characterised their Highnesses, the three wives, always making you uncomfortable in her presence. She was a fitting partner for such a prince as Ibrahim Pacha. She possessed great intellectual activity; hence there is no doubt but that she meddled indirectly in the weightiest affairs of the State; weightiest, I repeat, because I suppose Her Highness considered, in her eyes, the relations between the Sultan and the Viceroy to be such; in those matters she appeared at home, as I shall afterwards have occasion to explain.

She was extremely penurious—nay, mean would be the more appropriate expression—and, as an illustration, I need only adduce the fact of her Harem being the most beggarly arranged of any I ever entered. Her staff of attendants was very limited; her habits were frugal; her attire, upon ordinary occasions, extremely plain, while on grand ones it was regal and queenlike. She was avaricious to a degree, imperious in her manner, and exacting in the extreme.

The finest trait in her character was her devoted affection for her son, the Viceroy, which was truly reciprocal. She loved the Grand Pacha with the same enthusiasm, and spoilt and indulged him in every way possible. As regards myself, when Her Highness began to understand my European ways better, she treated me with respect. I never received a present, or baksheesh, of any kind from her, although to others she distributed gold and jewels with no sparing hand; but when illness overtook me, she manifested great sympathy—in short, did everything in her power to contribute to my comfort, so far as she understood

how, and, Heaven knows, that was *little enough!* about our European ways and habits; for she had never been in England, although Ibrahim Pacha, when he visited London, took with him some women. They were Armenians, and not Turkish, whom European travellers, because the former adopt at pleasure that mask, *the veil*, always take for the latter, a most common error.

The Validè Princess was attired in a robe of white satin on this occasion (for be it remembered that it was the *Bairam*, the Turks' greatest festival), having a breadth in front and behind, about two yards longer than the rest of the dress, which was on this day, being a state occasion, held up by four of the ladies of the Harem, or four of her *Ikbals*, but which, on ordinary times, is turned back like a three-cornered handkerchief, one of the corners being tucked in the waist-belt. Over that was placed a blue satin paleot, trimmed with sable fur. On her head she wore a small handkerchief; and in the centre of the forehead was a large diamond fly. In her hand she carried her small gold watch, encircled with diamonds; and her feet were encased in white satin shoes.

When she reached the landing-place, the young "Princesses and myself salaamed her. Her Highness then descended the staircase (the slaves holding up her train in front and behind) which led into the room where we had found the Belgian lady, passed between two rows of the ladies of her Harem (many of whom were very aged), and then walked majestically through four rows of slaves, and sat herself down in the centre of the divan, under the window (the Belgian lady had vacated the apartment). Then she took her darling pet, the Prince, placed him beside her on the right hand, while on the left sat a lady, whom I was afterwards informed was the widow of Saïd Pacha, the late Viceroy. By the side of the Grand Pacha sat his sisters, and then, lower down, a bevy of Princesses belonging to other members of the Viceregal family.

After all were seated in due order, according to their rank, each of the ladies of the Harem approached this Viceregal dame. Those of the highest rank kissed her right hand, and bowed their foreheads upon it, exclaiming, "*Allaha emanet oloun!*" "May God be with you!"

The others kissed the hem of her robe; upon which all the slaves bowed their foreheads.

After this ceremony had been gone through, coffee and pipes were handed round (to the Princesses only) by six slaves, dressed in black cloth jackets, wearing black trousers, embroidered shirts, like men, and black silk neckties, over which were turned white collars. Their heads were covered with *fezes*; their feet were encased in patent leather shoes, with bows of black ribbon. All were of the same height, and, what was singular, their complexions were nearly alike.

The Grand Pacha then kindly took me on a tour of inspection through the whole suite of apartments. They were large, noble, lofty rooms, but all carpetless, and destitute of every kind of furniture, except divans; having suspended from the centre of the ceilings chandeliers, quite as large and elegant as that which hangs from the roof of the Italian Opera House, in London.

Before the Grand Pacha took his leave, Her Highness filled his pockets with several packets of gold coin, as *baksheesh*; of which

he was despoiled by the head-nurse, on his return to the Harem, who on that occasion must have pocketed upwards of twenty to thirty pounds.

This visit to the Harem in the Citadel had initiated me into some of the secrets of Harem life, and I failed not to profit by them. I learned that the Messrs. H. were the *Inan divan end*, the Genii of those "Abodes of Bliss," and that Madame Caroline had been, at one time, the three wives' *Karayucuz*, ("Evil Eye").

I now looked upon Egypt as a strange country. I regarded my own position as a dangerous one. I had to guard against being looked upon by the Princesses as an "Evil Eye;" for although the Viceroy only treated me with that consideration which my position entitled me to receive, still, as one European woman had supplanted them in the *Baba's* affection for a time, I had no desire that a similar mark of his favour (honour, all in the Harem consider it to be) should be shown to me. I had been engaged to take charge of the heir presumptive to all his wealth, as I had

been led to suppose, to educate the Prince, and prepare him for a preceptor. I had thought it rather singular when the Viceroy and his reported partners had told me not to care about his instruction; but now I thought it more so than ever. I resolved to keep my standing in that character. I trusted that my own habitual reservedness of manner would save me from any advances being made, and determined not to become a loadstone of attraction to the Viceroy.

I had remarked how dull, melancholy, ah! and even dejected, Madame Caroline looked when I glanced at her, and my curiosity was naturally wakened to know what really were her feelings at being "caged up," as it were, in the Harem of the Citadel.

Had she been entrapped, "caught," bought or sold like a parrot? If so, who were the white slave-dealers? Thereby hung a tale. In after times I obtained, at Constantinople, a solution of all these queries which now floated on my imagination; and now I believe that Turks, Jews, and Europeans, who have become domiciled in the East, are not only traffickers in

every kind of merchandise, but also in *live* as well as dead stock. Did she ever think of her European home? What a dull, monotonous life she must have led there! Poor creature! I wondered how the Validè Princess treated her and her sons, noble intelligent European-looking boys, also called Princes. I recalled to mind the imperious look of that haughty dame. I longed to know her antecedents, her manners were so stately and court-like.

Above all other beings in the world, I, who had always been accustomed to have my own will, and to enjoy my liberty, should not have liked to be at her beck and call. Oh! no, indeed; I had, before I saw Her Highness "at home," witnessed enough of the proud Validè Princess.

I had no idea of being treated like an *abject* slave, by the widow of that overbearing ruler, Ibrahim Pacha, nor to be at Her Highness's command, nor by her caressed, flattered, and then cast off as whim or fancy led her. I was the Grand Pacha's *Institutrice*, and not the Validè Princess's slave or subject. I had no idea of passing the best years of my existence

within such "a gilded cage;" and so I always kept at a respectful distance from the Viceroy's mother, as I knew her to be a most shrewd and accomplished intriguante, one who, to advance the interest of her son and grandson, would "stick at nothing," absolutely nothing.

A few weeks afterwards, I accompanied the Grand Pacha to witness the return of the Pilgrims from Mecca. This was rather an imposing spectacle; but as the main object of this book is Harem life, I shall abstain from describing it.

Not long afterwards, we proceeded with the Viceroy in his yacht, to open the canal at Old Cairo. His Highness was accompanied by the Ministers of State, military and naval officers. When the billionaire waved his hand, a number of fellahs cut with their pickaxes an opening in the dam, in the centre of which stands the *Aroost-é-Neel*—"Bride of the Nile"—a large earthen pillar; and as the water flowed into the canal, the *Baba* scattered handfuls of *paras* into its bed, which were most eagerly scrambled for by the host of Arab *gamins* and donkey boys, who had assembled there for that purpose. It

was highly amusing to the Prince to see them floundering in the mud.

As soon as the water rose to a tolerable height, an immense number of boats ascended it. The decks were crowded with men, women, and children, all dressed in holiday attire, with native music; and as they squatted themselves on the decks beneath the awnings, the boats and river presented as gay and lively a scene as I had ever witnessed on its placid bosom: for there were hundreds of them, and several steamers puffing away at full speed.

As soon as the ceremony was finished, coffee and pipes were served on board the Viceregal yacht, and we returned to the Harem in time for the Grand Pacha's supper, and my dinner—a most frugal meal, consisting of the everlasting kebab and dry bread; but now, thanks to Ismael Pacha's courtesy, washed down with a glass of his own imported, full-bodied claret.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN the hot season began to set in, I fell sick, and was assailed by frequent attacks of intermittent fever and cholera; but, having providentially taken the precaution to bring a medicine chest with me, I began to doctor myself. The weak state of my constitution, owing to the want of proper nourishment (for I had been living upon Arab diet ever since my arrival in Egypt), naturally gave way, and the Viceroy sent his Physician Extraordinary to attend upon me. .

He did not prescribe for me, as he found that I had literally "cured myself;" however, instead of leaving me some stimulants, which any other European medical man would have done, to restore my strength, he very coolly

told His Highness that I had taken all that was needful. The Viceroy, from his knowledge of our habits, knowing that we drank tea, and as the "Validè" Princess also partook of that beverage, very kindly made me a present of a small chest of gunpowder tea, and a few loaves of sugar from his refinery, and frequently sent me soup from his own table. Finding, however, that I did not get much better, orders were given to hasten the departure of the Viceregal family to Alexandria, whither they always proceed to pass the hot season, as the palace of Ras-el-Tin and the Harem are situated on the Mediterranean, the breezes from which are very refreshing at that time of the year.

Of this I was extremely glad, as I had no nurse to attend upon me, and was totally unable to obtain the most simple diet, such as gruel, arrowroot, or beef-tea, although they could all have been purchased, at the English Italian warehouse in Cairo, had the Hekim Bachi only taken the trouble to order the Grand Eunuch to procure them; nay, it would not have been much trouble for him to have sent them himself by one of his own servants.

Then he was an Italian, and troubled his head very little about any of the patients within the Harem, except the Grand Pacha. I was a "poor governess," and a foreigner, besides an Englishwoman. I know not why, but my countrywomen are not, as a general rule, very great favourites with any foreigners, especially those residing in the East, unless they have a well-lined purse. I could not help thinking what a deep debt of gratitude the British Army owes to those bright ornaments of my sex, Miss Nightingale and her staff of nurses, who tended their heroes with such unremitting attention.

Their Highnesses the Princesses frequently visited me, and asked me what I required; but although I explained to them that all my illness arose from the bad and poor diet which had been provided for me, they knew not how, and, therefore, could not alter it. They might have sent the German laundrymaid into the city of Cairo to have procured me what I needed; but then they had at all times the utmost repugnance to allow even myself to have free ingress and egress, so that was quite out of the

question—consequently I had to trust to chance. God be praised, however, I recovered sufficiently to be able to travel to Alexandria.

As soon as orders had been given to the Grand Eunuch to hasten the departure of the Viceregal family to Alexandria, and that their Highnesses knew it was time to depart, *there was bustle all day long.*

One morning, when I returned from the gardens into which I had been strolling for a short time, I entered the Grand Pacha's reception room, and there I beheld one of the most extraordinary scenes imaginable. It was one of those nondescript tableaux to which only a Hogarth could have done justice. My feeble pen-drawing must necessarily fall very short of the original; for there were their Highnesses the Princesses, squatted on the carpet amidst a whole pile of trunks, most of which were much deeper than carriage imperials—a host of portmanteaus and carpet bags, of small and large dimensions—jewel cases and immense red leather sacks capable of holding from six to eight mattresses.

They were all attired in filthily dirty crum-

pled muslins, shoeless and stockingless, their trousers were tucked up above their knees, the sleeves of their paletots pinned up above their elbows, their hair hanging loosely about their shoulders, as rough as a badger's back, totally unencumbered with nets or handkerchiefs, but, pardon me, literally swarming with vermin! no Russian peasants could possibly have been more infested with live animals.

In short, their *tout ensemble* was even more untidy than that of hardworking washerwomen at the tubs; nay, almost akin to Billingsgate fishwomen *at home*, for their conversation in their own vernacular was equally as low. They all swore in Arabic at the slaves most lustily, banged them about right and left with any missile, whether light or heavy, which came within their reach.

Well, there they were, doubled up like clasped knives, sorting and packing up their *penates*, jewellery, pipes, *zarfs*, *jindjaüs*, large gold and silver salvers on feet, together with numerous other displays of Viceregal magnificence. I had never beheld before sets of gold vegetable dishes, each of the wives having a

set for her separate use, pipe-stems encrusted with diamonds and other precious stones, most valuable amber mouth-pieces, all ornamented with gold tassels. These were counted over before the Eunuchs, then packed in boxes and delivered over to their care. Between whiles they sipped *jindjaus* of 'coffee, and all the time kept puffing away at cigarettes.

It was highly amusing to see the slaves bundling their Highnesses' beds into the large thick red leathern sacks, and much more ludicrous did the scene become when they attempted to remove them out of the apartment, as it was found that they were too large to pass through the doors. So that, when the Princesses (as they very often did) hit them rather sharply with anything they might happen to have in their hands, at the time exclaiming, "*Destour, destour, yu mobarakee!*"—"Get in, you fool!"—the slaves cried out most lustily, and hastened to take all the beds out of the cases. Then they carried them one by one into the Harem's small garden, and there replaced them in the huge red sacks. Close by sat the *Ikkal* of the period, superintending

the packing up of the beds and bedding of her Viceregal liege lord.

The whole of the reception rooms, as well as the spacious hall, looked as if the Sinbad of the nineteenth century had given orders for the shipment of his cargo to some distant land, or that the magic wand of harlequin had instantaneously changed the scene into Tilbury furniture and luggage warehouse in Marylebone Street. For it is no exaggerated statement to affirm, that "within those marble halls" were piled up hundreds of bales, boxes, trunks, portmanteaus, carpet bags, jewel and pipe cases, &c., &c. Yet amidst that *mêlée* there sat not "the rough mariner who had weathered many a storm," with bronzed countenance, but the Prince of merchants *par excellence*, the billionaire of the world, Ismael Pacha, the Viceroy of Egypt, in his shirt sleeves, looking quite as fagged, not through over bodily exertion, but on account of the heat of the thermometer, which was then at 110° in the shade. His Highness has become very stout of late. He was as "dead beat," as the packer of a Bread Street warehouseman, when about to ship his costly

ventures to Alexandria or Constantinople; not casting up the pounds, shillings, and pence columns of an invoice (which he so well knows how to do, as long as the taxed bill of a chancery suit solicitor, nor calculating the probable golden returns that those bales, had they but been of fine Egyptian cotton, would have brought into his coffers), but playing dominoes with one of his lovely wives, and laughing fit to crack his sides, and puffing away at some of the choicest Havannahs that a Pontet had ever imported from the far-famed Cuba Isle with all the good-humour imaginable, and evidently quite at home amidst that commercial-like bustle and turmoil, delighted beyond measure at the *gaucherie* of the slaves, and particularly amused at the ludicrous manner in which those *oustas* bobbed their heads, and dodged round the trunks and bales to avoid being struck by the missiles which were aimed at them, right and left, by Princesses.

I too, ill as I was, had to pack up my own traps; but scarcely had I done so when, although at that time suffering from attacks of spasmodic cholera, I was awake at half-past one in the morning (for weary and faint I had

fallen down upon my bed exhausted with pain and suffering) and was ordered to get up immediately, as the slaves wanted to take and pack up my bed. I opened the door, let them carry it away, and threw myself down upon the divan, where I remained, not sleeping—for that was utterly impossible—as the slaves were hurrying to and fro all the livelong night; some carrying their beds, others bales, boxes, &c., many running about with wax candles between their fingers; others lying on the floor dead tired, snoring away like great grampuses, whom nothing could possibly awaken from their dreams of bliss.

At five o'clock in the morning, the whole household were about and stirring. Then was enacted a truly comic scene. Many of the slaves, it then turned out, had sent away the attire which they required to wear; so that they were obliged to borrow some things from one and some from another, which rendered them, when dressed, the most extraordinary looking beings imaginable. It was fortunate, indeed, that they were able to dress themselves at all decently.

The young Princesses began their morning toilet by throwing the whole of their things at the slaves. After they were tired of that amusement, they sat upon their divans and commenced crying and bellowing away like town bulls, kicking each other, and screaming as if they had gone demented. When they became a little more reasonable, they soon finished dressing themselves by simply placing their silk dresses over their dirty crumpled habiliments, and enveloped themselves in their *labaraks*.

I partook of my usual breakfast very early. At seven o'clock the whole of the juvenile members of the Viceregal family proceeded down to the landing-place, and there they embarked on board a yacht, which steamed down to Boulac, and at eight o'clock we all entered the Viceregal state railway carriages at the back of the palace. The state saloon carriage was occupied by the Grand Pacha, myself, the young Princesses, the Mother of the Harem, the nurses, and the Prince's usual attendants. The carriage was divided into three compartments, consisting of one large and

two small saloons. The former was fitted up with easy spring chairs, carpet divans covered with brocaded silk, and mirrors; the latter was similarly furnished, but covered with green velvet and brown morocco. The windows were of plate glass, with moveable net wire blinds; the former were taken out on this occasion, but the latter remained.

As soon as the train started, the Mother of the Harem threw herself down upon the carpet, and placed one of her bundles under her head as a pillow; for, singular as it may seem, all Turkish women, even the Princess, when travelling, have almost everything, even silver ewers, basins, and "vases" (which latter appertain only to the children, as the Princesses never use such indispensable appendages) packed in bundles formed of a round piece of cloth or silk, hemmed all round with a cord run in it, which when drawn tight forms a round bag not unlike a seaman's clothes-bag. Even when "at home," after every toilette their things are packed up in square pieces of thick wadded cotton.

As soon as the eunuchs had seated them-

selves in their carriage, all the Princesses and slaves threw off their *habaraks*, unveiled, took off their silk dresses, all of which they piled up in a heap in one corner of the saloon, removed the wire blinds, and then put their heads out of the open windows.

At half-past ten the train stopped at Benha, when breakfast was served up just as if they had been in the Harem, for the cooks and whole staff of domestics and *batteries de cuisine* had been placed in the train. During that repast several tin stands holding porous clay water-jars, having gold stoppers, which had been placed in the saloon, were replenished; the eunuchs taking the precaution to taste the water in every jar, lest any should have been poisoned. Then the whole party squatted themselves down upon the carpet, and as neither plates nor *soofras* had been provided, they tore the meat with their fingers like a set of cannibals, which was served them on metal trays similar to those used by the *trattorie* in Italy; and after the Princesses had partaken of what they fancied, the remnants in the trays were handed over to the slaves for their breakfast.

The Princesses asked me to partake of some of their *entremets*; but I declined, first, because my health would not allow me to eat Arab diet; (and, secondly, because it would have been utterly impossible for any European lady to have felt the slightest inclination to partake of refreshment in such a barbarous style.)

During the journey, the young Princesses made their toilettes no less than half-a-dozen times, putting on one dress, and then another. Then they ornamented their heads, by tying a piece of ribbon round their foreheads, and placing crimson and blue feathers around them in bands, and encircled their waists with broad and long ribbon sashes. After they had finished attiring themselves, each began to dress up their favourite slave, as if they had been dolls.

The Validè Princess on this occasion unloosed her purse-strings, and bestowed baksheesh of gold watches and chains upon all the European engineers, drivers, and stokers who were employed on the train in which she travelled. The three wives went in another carriage, and did not start at the same time as we did.

The Princesses were most disgusting in their

habits, and so totally devoid of decency, that they did not hesitate to empty the contents of their "*vases*" out of the window, as the train was passing along. I thought their manners bad enough, in all conscience, *at home*; but now I had seen them *abroad*, and I never wished to have the honour of travelling with them again. Then they laid themselves down ~~on~~ the carpet, and fell fast asleep, like wild beasts after a gorge.

About four o'clock in the afternoon the Viceregal party, after having been no less than eight hours in their transit, only a distance of a hundred and thirty miles, on account of the Viceregal children being afraid of proceeding at express rate, reached their destination. During which period the whole traffic on the line was interrupted, to the great inconvenience of the mercantile community.

When we arrived at the terminus at Alexandria, we met with a most regal reception. The platform was covered with crimson carpet, and decorated with flowers and flags. The Grand Eunuch, who had preceded us by three days, met our party there. He handed the

Grand Pacha and myself out of the carriage, and conducted us into the waiting-room, which was also covered with crimson carpet; while the band played "The Sultan's March." The troops who lined the platform presented arms as we walked across it.

The Ministers of State paid their respects to the Prince, and accompanied us to the Viceroyal state-carriage, which was in attendance. It was drawn by eight fine grey horses. Three outriders preceded us in front; *sais*, "grooms," ran on before to clear the way, and also by each side of the carriage; we were also attended by an escort of cavalry to the Palace of Ras-el-Tin, situated on the ancient Isle of Pharo, which was built by Mehemet Ali, and where that celebrated prince held his court much oftener than at Cairo, which latter city he disliked. There we alighted, and passed into the Harem, which stands facing it, and from which it is only separated by a large court-yard. In short, much more respect and ceremony was shown to the little Prince on this occasion than is generally shown to his illustrious "*Baba*."

The Princesses had led me to believe that

there I should find everything arranged for my convenience; but, alas! I was doomed to be most wofully disappointed. On entering the gates of the Harem, so replete with many an historical reminiscence, we passed through three spacious marble halls; then proceeded up the grand staircase into His Highness's apartment. It was a very spacious three-windowed room, overlooking a large marble-paved court-yard, around which were situated the Princesses' rooms. It was excessively dirty; the windows and frames were nearly all broken; totally destitute of hangings, with the exception of pieces of white calico, which were nailed up at each window as substitutes for blinds, with a piece of cord hanging down in the centre, by which they were drawn up and down. The floor was covered with common country matting; the walls and ceiling were whitewashed. It was totally destitute of furniture, with the exception of a divan which stood under the three windows, covered with cotton chintz.

“Well,” thought I to myself, “if this is all the arrangement which has been made for the comfort of *my* Prince, what can I expect has

been made for me?" I soon had an opportunity of seeing this as I was shown into my chamber, which certainly was a large room. It was one consolation, after the cupboard in which I had been cooped up at Ghezire, which at best was only fit for a lumber-room, in such a hot place, with the thermometer standing at 110°. It was filthily dirty, lighted by three windows, at which were hung up six tattered brown calico curtains, and three dirty white calico blinds. The walls and ceiling were white-washed, the floor matted; and the furniture consisted of a divan, as damp as if it had been soaked in water, covered with brown cotton, to match the window-hangings: this was placed underneath the three windows. And there, kind reader, you have an accurate description of my lady's chamber!

I was tired, suffering from attacks of my recent illness, and weary after my journey, and this was the apartment in which I had to vegetate, after having entered Cleopatra's capital in viceregal splendour. I really was quite disgusted with Harem life; and I will lead you to imagine what were my feelings to find that

there was nothing whatever for my convenience, not even a *bed* to lie upon, for it was utterly impossible that I could sleep upon that damp, mildew-covered divan.

I sought to lie down upon the floor, but that was equally impracticable, for it was only matted, and as damp as the deck of any of those wooden walls I beheld from its windows, as they commanded a good view of the roadstead, in which many vessels were at anchor, and among which I espied two or three Egyptian frigates. I looked round my apartment and longed to possess harlequin's magic wand or Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp, that I might bid some fair spirit to transport even the few conveniences I had left behind me at Ghezire; *but alas! neither were there, and so I had to put up with it.*

When the Superintendent of this Harem, who was a great tall hoarse godmother of a black, most meanly attired, entered to pay her respects to the Prince, I inquired where I was to sleep? Her answer was, "On the divan;" and at the same time she told me that she was quite surprised that I should feel dissatisfied, as I had

the same accommodation which had been provided for the Grand Pacha. I had no idea of being treated in that manner, so I walked down into the marble-paved hall, where some of the baggage had arrived, and made the slaves, *nolens volens*, carry up my bed and bedding into my apartment and lay it upon the matting.

At eight o'clock I clapped my hands, and Zenana, a Turkish girl about fifteen years of age, not very prepossessing in appearance, and most assuredly not gifted with more sense than she knew what to do with, responded to my summons, as she had been newly appointed at Ghezire to attend upon me. I ordered her to fetch my dinner, but she soon returned and very coolly informed me (it will hardly be credited, but it is a fact), that there was neither European bread nor any meat in the Harem, so that, sick as I was, and after travelling from seven in the morning until seven at night (for it was about that time when we reached Ras-el-Tin), I had not had a meal provided for me. Then I was obliged to content myself with what I could get within this "Mansion of Discomfort"

of the billionaire of the world, the wealthy scion of the usurer, Ibrahim Pacha.

Well did I verify the truth of the old saying that "hunger requires no sauce;" so I sat down on my pallet, not "on the cold flinty rock," but upon the damp matted floor, and there I selected a meal from the *carte*—a piece of Arab bread as salt as brine, and some salad, which consisted of a lettuce dressed with oil and water, without either pepper, salt or vinegar, and a slice of boiled fowl, of which the soup had been made which had been served up to the young Princesses, who had already partaken of their supper, and a *jindjan* of coffee, and that constituted my repast. Then I was obliged to give the Grand Eunuch money out of my own pocket to purchase me an ewer, basin, and *vase*, and in this manner I installed myself on that memorable day in the Harem at Alexandria. There, seated at the window, my thoughts naturally wandered over the reminiscences of all the varied scenes I had beheld, and the inconveniences to which I had been subjected ever since

"I trod the soil of Egypt's pestilential shore."

Then I recalled to mind the day of my arrival

at the Pacific and Oriental Hotel, where I had found excellent accommodation, plain *auberge* though it was, and gladly would I have returned to it again. For although I was an inmate of the stately marble halls of a Viceregal Palace, the residence of the Cræsus of the East, I had been unable to procure a crumb of European bread, though loaves in abundance might have been procured in the city almost within a stone's throw of the Harem, and everything was at hand; yet not any of the conveniences enjoyed by the meanest villager in my own country had been provided for me. With whom did the fault rest? Surely not with that good-humoured, jovial Prince II. H. Ismael Pacha, whom I had left not many hours before in his splendid palace at Burlac, surrounded by every luxury that wealth could command, who had said, "Madame, whatever you want, ask for and you shall have it."

I had taken the Viceroy at his word, I had asked for—mine had not been a very unreasonable request—bread to satisfy the cravings of hunger, but I could not procure even bread.

I exclaimed to myself as I then remembered

the words of the writer on Egypt in *Once a Week*, "You may call spirits from the vasty deep, but will they come?" I had tried the experiment, and found that they would not respond. Was I then to consider that H. H.'s words were, to use a very significant Turkish (but of late years turned into English slang) word, *bosh*, and meant nothing, absolutely nothing? How little did His Highness imagine that the companion, guardian, and instructress of his heart's idol was actually wanting bread to eat, and was lying on the floor in a damp room, absolutely destitute of every comfort; sick, weary, and uncared for! And yet these were the *lururies* that I had been told I ought to be thankful for; I had been treated like a princess. My reply was, "Like what kind of a princess?" Perhaps their Highnesses might at one time have considered what I termed inconveniences as *lururies*, but I did not. I had learned much of the antecedents and doings of the whole of Mehemet Ali's family and his descendants.

Well did I know that only a few short years had elapsed since that very room in which I lay was furnished with every luxury which the most

fastidious dame could have required. Ah! and even later than that, for Said Pacha was a prince of great taste, whatever may have been his demerits as a ruler; and there his lovely Princess had resided with every regal luxury around her. I soon became weary of lying down. It was a lovely night: the sight of the placid ocean as the bright moon cast her reflection on it brought to my recollection Southey's beautiful lines in his 'Thalaba.'

“How beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,
Breaks the serene of heaven.
In full orb'd glory, yonder moon divine,
Rolls through the dark blue depths.”

I rose up, walked to the window, and gazed at the calm scene around me. I noticed that the depth of the sea there would even admit of ships of war sailing close up to it, and wondered what tales, could it but speak, that depth could tell, what bodies it could cast up, were they once again “filled with the breath of life!” the doomed victims of a licentious and cruel wanton of a Turkish Princess—that bold, cunning, and subtle Nuzly Hanein Effendi.

I remembered that that beautiful Princess (and if she had been only as handsome as the little daughter of Said Pacha is, she must indeed have been *most angelic*—for that little Princess is the only being I have yet seen in the East who could be termed “to come up to” Tom Moore’s description of a *Peri*), the right hand of her astute father, Mehemet Ali, had often sat where I then stood gazing intently on that fleet, the command of which had been held by Ibrahim Pacha, when he went to seek glory in the Morea. I had visited the palace which she occupied in the vicinity of Cairo, and the old Frenchwoman, who had been in her service, and *who now lived within this Harem, where she passes her time in taking care of H. H. the Viceroy’s wardrobe, when he is at Ras-el-Tin.* She related to me the following strange, yet true incident, in the life of that extraordinary Princess:—

“It appears that Nuzly Hanein was very intimate with a Levantine lady, whose husband was in Mehemet Ali’s service. A young Italian nobleman, whose countenance and manners were very effeminate, offered that Levantine a large

sum of money, if she would assist him to visit the interior of the Princess's Harem at Cairo, which he had heard was most superbly furnished.

“Accordingly, it was arranged that Madame Otto should inform Her Highness that a lady of rank, who was on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and who had been most highly recommended to her from Europe, was extremely anxious to see her Harem, of the splendour of which she had heard so much when in Italy, and pay her respects to a Princess whose renown was spread all over the world.

“‘You must ask her,’ added Count Luigi, ‘to give the lady an audience; you will be sure to obtain permission, and when the appointment is made, you must lend me one of your richest dresses, which I am certain will fit me admirably. You must superintend my toilette, and then I am sure that I shall pass muster, and that the keenest eye will be unable to recognise my sex under that disguise.’”

I could not help exclaiming to myself, as the old Frenchwoman, for she was an octogenarian, related the Count's conversation, “Silly, silly

young man, how little did he know the power of an Arab, or Turkish woman's eye, or how quickly they can detect any imposture of that kind." Well, to continue the narrative:—

"Saying which, the Count, who was then sitting in Madame Otto's boudoir, added, 'Come, let us try how I should look,' and hastily metamorphosed himself as one of the fair sex, with the aid of one of the fair Levantine's dresses. The disguise was so complete, that Madame Otto could not keep her eyes off him, and seemed quite bewildered at the Count's first *début* in female character.

"Soon, however, she became more accustomed to his metamorphosis, and then burst into a fit of laughter at the droll idea which he had taken into his head, and which she looked upon as a most dangerous enterprise, knowing as she did the formidable character of that *Grand Lady*, as the Egyptians call her to this day; for after that title of *Grand* bestowed upon her by Mehemet Ali, all the eldest sons of the Viceroy are styled *Grand Pachas*. Madame Otto again burst out laugh-

ing. However, in a short time, she accorded the Count her co-operation.

“It is certain that the lovely Levantine did not possess much firmness of character, for even the Count’s mad whim, which, however, had *method in it*, was wisdom itself, when compared with many of that volatile lady’s vagaries. She carried out all the Count’s instructions to the very letter, and her embassy proved as successful as he desired. The audience was granted, and the day appointed, on which occasion she acted as lady’s maid, with such taste and tact that the Count, when he looked in his mirror, was really unable to recognise himself. He acknowledged that he had the vanity to think that he really looked like a very pretty woman. The success of this rehearsal gave them both great hopes that the attempt itself would realize their most sanguine wishes.

“The Count, who related the adventure to me,” added the old Frenchwoman, “did it so naïvely, that I cannot do better than repeat his own words. ‘I wore,’ said he, ‘for I can still remember it as plainly as if it were only

yesterday, a very pretty white chip hat, a rich crape bertha covered my thin shoulders, and an ample merino velvet dress, trimmed with deep rows of Mechlin lace, which helped to conceal any defect that I might have otherwise shown in my mean and slender figure. My transformation was performed with the greatest secrecy; no mortal being, except our two selves, having been entrusted with our secret. My male attire was carefully concealed, and when my toilet was finished, I availed myself of the absence of all the domestics, whom the Levantine lady had sent out on some distant errands, to take my place in the drawing-room, as if I had been a stranger, who had come to pay her a visit.

“A handsome carriage which I had hired for the occasion, together with two footmen, to whom I was unknown, were waiting for me at the door. It would, perhaps, have been far better if I could have prevailed upon my charming hostess to accompany me; but all my entreaties to do so proved unavailing. I really felt that I should never be able to keep my countenance, and the semblance of a smile,

nowever slight, might place both our lives in jeopardy. I waived that point; for, to tell you the truth, I did not care much about her company on that occasion. Although I had planned the whole affair without having any particular object in view, my mind was agitated with many a foolish hope and romantic idea. Hence I preferred being alone; for, perhaps, had the charming Levantine accompanied me, I should not have had a *tête-à-tête* conversation with the Grand Princess. I promised to make some excuse for her; to acquaint Her Highness that she had been taken suddenly ill; to tell Her Highness any falsehood which came uppermost in my mind at the moment.

“My dear friends, I can assure you that Signora Rosina (for that was the name of the Levantine) had never before appeared so lovely in my eyes. She almost overwhelmed me with precautions. ‘Take care, above all things, to beware of the snares and captivating manners of that most formidable of syrens.’ I remarked to her that she need not entertain the slightest jealousy, since I had now become a woman; and if it should unfortunately happen that the

Princess were to entertain the least suspicion, she might be certain that she would sooner have me empaled than fall in love with me. 'Who can tell?' replied she, as she shook me affectionately by the hand; 'for that woman is of such a whimsical disposition.'

"Preceded by two handsome *sais*, with their flowing garments, who ran nimbly along before the horses, I soon reached the Esbekieh, in which quarter the Princess's new palace was situated. To say that I did not experience considerable trepidation when I found myself on the threshold of that princely dwelling, would be untrue; on the contrary, my heart palpitated very much. Like the hunter, I could not behold the tigress in her den without experiencing considerable alarm; for I remembered that if that was the Grand Princess's palace, it was also the residence of her husband, the cruel and merciless Defterdar.

"When far away from its precincts, I had only thought of the wife; but now that I found myself within it, my thoughts naturally dwelt upon the husband, and the remembrance of his bloody exploits awakened anything but pleasing

remiscences in my mind. I had forgotten that, being much inferior in rank to his wife, he was, according to the Oriental custom, her slave rather than her liege lord and master, and that she alone possessed sovereign power within her domain. I had also overlooked the fact, that a husband, no matter who he may be, never enters the Harem when his lady has visitors, and that the eunuchs, or grooms of the chamber, who always stand at the door, are placed there expressly to say to him, 'You must not enter.' Therefore it was, morally speaking, quite impossible that I could beard the lion in his den, or awaken his suspicions.

"I was evidently expected. On alighting from the carriage I was received by about half-a-dozen fierce-looking eunuchs, black as ebony, wearing the fez, and richly clad. The younger ones wore red jackets, embroidered down the shoulders at the back and front, which terminate in a point at the centre of the back, at the waist; and the others large flowing white muslin robes. With the exception of one or two, who were very handsome, all of these 'phantoms' of men were stout,

paunch-bellied, and puffed up; their eyes betokening haughtiness and cunning of the deepest dye.

“I was conducted by them through a courtyard; then we passed into a second one, which opened into a large octagonal vestibule, paved with beautiful white marble, where I was handed over to six white slaves, all of whom were young, well made, and extremely pretty. They wore on their heads small velvet richly-embroidered fezes; and their dark jet hair hung in flowing ringlets down their backs. They were attired in wide trousers, hemmed at the bottom, through which ran a string drawn up and fastened round the leg just above the ankle, like a garter. The trousers were then pulled down over the feet (which they concealed); they are made of the stoutest and richest blue and red silk, between which and the bottom lining rolls of muslin are placed. It is that weight which causes that shuffling manner of moving about they have, for their carriage hardly deserves the name of walking. Their waists were encircled with costly Cashmere shawls; they wore long jackets, beautifully embroidered with gold

thread and lace, which were open at the chest, but reached down to their hips; their small feet were encased in elegant Oriental slippers; their wrists were ornamented with most costly golden bracelets, in which were set many almost priceless diamonds, some white, others pink, yellow, and black.

“Escorted by them, I ascended the beautiful staircase, on the landing of which stood ten other slaves ready to receive me: they were all white, and dressed in the same costume. There my shoes were removed from off my feet, and a pair of handsome Turkish boots replaced them. Then I was muffled up, I hardly know how, but believe it was in a superb Cashmere shawl; and, thus swathed, I was led through three or four saloons, each one more spacious than the last, and all most superbly decorated; but the style partook more of European than of Oriental luxury. The mirrors, the lace curtains, and the hangings were of Parisian workmanship. The divans, which were covered with the richest damask, embroidered with gold and studded with pearls, were alone of Oriental craft; and as to the carpet, it was,

perhaps, one of the finest ever woven in Persia. When the Princess left it for any other residence, all the carpets were taken up, the curtains unfastened, the divans covered, and everything turned topsyturvy.

“Thence we proceeded into a small room, but much more cozy, more congenial to my ideas than the others, because it was more frequently occupied. There I was requested to be seated to await the Princess, who soon made her appearance. I was highly delighted to have a few moments to prepare myself for the dangerous interview and the perilous adventure in which I had engaged. The fresco of the ceiling of that room was wretchedly painted; the chairs were European, covered with red morocco, but very shabby. Double deep scarlet curtains hung over the open windows which looked into the beautiful gardens, and cast a dark shade upon my person.

“Here were assembled several other slaves; some of whom, from their dark ebony complexions and regularity of features, were evidently Abyssinians. Their costume resembled that of the white slaves, except that they were

not so rich. Several of the latter were attired in robes open at the sides, all of whom were bedizened with emeralds, topazes, turquoises and several other precious gems of great value. Some of them wore plumes of feathers; others, butterflies made of diamonds, which, as they moved their heads, flitted about, as it were, sparkled and seemed as if they were on the wing.

“There was no mistaking the Georgian, Circassian, and Greek white slaves. And yet you must not imagine that the black ones were ugly: this was by no means the case, as many of them were extremely well made, nay, handsome, and possessed pleasing countenances. There was even something rather attractive in the variety of the colour of their complexions. Besides, the eye soon becomes accustomed to those beautiful ebony skins of the slaves, when their features are regular and their forms faultless. Nearly all their black orbs were fixed steadily upon me; but if my presence there attracted the curiosity of those lovely creatures, I was equally struck with theirs.

“I shall not attempt to describe to you all

the old women, as well as the other slaves and harridans of the Harem, who, as they stood grouped together, alone formed a pleasing outline in that interesting scene. The quick and searching glances of those *fates* caused me considerable annoyance; but in the twinkling of an eye my attention was riveted upon the Grand Princess, who had just entered the room. If I use the expression *grand* when speaking of her, I merely do so out of etiquette, and because that was the title which had been given to her, for that appellation could not be applied to her person; as the Princess Nuzly was of small stature, though beautifully made.

“As to her costume, I remember it as well as if she now stood before me. She wore, over a pair of wide bright amaranthus-coloured silk trousers, a large white Cashmere dress, the loose sleeves of which displayed her well-formed arms, and which, being open in front, made her train a yard and a half in length. A waistband of splendid large pearls, fastened with two large diamond clasps, encircled her waist. Her tiny feet were encased in a pair of satin slippers, almost as small as those of a child, embroidered

with costly pearls. Her head-dress consisted of a large fillet of golden-coloured crape Cashmere, which was twisted very prettily around her head. Her long black hair, neatly plaited, was rolled up behind and fastened with large diamond pins. Her bracelets consisted of strings of enormous pearls; her necklace was composed of some of the finest pearls imaginable, which fell negligently on her clear alabaster skin, and half disclosed her bust. This enchanting figure did not shuffle, but glided rather than walked, towards a red satin divan, on which she threw herself down.

CHAPTER IV.

“WHEN persons visit each other in the East it is the custom for them, on entrance, to observe the strictest silence. It also appears to be the same with the women, for the Princess was a long time before she addressed me, and etiquette prevented me from taking the initiative. You can well imagine how narrowly I scanned her features. How incomparably beautiful she appeared! How haughty and tapered was her nose; what a sweet, pretty mouth; what pearly white teeth; the whole of her lineaments were perfection itself!

“I fell desperately in love with ^{*with your mother?*} her at first sight. Her eyebrows were painted in the true Oriental style, just as they are delineated in the Holy Scriptures, and as Racine describes Queen Jezebel to have used antimony to conceal the

ravages of age. Her filbert nails, I mean those of the Princess Nuzly, not those of Jezebel, (although in features both those women bore a close resemblance to each other,) were stained red with henna. But her eyes, my friends, ah! what eyes! They were the most piercing I had ever beheld; at one glance they seemed to scan me from head to foot, to read my thoughts, and cause my heart to palpitate most violently. In short, they shot through the very innermost recesses of my mind. Every time that her penetrating glance was fixed upon me I felt my countenance change, and I could have sunk into the earth. Is it possible, thought I, that those scrutinizing orbs can read the audacious lie that I had framed?

“In the mean time the slaves had brought into the room, according to custom, two pipes with amber mouth-pieces, encircled with gold and ornamented with a broad ring of magnificent diamonds. They handed one to the Princess and the other to me, and while a slave knelt down and lighted Her Highness's, another, a beautiful Circassian girl, performed the same office for myself. Then coffee was served us in

beautiful thin Japanese cups (*findjans*), placed in golden filigree *sarfs*, and each time we sipped it the Oriental salutation of placing the hand to the forehead was performed. It is generally whilst partaking of that beverage that the conversation begins, by passing compliments to each other and inquiries touching the health of the visitors.

“I have omitted to explain to you that Providence had endowed me with a wonderful facility for acquiring languages. Having already resided at Constantinople, and formed an intimacy with several members of the Turkish Embassy in Paris, I could speak Turkish sufficiently well when I arrived in Egypt to be able to keep up a conversation, and as Turkish is the language of the conquerors of Egypt, it is generally spoken at Cairo, but more especially by the government officials and the *beau monde*.

“Mehemet Ali knew no other. I therefore naturally thought that no other ought to be spoken in his daughter's palace, who being Turkish like her father, was very proud of being thought so; so I presumed, perhaps it

was rather too presumptuous on my part, to dispense with the services of an interpreter, and at once enter into conversation with my vice-regal hostess. As soon as the usual compliments had been exchanged, and, Heaven be praised! they did not last long, I conveyed to Her Highness the fair Levantine's deep regret that her sudden indisposition had prevented her from accompanying me. I told her that she was extremely ill, almost in the last agonies of death, and I am really astonished that I did not even go so far as to state that she was dead.

“When once we begin to tell lies we hardly ever know where to stop. The excuses that I made for that lady's absence were graciously accepted by the Grand Princess, and our conversation passed on to other subjects.

“‘Have you any family?’

“That is always the first question which an Oriental lady asks her visitor. I answered as a matter of course, in the negative.

“‘Therefore I suppose you are journeying to Jerusalem to pray to your prophet to give you some?’ added the Princess.

“ ‘Your Highness, with singular aptitude, has guessed the object of my journey.’

“ ‘May Allah grant you your desire! for then your husband will love you more affectionately. Does he go with you?’

“ ‘No, your Highness, business detains him in Europe.’

“ ‘I am sorry for that: for it must be very dull to have to travel all that long way alone. For when a woman has to endure loneliness it is almost as wretched as death!’

“ Her Highness’s language was very impressive; an appropriate gesture accompanied every sentence. You must allow, my dear friends, that the subject which she had mooted was a very delicate one for me to answer; so that I endeavoured to turn the conversation upon some other topic. But to do so was no easy task, as that of all the daughters of the Prophet is always of a very mediocre nature. Thus the interchange of visits among themselves is scarcely anything more communicative than pauses of interminable silence. But Mehemet’s daughter was, for a Turkish lady, a very superior person; she appeared to possess something

more than a mere smattering of general knowledge. Dearly beloved by her extraordinary father, possessing his unlimited confidence, she had, literally speaking, been the companion of his misfortunes and active life, and, therefore, had become quite a politician.

“It very seldom happens that women in the East meddle with politics, but especially the Princesses; nevertheless she had become quite *au fait* with them, and her beautiful mouth often uttered both very pleasing and terrible truths. I gathered this outline of her character from the hints which she let fall about some very serious affairs which had happened at that time, showing me clearly how well and deeply she had studied the art of government. No topic appeared to come amiss to her. Notwithstanding, however, that politics had always been my own peculiar *forte*, still it was evident that I ought not to appear to take much interest in the subject, seeing that I myself was then but a woman.

“Wishing to act my new character to perfection, I turned the conversation as skilfully as I could, and began to display my feminine

weakness by praising, in the most fulsome Oriental style possible, the lovely pearls, large diamonds, and jewellery, with which the Grand Princess had adorned her person, at the same time taking care to assure her that her taste in those matters had been the theme of general admiration in Paris and in London; and I expressed to her how great would be my delight if she would so far honour me as to let me see her casket of jewels.

“Alas! how little did she suspect that the brightest jewel she possessed, in my estimation, was her own lovely self! But I dare not for worlds have expressed those sentiments to her. I found out, however, at a later period, that I had been guilty of an act of very great indiscretion in asking Her Highness to show me her jewels. But she did not express any astonishment at my rudeness; for she was above taking offence at such a slight infringement of etiquette by a stranger. Therefore making a signal to an old Abyssinian slave, who probably held the office of ‘Keeper of the Jewels,’ she left the room immediately.

“She re-entered it shortly afterwards, accom-

panied by several other slaves of the 'same caste, who came loaded with an immense iron chest, covered over with red satin, richly spangled with gold. It was opened, and the jewels were taken out of the cases.

“ It is impossible to describe their magnificence and splendour! My sight was actually almost as much dazzled by looking at them as if I had been fixing my eyes upon a glaring midday tropical sun, for blindness seemed suddenly to have come upon me. Aladdin's wonderful lamp, I am quite sure, could never have given its fortunate possessor a sight of anything like those precious gems. Among them were pearls as large as pigeons' eggs, topazes as big as fowls' eggs, emeralds as large as pears, rubies, diamonds, and—I really cannot enumerate the names of half the other uncut precious stones; but there were quite enough of them to fill a bushel measure. How many countless millions of pounds sterling in jewels did that chest contain! Just picture to yourself a superb chain of diamonds, mounted transparently, all of the same size, without spot or blemish, and as

big as large Barcelona nuts. You can imagine a beautiful full-blown rose, with its blossoms, buds, and leaves all composed of diamonds; a very large one formed the heart of that queen of flowers, which was only fitted to have been plucked by a fairy from the garden of the Peri.

“Then I was shown a splendid waistband, about half a foot wide, and of good length, and so heavy that my hands trembled beneath its weight. Do you wish to know what rendered it so heavy? Well, my dear friends, it consisted of diamonds, and such diamonds, that it actually appeared as if it were one solid piece. It is utterly impossible for me to describe to you all the head-dresses, bracelets, clasps, rings, and smaller articles contained in that chest.

“As to the quantity of gold and less valuable precious stones, all of which would have made the eyes of a London belle of the season sparkle with delight, they were countless, although scarcely any slave in that Harem would have considered any of them worth her acceptance. I cannot omit stating the fact, however unpalatable such may be to the French nation,

that within that iron coffer were to be seen a superb crown of diamonds and several most costly trinkets which had formerly belonged to that amiable Empress Josephine, Napoleon the Great's consort; but by what chance they had become buried, as it were, within the precincts of an Egyptian Harem, I was unable to learn.

“The Grand Princess, at a latter period, I believe, presented them to one of the little Princesses, so that the costly Imperial crown passed away into the hands of a less worthy and less distinguished personage. Now it is the property of the Validè Princess of Egypt, and she wore it on her last visit to Constantinople. The Princess Nuzly hardly deigned to bestow a glance upon all these priceless treasures.

“‘Your Highness,’ inquired I, after having greatly extolled the beauty and workmanship of those wonders of art and nature, ‘does not often wear them?’

“‘Never,’ replied she, very curtly. ‘No, never; they are too heavy; and of what use would it be for me to adorn my person with them?’

“ Then there was a long pause : the silence at length became so painful, that my embarrassment was extreme, more especially as the Princess never removed her eyes from off my face.

“ Not daring to presume to break the silence, for fear I might be considered too loquacious, I endeavoured to conceal my perplexity, by smoking a little, and drinking coffee ; a slave, the same who had attended upon me on my entrance into the room (for each has her office allotted to her), that handsome Circassian, of whom I have already spoken, kept continually replenishing my pipe. .

“ ‘ I have been told that you have a great desire to visit my Harem ; your request shall be gratified.’ Upon a sign being given, I was *immediately surrounded by half-a-dozen slaves*, all equally pretty, who took me with them. They were preceded by an older one, who led me into the interior of the apartments.

“ The Mother of the Harem, who wore a large diamond necklace, appeared to have supreme command over all the others ; she was a funny jovial creature, as nearly all the old slaves

generally are; the young ones, on the contrary, appeared sad, with downcast eyes, like weak plants, which have been kept away from the sun, nay, even shut up from the fresh air, and doomed never to enjoy either liberty or love.

“ We ascended a marble double staircase, protected by wooden banisters, which gave access to the smaller apartments. The latter were composed of a great number of rooms, similar to each other, and separated by thick velvet and silk curtains, which, although considerably smaller than the others, were all furnished alike. A number of beautiful caskets, silver fountains, embroidered handkerchiefs, numerous vases of all shapes and sizes, a number of pretty little objects used by the women of the East, lay scattered about in all directions, which showed that these apartments were constantly occupied. In vain did I look around to find a book, not even an embroidery frame was to be seen; so that I naturally concluded that these distinguished personages considered it quite derogatory of them to do any single thing with their fingers: Thus it is almost impossible to conceive the *ennui* which

those lovely beings must endure in these gilded cages; a most dreadful monotony, because the windows looked out on to blank walls.

“Truth compels me to affirm, that most outrageous incongruities met the eye at every step we took in those splendid suites of rooms. Thus, for instance, scanty calico curtains were hung up at several windows, rush-bottom and cane chairs were placed side by side with some of the most beautiful inlaid drawing-room chairs, and the richest divans. The European chairs, in the Princess’s drawing-room, were anything but in keeping with the magnificent decorations of the apartment. And I considered myself lucky even in finding a marble floor, where I expected to see but deal planks.

“The bad taste of modernizing had even been carried so far, as to paint the freestone of the outside, as is now the case with the palace of His Highness the present Viceroy, at Old Cairo. There were no signs of any bedchambers, as the inmates sometimes slept in one room, and sometimes in another. Mattresses, which are encased in satin cases, and piled up in an empty chamber in the daytime, were laid down upon

the carpets, or on the top of long flat cushions, at night, on which the slaves sleep, ready dressed. Mosquito-curtains were suspended from hooks driven into the walls, over those occupied by the ladies of the Harem, which are removed in the daytime, when a bouquet of artificial flowers conceals the hooks from sight. There were no toilet-tables, or signs of any of the usual appendages; they sat upon the divans, and thus made their toilettes.

“The Princess's bath-room was large and well arranged. The first room, or entrance into it, was furnished with a plain divan, where Her Highness reclined on leaving the bath. Marble baths were fixed in the second, or bath-room; and in the third one were taps of hot and cold water, combs, brushes, essences, scents, and the usual requisites of an Oriental lady's toilette. All these apartments were lighted by cupolas from the top. On entering, I observed several long marble tables, on which were placed a collection of small slippers, and plain yellow leather *babouches* (half-boots), appropriated for the use of the slaves. The Princess did not accompany me in this inspection, but every

room showed signs of her personal surveillance, especially the bath-room, and consequently for me they had a peculiar attraction.

“ Having thus ran through the whole suite, I was conducted back again to the apartment which I had quitted with my *cicerone*. There I resumed my place near Her Highness, and my pipe was again replenished, and coffee handed to me, by the beautiful Circassian slave. A short time afterwards, three white slaves sat themselves down, just as adroitly as if they had been Europeans, at the further end of the room, upon rush-bottom chairs—yes, upon wretched-looking rush-bottom chairs! One of them took up the oud (a kind of guitar), the strings of which she struck with a piece of shell; another played a long flute, resembling in shape that which the ancient painters always sketch Cecilia as placing to her lips; while the third one passed her small hand upon a tar (similar to a tambourine, but rather larger), which she beat hurriedly. The whole of these three instruments were out of tune, so that it was extremely difficult to catch any harmony, for the whole produced a most dull and monotonous, but yet

not displeasing, sound. A fourth slave, the melody of whose voice Her Highness had much praised, ought to have sung to that accompaniment; but, I cannot tell how, the poor girl had been so imprudent as to catch a cold; so that it was utterly out of her power to sing a single note. She blushed deeply with confusion, trembled with fear, evidently foreseeing the storm that was about to break over her head; for she came and cast herself at the Princess's feet. How I longed to take her place! and kiss Nuzly's pretty little feet, to obtain pardon for the fault of which the slave had so unintentionally been guilty.

* "But what right had a slave to catch cold—to lose that voice which did not belong to her, but which was the sole property of her who had bought her? What an abominable crime! The haughty Princess, whom this untoward accident had greatly disconcerted, more especially as it had disarranged the fantasia that Her Highness had prepared for a foreign visitor, frowned most darkly at the prostrate girl; her eyebrows almost met, and her countenance assumed an expression of fiendish cruelty. Then well did I

see that she was a fitting consort for the Nero-like Defterdar. 'May thy voice,' said she to the poor slave, in a threatening tone, as she kicked her from her, 'remain for ever dumb!' She clapped her hands twice; then two eunuchs appeared, and led away the poor innocent victim of her malevolence.

"Whether it was my imagination or reality I know not, but it seemed to me that I soon after heard stifled cries and a cracking of the *courbache* (or native whip, made from strips of buffalo hides); but those mournful shrieks were soon drowned by the discordant sounds of the instruments. The countenance of the Princess, which had borne such a sombre aspect, now appeared all radiant with smiles.

"After the concert was terminated, then the ballet began. Four dancers glided into the apartment, holding copper *saganets* (castanets), from which vibrated a complete rush of sonorous notes. All four of them had recently been sent as a present to the Princess from Constantinople. They were attired in red silk trousers, trimmed with gold, and elegant blue damask jackets, open at the chest, and which set off their fine

figures to the greatest advantage. Their black raven hair hung down their backs in long curls, like that of the other slaves; but one of them was quite fair, and her hair was cut in the Savoyard fashion. The most beautiful of the four, a charming creature of about twenty years of age, led the dance *à la mode* Taglioni. Nothing could possibly surpass the agility, nimbleness, and grace of all her attitudes; her whole contour was the personification of elegance itself. Her head was thrown back, her small mouth half open, the eyes half closed, as she bounded about the room like a graceful gazelle; and every time that her artistic enthusiasm led her in front of one of the immense mirrors which reached from the ceiling down to the floor, she glanced coquettishly at her own figure—most assuredly excusable in so lovely a creature; for it was impossible to conceive a more exquisite specimen of feminine beauty and symmetry.

“The ballet was the ‘lion’ of the fantasia, and its representation took place amidst a breathless silence, only broken at intervals by the clinking of the *saganets*, and it occupied a whole hour.

“The Princess scarcely bestowed any attention upon an amusement which was no novelty to her, and with which she had entertained me as being a foreigner of distinction. As Her Highness reclined indolently on her divan, her red lips were placed from time to time to the beautiful amber mouthpiece of her *chibouk*, from which she puffed forth light clouds of perfumed smoke. Occasionally she seemed as if lost in deep thought; but those piercing dark orbs of hers never took their glance off me; and even when they were withdrawn, I still felt their fascinating influence upon me, for the very marrow in my bones appeared to become frozen within me.

“The slaves who were unemployed stood at the end of the saloon, but many of them kept constantly moving about; and from the number that I saw that day, I should think that Her Highness must have had not less than a hundred white, and a much greater number of black ones. Some of them were not more than six years old. While the dancing was going on, several of them were employed in handing us violet, jasmine, and rose sherbet, with various

kinds of confectionery, but especially that of *Rahat-loukoum* (so much prized by the Turks, and which had been sent to Her Highness from Constantinople, where it is made in perfection), which was served up in beautifully embossed silver vases.

“Still that lovely, tall, graceful Circassian kept kneeling and handing me sweetmeats in silver-gilt spoons, and sherbet in large gold cups encrusted with diamonds. I drank it very slowly, which gave me an opportunity of gazing upon her beautiful features; and when I had drunk it, she presented me with a fine Indian muslin napkin, fringed round with a very deep border of gold and silk, of which a European lady would have made a head-dress for the opera or masquerade. During which, and, in fact, all the time my visit lasted, Abyssinian slaves, with their white ivory teeth, kept constantly fanning me with large ostrich plumes.

“I think I have already mentioned that some other strangers came to visit the Grand Princess during the time that I was with her. Two Coptic ladies, dressed in deep mourning, mother and daughter, the former a widow, passed

through the saloon, with slow, theatrical carriage, like two spectres. As soon as they reached Her Highness, they knelt down, kissed her slipper, and then sat themselves down at the bottom of the room, near the slaves. Ten minutes after they had seated themselves, they returned, faced the Princess, and again went through the same salutation; after which they retired with the same solemnity as they had entered.

“The Princess did not even deign to exchange words with them; consequently she had not the trouble of replying to any questions, and the most deathlike silence followed that ceremonial introduction. This is the manner in which all official visits are paid in the East. My reception, as I have already described, was of a very different character; but then I was a foreigner, a stranger of rank, in the East; for here, as elsewhere, such individuals are always received with marks of great distinction.

“Although my visit had been prolonged the greater part of the day, still it seemed to me but a second, and I was quite delighted to think

that my adventure had hitherto been so successful. Everything has its end, but especially lucky adventures.

“At length the hour of departure arrived. Accordingly, I submitted with the best grace possible to the final ceremony, which terminates all visits to distinguished personages in the East. Two slaves advanced towards me; one held in her hands an incense-burner, (in which was burning the wood of aloes,) with which she wafted the smoke into my nostrils, and perfumed me as if I had been a holy person; the other held a small silver urn, pierced with small holes, filled with rose-water, which she sprinkled over my whole person.

“I received this double attention in the most impassible manner possible, and thus, anointed with strong perfumes, I slightly touched with the tips of my fingers the Princess’s hand, and then put them respectfully to my lips; which is the mode in which persons of rank take leave of distinguished Orientals. The Princess bowed gracefully to me; then rising up all at once, just as I had reached the door, she advanced towards me:—

“‘Stop,’ said she to me, ‘I must show you my garden. And I will accompany you myself.’

“ We passed through the reception-room, then descended a staircase, passed through a hall into a beautiful kiosk, but as empty and unadorned as a Dutch Protestant church, but delightfully cooled by a large marble fountain, which played in the centre. Then we passed into the garden. A whole troop of eunuchs preceded and also followed us; while the group of black and white slaves kept at a respectful distance. I remained by the side of the Princess, whose long robe trained along the ground. Her Highness took hold of my hand as we descended the staircase, and, lucky was it for me that I had a very small hand, totally unlike that of a man, or else it would have betrayed me.

“ While I was seated on the divan, I maintained my new character extremely well; but when I began to walk, I experienced considerable embarrassment, and although I possessed the features, the height, and even a most feminine voice, as I have already explained,

still I had not the shuffling deportment. I endeavoured, as well as I could, to take short steps, so as to avoid treading upon my elegant long velvet dress, which I held up, as a sapper does his leathern apron.

“ Fortunately, the Orientals, being naturally of sedentary habits, do not shuffle along very quickly, unless when in a passion, and then they glide about as swiftly and noiselessly as serpents; and I imagine that there could not be anything so peculiar in my walk, awkward as it must have been, to have excited the slightest suspicion of my sex. The advanced guard of eunuchs, and that of the slaves who followed us, kept at such a respectful distance from us that it was utterly impossible for them to overhear our conversation; we, however, maintained an interminable silence, but it would have been all the same if we had been conversing with each other.

“ The gardens, into which we had entered, might be denominated very beautiful; but I confess that I was so dreadfully agitated, that I am quite unable to give any description of them; I was so entirely occupied in taking

short steps, and so fearful lest I should catch a sunstroke, that I did not bestow the slightest attention upon the flowers, flower-beds, or fountains which were scattered about and which played into marble basins. All that I remember is, that we walked for some time along, very slowly, under a very shady avenue of sycamore-trees, and where I must have been least noticed. •

“The silence that both I and the Princess observed towards each other at length became unbearable. So at last I took upon myself to break it, and began to praise, in as pure Turkish as I was master of, the perfume of the flowers, which I had neither noticed nor smelt; the gentle murmuring of the waters, that I had not listened to, and was proceeding, in the same strain when the Princess interrupted me rather sharply, without the least allusion to the effusions of my poetical rhapsody:—

“‘I hope that you do not for a moment imagine I am your dupe?’ said she, in a curt manner, at the same time letting fall my hand, which she had held in hers up to that

moment. 'If my husband, Defterdar, whose anger knows no bounds, had seen you, and had but the slightest inkling of your audacity in thus presenting yourself before me, he would have had you empaled upon the spot and most assuredly you would have deserved it.'

"'I flatter myself,' said I, 'that I have shown you, and I will prove to you again shortly, that I possess no fear, and that I am no coward.'

"Nevertheless, I cannot but confess that those words gave me such an electric shock, that the whole of my limbs shivered and trembled violently. The bare idea of empalement is far from being agreeable at any time. I was so thunderstruck that I remained speechless. Fortunately, the Princess gave me no time to offer any reply.

"'But luckily for you,' replied she, in a more subdued voice, 'my terrible husband is not at home, and I am as much mistress of my own actions as a woman can possibly be in any Musulman's country. Adventurous mortals are far from being displeasing to me; I admire courage, no matter what form it takes; even if it borders

on temerity or rashness. If then you are as brave and bold as the enterprise which you have now undertaken makes me give you credit for, you will come to the *Mogreb* to-morrow, to the Elfy Gate; a tall negro, dressed in red, will pass you, touch you on the left shoulder, as he walks along. Follow that slave if you wish to know anything more.'

"Saying which she again took hold of my hand as if nothing had happened, and led me on without uttering another syllable to the foot of the staircase. There she took leave of me in the most cordial and graceful manner imaginable, saying, in a loud tone, so that all present might overhear her, that she was exceedingly grateful at having had the pleasure of conversing with such a ladylike specimen of my countrywomen, all of whom she trusted resembled me both in manners and habits.

"Preceded by the eunuchs, and followed by the slaves, I was led to the outer gate of the palace with the same ceremony as had been observed on my arrival. A devil of a tall black, armed with a most formidable-looking

courbache, was present as sentry at the gate as I took my departure, for fear lest any of the slaves should take it into their heads to take French-leave and quit the palace. I propitiated that sovereign of Egypt, Prince Baksheesh, by handing the Grand Eunuch several purses of gold coins. Entering my carriage, perhaps a little more hastily than ladies general do, I was driven straight to the residence of my charming friend, the lovely Levantine, in whose clothes I was dressed; there I exchanged my habiliments and put on my own attire. She had been very uneasy during my absence as to the result of my daring and dangerous exploit. I assured her that my success had even been far greater than I had anticipated, and that I had satisfied my curiosity very easily. But true it is, that I did not think it prudent to let her into the secret of the manner in which my stratagem had terminated. When I say terminated, I am in error, for it was scarcely in its zenith, and the actual *finale* of it was at that moment quite enveloped in mystery.

“You are not young it is true, but you were so once; consequently you will believe me

when I affirm that I never closed my eyes the whole of the following night. My brain kept thinking of all the good and bad reports which I had heard about the Princess Nuzly, and my mind became extremely uneasy. Was it really a meeting or a snare? Was I to be the hero of some good fortune or the victim of vengeance? My position appeared to be of a most embarrassing nature, especially as I well knew the reputed character of that Princess, and the dreadful things which were recounted of her. Good fortune does not shield us from vengeance, nor vengeance from our enjoyment of it; the question was, if it were possible to avoid the one and to enjoy the other. My mind was employed in trying to solve that difficult enigma. The finale of my adventure, however, will give you a key to the solution at which I arrived. You must also bear in mind that I was then only twenty years of age.

“ Early in the morning I repaired to Khan-el-Khalyly; there I purchased at the shop of one Barakat, who knew me intimately, an excellent Damascus scimitar, as fine as a hair, and

which was so highly tempered that it would have cut an eider-down pillow in half. This I concealed beneath my cloak,—for I now wore my male habiliments—this was my life protector; and placing a six-barrelled revolver in my pocket, I walked up and down the Mogreb in front of the Elfy Gate.

“It was not long before the negro clad in red made his appearance and touched me on the shoulder as he passed. As that gate of Cairo is one of the most frequented, I did not attract the curiosity of any of the passers-by as I turned round and followed him. This I did and continued to do at about twenty paces distance, still keeping him always in sight. Walking at first in the direction of Boulac, my guide soon proceeded along a path to the left, and after having taken several windings which always led nearer to the banks of the Nile, he stopped short, which I did also, at the foot of a high wall which seemed to block up our passage.

“As night had suddenly closed in I did not at first perceive the small low door, which had all the appearance of being the postern gate of

some old castle, of which the negro possessed the key. While he was in the act of stooping down, for he was full six feet high, I scanned the height of the wall, and kept thinking whether, in case of need, it were possible for me to scale it by dint of a gigantic feat. That is what is called, in military parlance, taking a reconnoitre in case of emergency. I was just on the point of measuring it more accurately with my eye, not having any instruments with me, when the tall slave interrupted my calculations by touching me on the shoulder as a token that the door was open. I crossed the threshold with a firm step, at the same time feeling that my revolver was safe in my pocket, and my Damascus blade by my side. The slave quickly shut the door after me, and I continued to follow him. He passed across a long garden, which I shall not stop to describe, for the best of all reasons that the darkness of the night prevented me from being able to discern how it was laid out. My guide maintained an imperturbable silence.

“I really believe (may God forgive me!) that he was a mute, and I will not swear but that he

was deaf also, for he did not reply to a single question which I put to him. The grating of our footsteps echoed on the hard sandy paths of the avenues as we passed along. After making several detours, we at length reached the door of a kiosk concealed beneath some large trees, which must have formed a most grateful retreat in the daytime. My mute of a guide did not enter therein, but pushed me rather than introduced me into it, and there I was within that mysterious retreat alone in the dark, and without being able to grope my way. My first care was to find out my position as best I could. All that I was enabled to discover was that I trod on a thick carpet, strewn with the softest cushions, and that the hangings were of silk. It was surrounded with a large divan. I had just finished taking this inventory of the *penates* when I felt something clasp my neck. Do not be alarmed, my friends, it was not the classic silken cord of the mutes of the Seraglio: it was only the two soft arms of a lovely woman.

“This mode of reception was adopted to banish all my fears. I returned the embrace

as any young man would naturally have done, without waiting to identify the person of the individual who had thus honoured me with a private interview, and my approaches were returned with corresponding alacrity. I was not long before I knew perfectly well who my unknown Venus was.

“Now I must beg that you will allow me to draw the curtain upon the scene which followed.

“The night passed away as rapidly as if it had been but a few seconds; the stars were still shining most brilliantly, when that awful word, ‘Farewell,’ was pronounced by the sweetest lips I had ever pressed, and by a woman who was much more mistress of her own actions than I was of mine. I felt half inclined to have translated for her edification that beautiful balcony scene in Shakspeare’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’ into the purest Turkish that I could command; but she appeased my regrets by breathing into my ear the fond hope that I would come again to-morrow, at the same hour, and in the same manner; and then, embracing me, the lovely phantom vanished, in the twinkling of an eye, like an ethereal being.

“ I did not remain long alone ; a heavy hand was placed upon my shoulder and I hastily retreated. My safety, however, was not yet secured. I was not long in discovering that, instead of returning by the way he had conducted me, my guide, still the same black, dressed in red, took me in quite a different direction. He walked straight towards the Nile, which lay before us, ‘as the creaking of the *sakias*, ‘water-wheels,’ confirmed.

“ ‘ Good,’ said I, as my heart beat with its usual promptitude. ‘ This is like having passed a quarter of an hour as Rabelais did. Now comes the forfeit. I am doomed to pay for the happiness I have enjoyed.’ And all the dreadful tales which I had heard of the baseness and treachery of the Princess Nuzly presented themselves to my imagination.

“ When a collegian my tutors taught me to believe that Queen Cleopatra possessed such charms, that many thought themselves happy in passing an evening alone with her even at the sacrifice of their lives. I remembered that I was in Egypt, and if I had not quitted the presence of a Queen, I had at least left the

arms of a Princess, who, if she were not equally beautiful, seductive, and powerful, still was quite as inhuman. The only difference was that I had not given her any right to take possession of my person, and most assuredly I was not fool enough to sacrifice it for the love I bore her beauteous orbs.

“But how and by what means was I to escape from the snare into which she had entrapped me? This second Margaret of Burgundy’s black Orsini was six feet high, his frame Herculean, and I should have stood but little chance had I wrestled with such an antagonist. That Goliath would have crushed me with his thumb, and I possessed not the prowess of David.

“It is true that I was armed with one of the keenest of Damascus blades ever made, and a six-barrelled revolver; but then the report of fire-arms would have brought a legion of eunuchs to his rescue, and as to the scimitar, well-tempered as it was said to be, I placed no confidence in it, as I had never used such a warlike weapon before. If my blow had missed I was a dead man; and yet I was obliged to adopt some plan; time pressed, or else in a few short mo-

ments all would be over' with me, and I should never again drive or walk along the Cascine at Florence.

“The creaking of the *sakias* became more distinct; the Nile was evidently not far from us. The first dawn of the day, which gives such a very indistinct light in the East, hardly allowed me to distinguish any more than the lofty wall beyond the trees, which on that as well as on the other sides encircled the garden. Soon afterwards I saw the gate which opened on to the river and you may rest assured that I was taken aback when I saw that it was guarded by three tall phantoms, three devils of blacks, placed there most unquestionably to seize hold of me and to cast me into the Nile, like a kitten, as they had done many a European before.

“At the sight of those formidable opponents, I resolved to put into execution the project I had been meditating. Slackening my pace, I took advantage of an angle of masonry-work, which concealed me from observation, to rush upon my guide with the agility of a man who struggles for his life, and to plunge my

Damascus blade up to its very hilt into his body. My trial stroke proved a *chef-d'œuvre*. It must have pierced his heart, as the poor devil dropped down dead instantaneously without uttering a groan. I then rifled his pockets, expecting to find there the key of the gate by which I had entered the grounds. I was fortunate enough to put my hand upon it, and, leaving others to bury his body, I turned about quickly and ran along as fast as my legs could carry me.

“In a few minutes I reached the opposite wall; the same the height of which I had taken the precaution to measure. On arriving there I found to my dismay that I had overrated my gymnastic abilities, and was baffled. A squirrel could not have bounded over it. I was then obliged to seek for the gate, which I was unable to discover. Was it on the right hand or the left? I could not tell. By mere chance I proceeded to the right, that side appearing the most likely; and, Heaven be praised! I had hardly gone thirty steps before I found the gate which had been anxiously sought for.

“Scarcely, however, had I put the key into

the lock, when three tall black eunuchs, who had concealed themselves behind the opposite door, and who had given chase after me, came suddenly upon me from different directions. They were the same three eunuchs whom I had seen mounting guard at the door to which the defunct negro was proceeding. The first one who approached me brandished a tremendous large sabre, a blow from which would have cleft my body in twain, but the first ball from my revolver laid him prostrate on the ground. It had, however, only broken his arm, but that was quite enough for the moment, as it was his right arm, and his sabre fell from it. That slight chastisement for his insolence produced a most salutary effect upon his companions, who thought that they would receive a similar correction, as they were also armed with formidable scimitars. As they drew back I passed through the door, and in so doing fired at them two farewell shots, without stopping to see what mischief I had done. But it is most probable that they were killed, as I proceeded quietly on my way, and reached my own house safe and sound before sunrise.

“I assure you, however, that I hastened to quit Cairo as soon as possible, as I knew not what might be the result of my adventure, especially as I had killed a eunuch. But it was passed over in silence, for people in Egypt are not so particular when a murder is committed as in Europe. The East is the land of silence as it is also of mystery.

“Soon afterwards I proceeded on my journey to Jerusalem, and on my return to Cairo I called upon my charming Levantine friend, when she informed me that during my pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, H. H. the Grand Princess had invited her to see her; on which occasion she had treated her most graciously, and made numerous inquiries about me, ‘her amiable friend,’ as Her Highness termed me. The Grand Princess, who had no wish that the adventures in the Harem and the Kiosk should be bruited about, very quietly pocketed the trick, which had been played her, and nothing more was said about it.”

Then I pondered in my own mind, how many lovers, in that apartment in which I then stood, had paid the penalty of their audacity by

being plunged into the Nile, or allured to meet a watery grave, perhaps beneath those very windows from which I then beheld the lovely moon shining so brightly, and had thus been sent to their "last account with all their imperfections on their head!" It was natural that my imagination should dwell upon such thoughts; not because the old Frenchwoman had related the above incidents to me, on whose veracity I might have placed some doubt, had I not heard the ladies of the Harem and slaves repeat to me many a time and oft similar histories not only of the Grand Princess, but of other Egyptian Harem celebrities, that had made

"My hair stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

which fully proved to me what a mysterious abode a Harem is.

CHAPTER V.

THE next morning I was awoke at four o'clock by the three Germans, the laundrymaid, needle-woman, and cook (the latter of whom had only arrived at Gh zire a short time previous to our departure, and had not as yet been able to enter on her duties, there being no kitchen in that Harem, or any *batterie de cuisine* for her use) knocking at the door of my room, as they had only just arrived from Cairo.

Upon making inquiries of them, it appeared that they did not leave the Harem at Ghezire until nine o'clock at night, although their beds, &c. had been taken away from them at the time all the others were packed and sent away. I learned that they had also been treated most shamefully; and had their fellow-countryman, Mr. C. H. (his Royal Highness's civil aid-de-

camp), been present when they rushed into my chamber, he would have learned how little they were disposed "to accommodate themselves to *such* circumstances," pressing though they were.

Getting up, I hastily enveloped myself in my flannel dressing-gown, unbolted my door, and gave them admittance. I shall never forget their gesticulations when they looked at my pallet on the floor, and the large empty space around. They held up their hands in perfect amazement: "*Mein Gott! Mein Gott! was muszen wir thun?*" "My God! My God! what must we do?" The despair, the horror, which was depicted on their countenances I shall never forget. They all burst into tears, and cried most bitterly. I endeavoured to soothe their feelings, but to no purpose.

Then I inquired of them why they had come there to disturb me (knowing that I was powerless to help them), instead of staying in their own room? You may guess my surprise when they told me that they were all ordered to take up their quarters in my room; which, in short, was to be *not* the hospital *as yet*, but the

European ward. Now I really became annoyed ; for I could not possibly imagine for a moment that the English governess in the family of a Viceregal prince of Egypt ought to submit to such an indignity as to have her chamber turned into a "nightly refuge" for Ismael Pacha's domestics. Thanks to the legislators of English jurisprudence, a poor governess is not a menial (drudge though she too often is made to be) : and one thing is quite certain, and that was that no English family ever treated a Prussian institutrice as a domestic servant ; although, had I not battled against it, the Prussian *millionaires* in Egypt would have had me served and held in no better estimation than a slave !

Well, what could I do for those poor creatures, who had not had food between their lips from the hour I had left Ghezire on the previous day ? Nothing—absolutely nothing ! No propitiation on the altar of that all-powerful sovereign ruler of Egypt, Prince Baksheesh (for my heart bled for them, and I tried it, in spite of the Princess's orders), at that hour in the morning, could procure them a crust.

I told them that they could lie upon the

divan, but that it was very damp. They asked—nay, they positively cried to me for bread (hated Englishwoman as I was), poor helpless creatures! and yet the laundrymaid, who spoke Turkish very well, and had been in Egypt much longer than myself, ought to have taken the precaution, as I did, to have had their breakfast and dinner before they left. True, I had only been enabled to obtain the former meal, but then I found that a great support to me in my present state of health.

I then despatched them down to the eunuchs, with baksheesh in their hands, in quest of some refreshment; and soon afterwards they returned, bringing with them some Arab bread, and a small tin-pot of coffee, of which they partook most voraciously, after which they threw themselves down upon the divan, damp as it was, and fell fast asleep.

Rising at five o'clock (for I could not sleep after the Germans had disturbed me), I summoned the slave, Zenana, to take away my bed into the bed store-room (for it will be recollected that in every Harem there is such a repository); then partook of my breakfast, which consisted of

Arab bread, as no European had yet been provided for me, and several *sindjans* of coffee.

Having heard the salutes fired announcing the arrival of the Viceroy, I ordered the head-nurse to dress the Grand Pacha; and, being desired by their Highnesses the Princesses (who had arrived late at night, in company with the Validè Princess) to take the little Prince, early in the morning, to visit his illustrious *Baba*, I walked across the courtyard into the palace of *Ras-el-Tin*, "Cape of Figs."

As we entered the grand entrance, it reminded me at that time of the floral arcade adjoining the Italian Opera, at Covent Garden, except that it was much more diminutive in size, and narrower in compass. It was now all arranged for the grand ball, the "lion" of the season, which the Viceroy was about to give to the Turkish *noblesse* and the *élite* of the European population of Alexandria and Cairo, who were assembled there on account of the excessive heat at the Capital.

The basement was covered with sawdust, over which was laid a handsome Brussels carpet. Coloured globular lamps were suspended from the glass roof, which was concealed from the eye

of the spectator by white lace and crimson silk curtains, interlaced and looped up together in the centre by a crimson silk rosette, in the centre of which was placed artificial bouquets of flowers. On each side, raised in the sawdust floor, was an imitation *parterre* of blooming exotics, the fragrance of whose perfume was delightfully grateful to the senses.

A great variety of small coloured illumination lamps were hung in festoons suspended from the gilded pillars. Large, handsomely-gilded mirrors hung down the sides, in which the exotics were reflected. At the bottom, on each side, were two pure white marble fountains, whose waters, as they played, formed representations of peacocks, with their superb tails. Around them were placed variegated evergreens and prettily-constructed rockeries. Over the door of the entrance to the palace hung a very handsome crimson cloth curtain, embroidered with gold crescents, and fringed with a deep gold border. At the top of the door were placed the Sultan's arms, and two standards with gilt spears.

We then descended two marble steps, which

led us into a small marble-paved hall, which, owing to the large orange-trees and shrubs and exotics it contained, presented a very sombre appearance, but which, when lighted up by means of the superb lustre that hung suspended from the ceiling, which was dome-shaped and most beautifully painted and gilded, gave it a truly fairylike *coup d'œil*.

It was such an entrance into a palace as the polishing of Aladdin's wonderful lamp might really have produced, but not outvied; in short, an Arabian Night-like creation. It was covered with mirrors which reached from the ceiling down to the floor, between all of which hung white lace and crimson silk curtains, which gave them the appearance of windows.

Upon numerous gilt brackets stood white marble vases, filled with moss and artificial flowers. Between the evergreens stood several marble statues, some bearing coloured globes in their hands, and others holding bouquets of flowers. Here and there were placed gilded chairs, the cushions being covered with crimson velvet.

The effect, as the spectator entered, was

extremely pleasing, and the gentle trickling of the water from the fountains in it produced a most delightful sensation.

Then we passed into an immense marble-paved hall, having raised banks all around it covered with beautiful velvet-looking green moss, interspersed with natural and artificial flowers most tastefully blended together. The walls were hung with large mirrors which reached halfway down them and rested on the raised banks, and a hanging terrace of flowers ran round the apartment on the top of the mirrors. On the banks were placed vases of the rarest exotics, interspersed with statues, on whose heads were placed rustic carved baskets of blooming flowers, each holding in the hand coloured globular lamps. Down the entire centre of the room ran a huge bank covered with moss interspersed with flowers, creepers, and orange-trees, amidst which, dotted about, stood numerous statues, and which divided the apartment into a double promenade, at each end of which was a pure white marble fountain, bordered with flowers. The ceiling was magnificently painted, surmounted with a deep gilt

beading. The room was lighted with twelve huge silver candelabras, fixed in the sides of the walls. Here and there rout-seats were scattered about, all covered with crimson velvet to match the hangings, which were of crimson silk.

Then we proceeded into another apartment similarly arranged, but having a double marble staircase covered with fine Brussels carpeting. The banisters were richly gilded. On the first landing stood two statues holding coloured globular lamps in their hands, and a basket of flowers on their heads. Behind them were superb gilt mirrors, reaching from the top of the ceiling, which was also richly gilded, and elegantly painted, down to the floor. The walls were covered with rich crimson satin-paper, ornamented with a broad gilt beading both at top and bottom. All up both the sides were placed boxes of blooming flowers.

Then we ascended seven stairs, and soon reached the top of the second landing, on which stood two veiled, life-sized statues, holding gilt branch candelabras in their hands. There the rooms branched off right and left,

but I and the Grand Pacha first proceeded into those facing the staircase.

The first apartment that we entered was an immense round drawing-room, which commanded a most extensive marine view. The floor was of highly-polished brown and white marqueterie, the ceiling beautifully painted, having in its centre a battle scene, commemorating one of Mehemet Ali's victories, and very pretty vignettes of other warlike engagements in squares. A magnificent lustre was suspended from the centre. The walls were covered with crimson satin-paper, against which hung several rich cut-glass lustres. The hangings were of crimson silk and white lace, looped up with heavy bullion cords and tassels. The chairs and sofas were of ormolu and gold, covered with crimson satin. Mirrors hung from the ceiling down to the floor. In the centre stood a large round mosaic-table on gilded legs.

Opening a door on the left we passed into the Blue Drawing-room, furnished in a similar manner, but the hangings and furniture were of sky-blue satin. This led us into the Pink

Drawing-room, the hangings and furniture of which were of pink and white satin.

Opening a door we entered the Dining-room, a very heavy-looking apartment with green velvet hangings and black ebony furniture covered with velvet to correspond.

In the centre stood a long highly-polished ebony dining-table. The floor was of the same material, in black and white chequers, and as slippery as glass. Thence we proceeded into another apartment, similarly arranged, only with crimson hangings, and the coverings of the furniture to match. In the centre stood an inlaid mosaic-table, with gilt legs, and here and there stood several console-tables. The flooring was arranged in red and white chequers.

Passing out of it we entered the Vice-roy, Ismael Pacha's, bedchamber. The walls were covered with plain white satin-paper, with a roseate hue. The ceiling was painted and gilt; the flooring was arranged in brown and white chequers, with a strip of Brussels carpet down the centre, and also across the bottom, at the foot of the sofa, the frame of

which was gilt, and the squabs were covered with red-figured silk.

On the left-hand side stood the gilt iron bedstead, with rods and poles to correspond. The hangings consisted of crimson Persian silk mosquito-curtains. At the foot were placed handsome thick Persian rugs. The bed was arranged *à la Européenne*, with bolsters, pillows, and covered with the usual linen. The Turks and Egyptians never use but one wadded coverlet, and nothing else on their beds, the coverlet being lined with thin white calico, which, when dirty, is unpicked, replaced by a clean one, while the soiled one is sent to be washed.

On the right hand stood a black ebony chest of drawers, with a cabinet to correspond, and those two articles, with a few chairs, constituted all the furniture. True it is, however, that the Viceroy does not reside much at this Palace, as he is a Prince who cannot endure to be annoyed with State affairs, and prefers spending his time on board his yacht, steaming up and down the Nile, as then he is free from the unwelcome visits of those "other eighteen

Princes who govern Egypt," whose calls are not always of the most agreeable kind.

Leading out of this room, we entered the dressing-room, then the bath-room, the floors of both of which were of marqueterie. In it were two large marble baths, one being for fresh, and the other for sea water. Facing these, were the suite of apartments used by the Ministers of State, and Ismaél Pacha's suite.

CHAPTER VI.

LEAVING these apartments we passed along a marqueterie corridor, of brown and white chequers, and entered that memorable apartment, in which Mehemet Ali, in March 1811, determined on the extirpation of the Mamelukes, whose powerful influence had thwarted his plans of aggrandisement.

It was an immense room, supported in the centre by three colossal green agate pillars, against the first of which stood a double marble fountain; round the second pillar was placed a tier-ed conversational sofa. At the third pillar was a beautiful cascade, where the water fell trickling over the rocks, interspersed with large white and yellow water-lilies, ice-plants, violets, and beautiful ferns, amidst which was that

species called "*Maiden's hair*," all then in blossom, which had originally been brought from the Island of Arran, and numerous other exotics, in full blossom.

Along one side was a gallery formed by twelve small white Corinthian pillars, on which were alternately placed silver candelabras and vases. Round the bottoms of them were ranged baskets of flowers, the tendrils being twirled round the pillars in imitation of creepers entwining themselves around forest-trees. The gallery was entirely festooned with yellow silk and white lace curtains, having in their centres bouquets of flowers with large blue satin streamers hanging down from them. This apartment extended along the whole *façade* of the palace on one side, and contained about twelve immense wide windows, all looking on to the Mediterranean. It forms the Viceregal promenade in the winter season, and here it was that Mehemet Ali gave his Kchia Bey (Mohammed Laz) his instructions for the decimation of the Mamelukes, which took place after he had at Cairo invested his son Tussoom (Tussam) Pacha with the command of

the Egyptian army, when on the eve of its departure for Arabia.

On the left-hand side of it stood a yellow satin sofa and a few chairs covered with the same material. It also contained two large mirrors, one placed at the top and the other at the bottom, in which were reflected both the cascade and fountain,* on each side of which hung the full-length portraits of the renowned founder of the present Viceregal dynasty, and his cruel and subtle son, or adopted son (for his parentage has never to this day been clearly explained), Ibrahim Pacha, the present Viceroy's father, both allowed by all old Turks and Egyptians to be most striking likenesses. One thing is certain, and that is, that they are beautifully executed.

It is a most regal apartment, replete with highly interesting historical reminiscences; and as I stood therein, holding by the hand *my* prince, the grandson of that remarkable man, I could not help looking intently at the child, and wondering what his future destiny will be. There he stood, that little "dot of humanity," the heir to almost countless wealth, (whose

guardians, in case of his illustrious Baba's death prior to his majority, I hope may not be any of the clique belonging to the Prussian Jews' fraternity,) endowed with talents which if properly cultivated would carve for him a name in the annals of Egyptian history, inheriting most unfortunately the combined vices of the founder of his dynasty and those of his grand-sire, and spoilt, petted, humoured, and inflated with pride.

His probable chance of succeeding to the Viceroyalty is at the present time very remote; but the Viceroy and the Valide Princess would, or I am much mistaken; both give every *para* they possess to every slave and dependant in their suite, whether Turk, Moslem, or Christian, and shed, too, the last drop of blood which flows in their veins, if they could but induce Her Sovereign Majesty to nominate the Grand Pacha to be the next Viceroy (*Gouverneur de l'Egypte*). Then like another Jacob he would supplant his brother (but not by the same mother), Mustapha Pacha. It has been, and still is, "their thought by day, their dream by night;" and presently, when I come to describe

the visit of the Cræsus-like viceregal family in 1864 to Sultan Abdul Aziz "the Poor," my readers will regard with peculiar interest the following clause in the Firman of Investiture, dated May 22nd, 1841, under which His Highness the Pacha of Egypt rules—

"Henceforth, when the post shall be vacant, the Government of Egypt shall descend in a direct line, from the elder to the elder in the male race among thy sons and grandsons. As regards their nomination, that shall be made by my Sublime Porte."

Continuing the historical reminiscences of this gallery, I must add that it was from that spot that Mehemet Ali reviewed that formidable fleet which he sent forth to the Morea, and which afterwards almost rotted in the roadstead, when he had nurtured in his ambitious mind the vain idea that he would be able to make himself the independent sovereign of Egypt.

On the right hand are three doors, the first of which leads into a very pretty and tastefully-arranged boudoir. It was formerly the favourite cabinet of Mehemet Ali, and here he held his private Council. This consisted of his wife, who died at Constantinople in 1864,

in her sixty-seventh year, at the palace of her daughter Zeneb Hanum, wife of Kiamil Pacha, President of the Grand Council, to whom she bequeathed her almost unrivalled collection of jewels and all her vast estates in Egypt, and the beautiful, wanton, gifted, but cruel Princess Nuzly, who acted as her aged father's *Bach-Kiatibi*, "Private Secretary."

Here it was that the better and cooler judgment of this able Turkish female politician often checked many a dire scheme of her ambitious parent.

The second was fitted up as a buffet on the occasion of the grand state ball on the 8th of June, 1864; and here it was that the *Kopuks*, "dogs" of Christians, drank freely of those choice wines which the quondam Crimean sutlers knew so well how to select, and to charge for too. At the time we visited it, it was arranged for that forthcoming *fête*. In the centre stood a long table; in each corner a case of stuffed birds. Chairs covered with plain crimson morocco were placed in a row down each side.

We then proceeded to the ball-room, a circular apartment, which is well lighted by a

handsome stained-glass cupola. The floor was of red and white marqueterie, highly polished. The walls were covered with white satin-paper, having a roseate hue. White lace and pink silk curtains hung in festoons from the cupola, fastened with bouquets and white and pink silk rosettes, having long streamers attached. The windows were similarly arranged. Most magnificent cut-glass lustres hung down from each side of the cupola, and several lustre candelabras were fixed to the walls. A semicircular orchestra, covered with crimson cloth, occupied one-half of the circumference, which, as well as the whole of the apartment, was decorated with vases filled with real and artificial flowers.

The artist who had fitted up these apartments for this state ball, happened to be in the Palace as we were making our tour of inspection, and he presented both myself and H. H. the Grand Pacha with several artificial flowers and bouquets of most fragrant exotics.

Here it was, that on the 8th of June, 1864, the Viceroy Ismael Pacha gave the grand state ball. On that occasion the whole line of the route leading from the Place de Consuls to

the Palace was most brilliantly illuminated with thousands of flambeaux, and the police arrangements were admirably conducted. My pen-drawing must necessarily fall very short of the splendid *tout ensemble* of the fête, *par excellence*, of the Alexandrian season. Still, I cannot but observe, that as the powerful rays of those torches fell upon the well-appointed equipages which rolled along to the festive scene, they brought out in bold relief the animated countenances of their fair elegantly-dressed female occupants, whose hair was ornamented with many a lovely spray and brilliant tiara of diamonds, which formed a most becoming addition to their well-selected yet variegated coloured costumes and elaborate toilettes.

I have not of late years amused myself by a perusal of any of the numerous beautifully illustrated editions of the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments' which have been published, although I must plead guilty to having been a resident within those "gilded cages," where such are narrated nightly, and believed in most scrupulously. Yet, as I gazed on the busy turmoil (for on that day I took no official part in

that festivity), as it was being rapidly whirled past me, I almost fancied that I had been carried away by some genii, and was at that moment an inhabitant of one of those spots, that the "rubbing up" of Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp is said to have the gift to call into existence.

I have already described the decorations of those splendid suites of apartments as I walked through them in the daytime; but when I entered them on this night, the *coup d'œil* that burst upon my sight as I most carefully walked up and down that beautiful mosaic pavement, was magnificently imposing. The stewards, quite ignorant of their duties as masters of the ceremonies, had forgotten one of the most essential precautions in a ball-room, but most especially where the flooring is of highly-polished marqueterie — to have it strewn with finely-powdered perfumed chalk.

I observed a good-natured smile cross the fine features of the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, as he graciously received the homage of his ministers and brilliant staff, closely attended by that small circle of Europeans yeleft *the clique* who have

the entrée at Court. His condescending salaam was given with all that grace of deportment and suavity of manner, which we should only have expected to see displayed by a Prince who had been educated in the school of the *first* gentleman of Europe (George the Fourth of England), when he received the presentations of that bevy of European ladies (*kopeks*, "dogs" of Christian women), who were presented to him by their own "Special Princes," many of whom officiated as masters of the ceremonies.

This fête will ever be remembered as a most remarkable occurrence in the annals of Egyptian history, as it is the first time that any Mussulman Prince gave audience to the fair daughters of Christendom. We did not perceive any of the dark-eyed daughters of Israel, although there was a pretty fair sprinkling of members of the Hebrew persuasion.

His Highness the Viceroy acknowledged the attendance of such a numerous body of his European population with much apparent satisfaction, walked about the rooms, showed considerable attention to the officers of the United States frigate, *Constellation*, and appointed

them some attendants to escort them about the Palace; seemed much pleased at the *entente cordiale* which appeared to exist among the different classes and nations of Europeans; expressed his entire approbation of the whole of the arrangements that had been made to carry out his princely hospitality; and remained until a late hour, evidently gratified and amused most thoroughly at the dancing and hilarity of his guests.

I was credibly informed that this entertainment cost no less a sum than 40,000*l.* to 50,000*l.* A few days afterwards the Viceroy visited the vessels in the port of Alexandria belonging to the Pacific and Oriental Company, and the *Messageries Impériales*, and presented the officers and crews with rings and baksheesh respectively; but his crowning and princely gifts were a tiara of diamonds, each valued at 1200*l.*, to each of the wives of the agents of these companies, Mrs. B. and Madame L., in consideration of the polite *personal* services rendered to His Highness by their husbands.

The morning after the state ball their Highnesses the Princesses ordered me to take the

Grand Pacha to see his illustrious *Baba*. On our arrival at the palace we had to wait a considerable period, as the Viceroy had not yet risen. As soon as His Highness had dressed we were ushered into his bedchamber, which I have already described; there we remained a considerable period. The Viceroy was sitting on the sofa smoking a cigar, the Prince approached and salaamed. I curtseyed, and was on the point of leaving the apartment, when His Highness exclaimed, "*Approchez! approchez! madame.*"

I did so, took my station in the centre of the room, and there remained, leaving the hangings of the door drawn aside, which gave the officials in attendance an opportunity to overhear all that transpired; and luckily I did so, for I soon found on my return to the Harem that the inmates had already begun to make "mountains of mole-hills." The little Prince soon became tired; for, singular to add, as I have previously stated, he never liked remaining long with the *Baba*. The Grand Pacha salaamed the Viceroy, I curtseyed, and we both returned to the Harem. As soon as I reached the

Prince's apartment I was surrounded by a whole host of ladies of the Harem, *Ikbals*, and slaves exclaiming, "Oh, madame! oh, madame! you have been in the *Baba's* bedchamber. Now you must ask this, and this, and this, for me," naming all their requests simultaneously together.

I listened very coolly to them, and neither smiled nor said a syllable; but at length, when their hubbub had subsided and they were silent, I replied, "Well! and what of that?"

"What of that!" repeated the whole body in a chorus, "You are the *Baba's Ikkal*."

"No, indeed," added I; "you are mistaken, I have no desire to please the Viceroy in that manner; that is an honour I do not covet; so I cannot and will not ask any favours either for myself or for any of you."

They stared again at me; they believed me, yet could scarcely credit their senses; all were amazed and dumbfounded. Shortly afterwards their Highnesses the Princesses sent for me. On entering the apartment, which was quite as miserable in appearance as that of the Grand Pacha's, they inquired of me,

“Where was the Viceroy? Was he dressed? What was he doing? What did he say? When was he coming over to see them?”

To all these interrogatories I replied most truthfully, “In his bedchamber. Yes, dressed and sitting on the sofa. Smoking a cigar. He told me to draw near to him. He is coming over here at one o’clock.”

Their Highnesses had previously questioned the little Prince. He was truthful, a virtue which he inherits from his mother the Princess Epouse, who always spoke the truth, and had already given them the same information. They smiled, sent me some coffee, sweetmeats, and a bundle of cigarettes. I partook of the former but declined the latter.

Their hitherto restless fiery orbs resumed their habitual calmness. The crisis had passed. I had been tried and found to be faithful and trustworthy, and from that hour their confidence, esteem, and respect for me rose to par. Had I but yielded to the opportunity that presented itself for me to make—perhaps my fortune—what should I have gained? most assuredly only what the cunning creature does

who is well up in the knowledge of this world, “who dodges past Prince Baksheesh in the antechamber of the Viceroy.” Nothing! absolutely nothing! Indeed, I should have acquired something more lasting—the jealousy of their Highnesses the Princesses, the three wives, and the mortal hatred of all the ladies of the Harem, *Ikbal*s and slaves. And my life, what would it have been worth? A few brief hours’ purchase, perhaps not even long enough to have made my peace with my Maker!

God be praised that was the first and last time that I ever entered the precincts of the bedchamber of Ismael Pacha the Viceroy of Egypt. For although His Highness behaved to me on that occasion with the same respect with which he had always treated me, still the effect that the telegraphic announcement (for no sooner had I crossed the sill of that apartment than the fact was known all through the Harem) produced on the minds of their Highnesses the Princesses, placed me in so painful a position that my life was jeopardised, and its preservation or forfeiture hung, as it were, upon a thread—the truthfulness of a mere child of barely five years old.

When I retired to my chamber, I returned thanksgiving to the Almighty, who had so wonderfully instilled into my Prince the virtue of truth, and I prayed that I might never again be thrown into such a dilemma.

God be praised! my prayers were granted; for I was never again placed in a similar position, and I felt the full force of the Turkish expression, "Whatever is written is written."

CHAPTER VII.

ON the evening prior to the departure of their Highnesses the Validè Princess, the Princess Epouse, and the Grand Pacha (as none of the other Princesses accompanied them) for Constantinople, the whole of the ladies of the Harem and slaves were up all night.

I had been on a visit for three days at the Peninsular and Oriental Hotel to some friends who arrived from Europe; and in the morning of that day, when in company with one of them, I had met Mr. B. of Cairo, near the British Post-office, and then told him that I protested against being sent to Constantinople, as it was a violation of my contract, which simply specified that my services were for Egypt only, and not for any other part of the Ottoman dominions.

He replied, "But, madam, you must go, as we have no time to procure anybody else."

I replied, "No, no!"

"But you will return to the Harem this evening?"

My answer was, "Yes!" and that was the last time I had the pleasure of conversing with the banker; although when I afterwards returned to Alexandria, broken down in mind and body, I frequently saw him pass my hotel, as I was sitting in the balcony to inhale the fresh sea-breeze.

Between three and four o'clock in the morning, the bed-scene, similar to that which had taken place on our departure from Cairo, was enacted, and the beds, bedding, and baggage were shipped on board the steam-tenders, and then transferred to the *Mohamet Ali* frigate.

At five o'clock a eunuch came and called me, as he wanted to have my bed, &c. packed up. I arose, dressed myself, and admitted him. When I came to inquire for my breakfast, I was met with the reply, "*Malsch*, madame! *Malsch*, madame! You shall have it in an hour's time." I perfectly understood what that

meant, and I obtained nothing—no, not even a crust of bread, nor a cup of coffee!

Shortly afterwards the barber came into the Grand Eunuch's room, and cut the Prince's hair, which was picked up and thrown out of the window into the Mediterranean Sea, as the other had been into the Nile, and with the same ceremony. It was a most imprudent act, but done at the express desire of the Viceroy, and was the cause of the Grand Pacha falling ill soon after his arrival at Constantinople.

As soon as the *perruquier* had quitted the palace, we were hurried upstairs to put on our things; and on our return into the Grand Eunuch's room, I found all the Ministers of State waiting, *en grande tenue*, to pay their respects to the little Prince.

As soon as this *bata los manos* was finished, the Grand Eunuch came and told me that I was to accompany the Prince on board the frigate. I was astounded—nay, electrified—-at receiving such an intimation. I declined to go. I requested to be allowed to proceed into my chamber to fetch my travelling-bag, keys, and parasol, which I had left on the divan. But

no; that "spectre of a man" told me that his orders were imperative not to leave me until he had seen us safely on board the frigate; and thus, without having had anything between my lips since I quitted the *salû à manger* at the Peninsular and Oriental Hotel on Saturday evening, and although it was my Sabbath, still, *nolens volens*, I was forced to go on board the Egyptian frigate. I had fully expected that when the levée was over I should have found my breakfast in my room; but I was egregiously deceived.

"Well," thought I to myself, "if this is a specimen of the treatment I am to expect on my voyage, and during my sojourn at Constantinople, I shall be heartily glad when I have finished out the term of my contract with the Viceroy!" which was, however, much nearer its conclusion than I then dreamt of.

Entering the carriage in the courtyard, we drove round to the Viceroy's bath-room, from which a marble-paved corridor led us on to the palace landing-stairs; there we embarked on board a small steam-tender, under a salute of five guns for the Grand Pacha.

There we were received with the usual honours. I inquired for my breakfast, but no kind geni came to administer to the cravings of my hunger, although the Grand Pacha had, previously to leaving his head-nurse, been well supplied with symmets and boiled milk.

The whole of the quarter-deck was partitioned off by a thick canvas screen, which prevented the officers and crew from being able to catch a glimpse of any of the females. No! not even as they ascended the gangway-ladder, the sides of which were closely covered in with similar material.

About twenty minutes after we had reached the frigate, the Princess Eponse, accompanied by the other two wives, came alongside, attended by their suite. They were all closely veiled.

Ten minutes later, the Valide Princess embarked in Her Highness's small yacht, under a Viceregal salute of eleven guns from the fort and frigates, the yards of which were dressed and manned as she ascended the gangway-ladder. The band of the regiment on board struck up the "Sultan's March," one of Doni-

zetti's noisiest pieces. She remained on deck, chatting to their Highnesses the Princesses, while her suite went below, and arranged her berth and their own.

Twenty minutes afterwards, Ismael Pacha, the Viceroy, came on board to take leave of those members of his family who were going on a visit to the Sultan. It is utterly impossible for my feeble pen-drawing to sketch with fidelity this parting scene; still I will do my best to convey to my readers a delineation of its leading incidents.

The Viceroy, who was received with the usual honours (a salute of twenty guns) on reaching the frigate, proceeded into the saloon. He was soon followed by his illustrious mother, the three wives, the Grand Pacha, and myself, the ladies of the Harem, *Ibbals*, and slaves. Then began a blubbering scene; for the whole of the women, from the highest to the lowest, commenced, not crying, but absolutely howling. Had they been the professional mourners at a Caireen's obsequies, they could not have enacted their parts better.

His Highness the *Baba* took it very coolly

and, if I might judge from his countenance, which is rather a difficult thing to do, as Turks seldom or ever show whether they are pleased or vexed, I should say that this scene did not affect him in the least.

After their Highnesses had given vent to their chagrin, the *Baba* rose up, approached his mother, kissed and embraced her most affectionately. He then kissed the Grand Pacha, patted him on the back, as also Her Highness, the Princess Epouse (who was crying most bitterly), wished her good-by, exclaimed, "Oh, *Zoub-Nina! Zoub-Nina!*" and when Her Highness turned away, sobbing as if her heart would break, His Highness turned towards me, looked intently at me, and as I caught the glance of his eye, he smiled most courteously, nodded to me, again looked at their Highnesses, turned round once more, appeared bewildered at beholding the scene before him, and left for the shore.

Soon this scene of woe and grief was changed into a marine picnic for *judjans* of coffee, sweetmeats, and cigarettes. These were handed round to their Highnesses, who partook of the

former but sparingly, yet smoked away at the latter with great gusto.

Again I sallied forth, not like Cœlebs in "Search of a Wife;" nor Doctor Syntax in quest of "The Picturesque;" but like a Bordeaux kopek, "dog" (for was I not looked upon as such in the eyes of the true believers around me? for the Germans were left behind, and I was the only unbeliever among this Moslem freight), who takes his morning rounds to find his *déjeuner*; for many a time and oft have I sat in the balcony of my residence in the *Cours d'Albert*, at that birthplace of our unfortunate sovereign, Richard II., watching *les chiens de cette jolie ville*, rummaging among the heaps of offal, that are daily placed in the road, and selecting their dainty morsels; but, like many of them, who sniffed at the inviting mounds and found nothing to suit them.

On my return I found that the ladies of the Harem, and slaves, had stolen a march upon me: that, being as hungry as hunters themselves, they had eaten and drunk all up. At half-past eight o'clock, the frigate steamed away out of the roadstead of Alexandria, and

then began my experience of life on board an Egyptian frigate, especially when freighted with such a precious cargo as a Viceregal party.

The *Mehmet Ali* was a forty-two-gun screw steamer, manned with a motley crew of Turks, Egyptians, Maltesé, &c., and having a regiment of soldiers on board (most assuredly not a fitting escort for a Harem, if all that I have heard is true of those most moral Turks); but I saw quite enough to make me wish never to see more of it.

The upper deck, as I have previously described, had an awning over it, if I may be allowed the expression, thick canvas, and most appropriately so, as a promenade for their Highnesses and their suites, and comfortably fitted up with sofas and easy-chairs, but on which they never promenaded, or lolled about once during the whole voyage: so that I and the Grand Pacha Ibrahim had it all to ourselves.

The saloon was divided into three parts, having on each side six smaller cabins, in four of which were placed the ladies of the Harem, in attendance on the Validè Princess of Egypt;

the other two were occupied by the Princess Epouse, and one of the little Princesses Zoub, who accompanied us. It was carpeted and furnished with pretty china vases filled with growing exotics, tables, sofas, chairs, and divans. From the top of the panels hung large mirrors.

At the stern-end was a round cabin similarly fitted up, which was appropriated to the use of the Viceroy's mother, from which, steps led up to the poop-deck, on which was ranged a large divan.

The poop-saloon was enclosed with large plate-glass windows, which were made to slide back at pleasure, and to which were affixed iron shutters. The hangings were of lace and crimson silk; branch silver candelabras were fixed to the panels.

The smaller cabins were similarly fitted up, having, like the saloons, boxes of Huntley and Palmer's biscuits, to which the slaves helped themselves; and large baskets of *bambons*, besides two earthenware bottles, filled with water, with gold stoppers.

His Highness the Prince, together with his little sister, slept on the floor of the end saloon,

surrounded, as I have already described him at Ghazee, by his slaves and nurses. Descending a staircase, I proceeded to the lower deck, which was so dark, that it was requisite to light it day and night.

This saloon was uncarpeted, and contained a deal table, a few wooden stools, and some rush-bottom chairs. On each side of it were ranged six berths, each of which was fitted up with a three-foot bare board, having two cotton coverlets placed thereon, not a mattress, or any other kind of bedding, or toilet utensils of any description. One of these most comfortless berths was appropriated to me; so that I found, while steaming on the bosom of the Mediterranean, I was deprived of the order of precedence which had been assigned me in Egypt, on the banks of the Nile, which promotion was given to the ladies of the Viceregal Harems, while I took up my place among the lowest slaves on board (except the coffee and cigarette-makers, and scullerymaids), as the low caste black slaves occupied the other eleven berths.

This was a change of position and scene I

had not contemplated; however I held my peace. I knew that, cooped up in that wooden barrack, I had no chance of redress; so that I abided my time. Still I could not help thinking that my visit to the Viceroy in his bedchamber, although their Highnesses, the wives, sent me there at that early hour, well knowing that the *Bahut* could not have risen, as he had scarcely arrived more than two hours from Cairo, and the presence of that overbearing dame, Ibrahim Pacha's widow, had something to do with this rude treatment.

At the end of this (the second saloon), a flight of steps led up on to the deck. About half-past eleven o'clock the eunuchs brought the Princesses' breakfast to the door of the saloon; but as they were all suffering from *La Maladie de Mer*, as also the whole of their retinue, it was removed. I made another attempt to get some refreshment, but all in vain; and, unwell and fatigued, I retired to my miserable berth, rolled up my paletot, placed it under my head for a pillow, and laid my weary limbs down upon the wadded coverlet, having then been no less than sixteen hours fasting.

Thus, though the table of the Princesses was covered with Arab and Turkish delicacies, I was left without anything.

There I lay, with numbers of slaves snoring like grampuses around me, until nine o'clock at night, when the eunuchs came down to lock up the hatches, just as if we had been a band of slaves on a voyage across the middle passage. I then appealed to the humanity of that phantom of the stronger sex, who, possessing a little of the milk of human kindness within his breast, brought me a cordial cup filled with chicken broth, and a piece of European bread, so stale, that it was almost as hard as a stone, with a cup of bad-tasted water; and this was my feast after a fast of more than twenty-four hours! I think on that occasion I can safely say I had accommodated myself to circumstances. The fast I had been obliged to endure, added to my bad state of health, confined me to my almost unbearable berth (situated close to the chain of the rudder) the whole of the following day.

Her Highness the Princess Epouse now visited me, and after expressing her surprise at finding

me so ill, inquired if all the "*à la Française*" ladies suffered in that manner.

The doctor, who was an Italian, attended me, advised me to make an effort to rise, which I did, and went on deck. My usual refreshments while on board that detestable frigate chiefly consisted of a cup of tea in the morning, without any milk, a piece of dry bread, and a few Palmer's biscuits, which the Grand Eunuch had the kindness to send me.

In the middle of the day I had a little chicken-broth, thickened with rice, and the fowl, of which it had been made, served up with it, and a little fruit; and at six o'clock similar rations were given me for my dinner. Then did I wish I could have sent a *Mektoub*, "letter," to the Viceroy, in which I should have appealed to his feelings as a prince and a gentleman; for Ismael Pacha, into whose service I had entered, finished his education in France, was courteous in his general deportment towards me, and well knew what were the requirements of a European lady; for had he not one "caged up" in the Harem in the citadel, with whom I had conversed? Besides, there was a *chef de cuisine*,

and staff about him, and, had His Highness himself adopted proper means, that intelligent Frenchman, or his assistants, would have gone on board the frigate before our embarkation, and have arranged everything for my comfort, but it was all *Boosh! Boosh!* But the *clique* were endeavouring to supplant them, and as an exodus of French attendants took place after my departure from Alexandria, in all probability they have been replaced by Frankfort *Dienstboten*, "servants," and *Deutsche Küche*, "German cookery."

There was an under-current in motion as regards myself, but neither the source nor mouth of it could I as yet discover; later, however, both were clearly developed. Had I but then been able to send forth a missive by the hands of a trusty messenger— I always had one at hand in the Harem (one over whom Prince Baksheesh had no power, and with whose actions that Sovereign Prince of Egypt dare not and could not interfere), my Prince—the Grand Paeha Ibrahim would not have left me in this state.

As I was constantly perambulating the frigate

from stem to stern, I had an opportunity of seeing the ample provisions that had been laid in for the creature-comforts of their Highnesses and suite, who were sumptuously served every day. It was only the *Nazarani kelb*, "the creeping Christian dog," my unbelieving self, that was left to feed off the crumbs that fell from the daughters of the Prophet's table, at which, however, my heart turned sick, and I found the scanty diet I had prescribed myself more palatable.

Daily did the Prince run up and down the deck. One day I had observed that several of the port-holes were left open, and that the Prince had approached close to them. By them were sitting the two Grand Eunuchs, smoking their *Tchibouks*. I told them to order them to be closed—they only smiled. Nevertheless, I insisted upon its being done, for well did I know that if that "dot of humanity" had fallen into the sea, neither my life, nor that of the Grand Eunuchs, were worth ten minutes' purchase after that event had taken place. I had now gathered such an insight into the mysteries of Harem life, and the manner in

which, in this the nineteenth century, Viceroys of Egypt and Egyptian Princes had been launched into eternity, that I kept, as the sailors say, "my weather eye open," and the Grand Pacha was hale and sound when I took my leave of him in the old Palace at Bebek, in 1864. If the port-holes had been left open with any sinister purpose, *Alla-ha, chukur*, "God be praised," the fish gained not their prey. What is written, is written, *Bismillah! Bismillah!*

Often did the Prince stop and amuse himself by looking at the almost countless number of fowls, pigeons, turkeys, quails, and sheep being fed. He had a perfect mania, as all the inmates of the Harem seemed to have, for eating crude vegetables, so that he looked most wistfully at the basket-loads of vegetables, gourds (which were actually piled up like cannon-balls), bushels of onions, hundreds of lettuces, thousands of cucumbers and lemons, of which they were particularly fond, baskets of cherries, sour green plums, green tamarinds, strawberries, cans of sour milk, and immense lumps of ice. It is almost impossible for me to give an estimate of the immense quantities of all the above

eatables which were consumed by the Viceregal party.

Close to the *cabooosh*, "kitchen," were ranged several wooden benches, on which the cooks were engaged daily, arranging their fruits and pieces of melon in glass dishes, as their Highnesses the Princesses, and in fact all Arabs, have a particular *pouchant* for them, and will consume the contents of six of them daily, although each is as large as the round part of a common-sized crockery pan.

Their Highnesses amused themselves by stuffing and gormandizing (especially munching fruit and crude vegetables) from four o'clock in the morning until twelve at night. The crew and soldiers were frequently in a state of inebriety, which was caused by the quantity of *araki*, "a spirit distilled from dates," that they drank. This rather surprised me, as I had always understood that it was contrary to the Mahometan religion for Moslems to imbibe spirituous liquors—that is what they termed their *kef*, "dolce far niente." Sometimes they would amuse themselves by singing their favourite Bacchanalian song.

During the whole of our voyage, which lasted seven days, when it might easily have been accomplished in four, a deputation of women, consisting indiscriminately of both rich and poor, from the numerous places at which we stopped, came off, bringing with them large baskets filled with fruit of every kind then in season, especially oranges, lemons, gourds, cherries, plums, sweetmeats, cucumbers, cakes, jams, candied fruits, besides presents of native earthen jars, toys (some of which were very ingeniously made), superb open-worked silk stockings, native stuffs, shawls, gums in large jars, the greater portion of which were filled with the "Turkish Delight," the *Lentiscus*, or "gum mastic," of Scio (the sale or traffic in which is "a monopoly, and is a fruitful source of illegal action and crime in many a form"); also a kind of porridge made of flour, water, sugar, almonds, both green and blanched, lime-pips, &c., which was, for I often tasted it, as sweet as syrup.

When we arrived off the island of Scio, their Highnesses the Princesses, who were unveiled, were in the saloon, amusing themselves by

looking at silk stockings and various other articles that had been presented to them by some of the deputation. A number of boats put off from the shore, most of them full, among whom were the Governor and his officials, as also hucksters, who had brought things off for sale.

So intent were their Highnesses looking at *les nouveautés*, that I did not heed the approach of the boats. I was standing near the windows of the saloon (which, as previously explained, had been drawn back), when I noticed a number of boats glide round and round the frigate. All at once they approached so near that the men, had they felt disposed, could have put their hands in the openings and have jumped in. I observed the Validè Princess and the Princess Epouse smile, when they looked at the occupants in the boats, and kept asking whether I did not think some of them "*Guzel*," and others "*Batul*?" But as the men (perhaps thinking that they were only some of the ladies of the Harem, or slaves) drew nearer, the Princess Epouse shrieked out and drew back; the Validè Princess jumped up on a divan, and then, placing myself before them while they

played "bo-peep," and, acting according to their orders, I returned the salaam of the men in the boats, who all placed their oars upright and salaamed me. This afforded the Princesses great amusement, as they enjoyed the sport amazingly, and every now and then kept asking me if I did not think it great fun, as they were sure that those officials would go back and report that they had seen their Highnesses the Princesses, when they had only been salaamed by the Grand Pacha's governess.

I only smiled; but it is a fact that those individuals had gazed upon their Highnesses, and that, too, when they were (believe it whether you like it or not, ye sons of the Prophet, Moslems and true believers) *unveiled!*

The moment that the Princess Epouse screamed, the farce was ended, for down rushed the eunuchs and drew the curtains across the opening, while those on deck with drawn swords, warned the intruders off. How little did they suspect that the Peris of the Harem had been gazed upon by other eyes than theirs and those of their liege Lord and Prince! For, had they but known it, the boats and their

live freights would have been fired upon by the frigate's guns until they had gone to their last account. One old Turk, thinking that I was one of the *Peris* destined for the seventh heaven, seemed quite in ecstasy when I returned his salaam by the Princess's orders, at which His Highness smiled; but as he was well advanced in years she exclaimed, "*Batal, Madame! Ihtyar, Madame!*" "He is ugly, he is 'old, Madame."

The Princesses accepted of such presents as took their fancy, in return for which they gave baksheesh of gold Egyptian coins.

Often and often did I think that I should never leave that cockpit of an Egyptian frigate, and vowed if ever the Almighty vouchsafed that I should land on the lovely shores of the Bosphorus, nothing should induce me ever again to tread the decks of the *Mehemet Ali* frigate. At that time I often glanced, in the mirrors of their Highnesses' splendid saloon, at my attenuated frame, sunken eyes, and blanched checks, and thought of the misery and discomfort I had suffered, but little dreamt that I had yet to endure much more before

I was released from my unprofitable, irksome, and thankless task. I had, however, found out the utter worthlessness of my "Special Prince's" assertion, that, if the Viceroy Ismael Pacha was polite to me, I had but to ask, and nothing would be refused me. Well, the last time I had the honour to see the Viceroy (which was, as I have already stated, on board that detested frigate) he was polite to me; and, acting up to the advice of one of those "Eighteen other Princes" who govern Egypt, I have asked for my just rights since my return to Europe, but they have not been accorded to me.

So beautiful beyond conception is the approach to Constantinople (the Byzantium of the ancients, the *Eis-tin-polin* of the Greeks, and the *Is-tan-boul* of the Turks) that I dare not attempt a pen-and-ink drawing of the wonderful panorama displayed to me in all directions. That prince of French writers of travels, Theophile Gautier, has painted that varied landscape with fidelity, when he states that "never did outline more magnificent display its undulations and indentations between sea and sky. It is one of the favourite spots

of the world's history ; another scene in which she loves to engrave, in perishable matter, *imperishable words.*"

As soon as the frigate reached *Bebek*, "Babec," it came to anchor off the Sultan's palace at that village, which is beautifully situated on the water's edge. Then salutes were fired by the Turkish frigate that lay off it. There we remained full two hours, during which time the Validè Princess received the deputation sent by the Validè Sultana. It consisted of twelve ladies of the Imperial Harem, who came off in three caïques, unattended, however, by any eunuchs. They were by no means beautiful in appearance, and were attired in different coloured silk dresses. Their feet were encased in white cotton stockings, which hung down about their heels, over which some wore yellow boots, and others *babouches*. Round their faces was wrapped one end of a piece of white net, and the other was passed over their heads, which it quite enveloped, so that the whole of their features were distinctly visible. On their shoulders they wore coloured stuff cloaks, with sleeves, and two large capes.

Leaving their shoes at the door of the saloon-stairs, they descended into the saloon. On entering, they salaamed the Validè Princess, after which coffee and cigarettes were handed round. They did not remain much longer than a quarter of an hour.

After they had taken their departure a whole bevy of ladies from the different Harems of the Imperial family, as well as those of the Ministers of State and nobility, came on board; and after they were gone, a host of females belonging to the Turkish merchants and imperial shopkeepers, bringing with them numerous rich and costly presents, and some of the most curious description. After these receptions had taken place, the Sultan's Grand Eunuch, dressed *à la Européenne*, and wearing one of the most superb diamond rings perhaps ever seen, valued at 125,000*l.*, on the little finger of his right hand, came on board. He descended into the cabin of the Validè Princess's Grand Eunuch; there, in company with the Princess Epouse's Grand Eunuch, he sat down, smoked a pipe, and sipped a *jindjan* of coffee.

Scarcely, however, had he finished this re-

freshment when was heard the cry, "Men overboard!" for seven of the Viceroy's soldiers, who were being lowered into a caïque from the side of the frigate, were upset into the Bosphorus. Fortunately they were soon picked up and sustained no bodily harm, but were much frightened at their ducking, which is not to be wondered at, as the clear blue waters of that lovely river swarm with sharks. After tranquillity had been restored on board, the Sultan's Grand Eunuch proceeded into the saloon to pay his respects to the Valide Princess and her Viceregal Highness. There that important functionary was received with all the honours due to his rank and position. *Findjans* of coffee, served in elegant gold filigree *zarfs*, encrusted with precious stones, placed upon a gold salver and covered with a violet-coloured silk velvet cloth, one mass of gold embroidery; and a *kanum kaloun*, filled with fragrant gold-leaved tobacco, was then served him, which he remained smoking until their Highnesses were ready to land.

In the mean time three caïques had been drawn up to the gangway ladder, which, as

well as the whole of the deck, had been covered with fine Brussels carpeting. All being ready the Sultan's Grand Eunuch rose up off the sofa and led the Princess Validè to the gangway. He took hold of the front of her robe, on one side walked her own tall stately sinister-looking creole of a Grand Eunuch, and on the other our own noble Grand Eunuch, who was followed by the Princess's Epouse. Behind walked three of our other Eunuchs, dressed *à la Européenne* in black, as they all doffed their Egyptian costume while in Turkey, holding drawn swords in their hands.

On each side of the gangway stood the naval and military officers. Behind the Princess Epouse walked the ladies of both those princesses, who, on reaching the gangway, formed themselves into a double line.

Then the two Princesses descended into the Viceregal caïques, each of which were about ten yards long, pointed at the stern and prow, of very deep build, drawing a considerable depth of water. At the bottom of the caïque were placed several mattresses covered with satin, which, as also the cushions that were

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placed round it, and which formed a divan, were covered with violet velvet cloth richly embroidered with gold. Their Highnesses seated themselves in the centre, near the prow. On a raised deck was placed a piece of carpet, on which knelt the Eunuchs, who had divested themselves of their patent leather overshoes, in which silver spurs were fixed, those of the Grand Eunuchs being of gold, as whenever the Princesses take carriage exercise they ride by the side on horseback.

All of them had swords belted round their waists; those of the Grand Eunuchs being gold hilted, with crimson velvet scabbards inlaid with gold. The Turkish standard floated at stern and prow.

Each caïque was manned by four caidjis, attired in white crape silk open-worked shirts, blue silk trousers, which reached a little below the knee, sky-blue velvet jackets, embroidered in gold, and wore fezes on their heads. The Caidji Bachi, a very old grey-headed man, sat in the stern and steered the Viceregal party.

Then I and the Grand Pacha and the young Princess, his sister, attended by his suite, de-

scended into our caïques, which were similarly fitted up to that of the Validè Princess, only that they were furnished with crimson drapery, and the caidjis being dressed in crimson. After us the Grand Eunuch descended, holding in his hand a large black silk velvet bag completely covered with silver, which contained the jewels of the Validè Princess. He was attended by another eunuch, carrying Her Highness's cash-box, which was similarly covered. It had a silver handle in the centre. Both of these caskets were carried in a separate caïque, and covered with a cloth of gold.

The yards of the frigate were dressed and manned, the band struck up the Sultan's March, and a Viceregal salute was fired. Then the water procession commenced: the caïque containing their Highnesses the Princesses led the way, and our own followed in its wake. After them the ladies of the Viceregal Harems descended into six caïques, which were fitted up with red silk; then followed in other caïques the whole of the slaves, and all were rowed to the steps of the grand entrance of the Sultan's palace at Bebek.

This is an immense long two-storied stone structure, facing the Bosphorus, of which it commands most extensive and beautiful views, having pavilions at each end, which are occupied by the eunuchs. In the centre is the grand entrance, which is reached by a flight of marble steps. The portico is supported by four Corinthian pillars, at each end of which are two large gilded lamps.

The centre of the palace projects considerably forwards, over which run three square balconies. The promenade before it, which is paved with stone, forms (oddly enough, as it destroys the privacy of the place) the fashionable rendezvous of the *élite* of Bebek, a very pretty village, and its suburbs; and on which hundreds of persons also land from their caiques, and lounge up and down in the evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

HERE we landed, and were received with full honours, the military band playing at a distance the Sultan's March, and the frigates booming away their Viceregal salute; while, drawn up in double line, stood a host of the ladies of the Imperial Harem, who on that occasion were richly clad in silk robes, wearing a profusion of diamonds and other precious stones. Their hair hung down their backs in two long plaits, like Polish women, and the ends tied with broad rich ribbons, of various colours. Then their Highnesses the Princesses passed through an immense marble hall, the floor of which was covered with matting, with long strips of handsome Brussels carpet laid over it in the form of a square. The walls were papered. From the ceiling, which was beautifully painted with

views of Egyptian and Turkish scenery, and bordered with the representations of numerous musical instruments, hung suspended several magnificent chandeliers.

Ascending a flight of marble stairs, similarly covered, we entered the Grand Reception-room. The floor was matted, having pieces of Brussels carpet laid down along the sides, and across the top and bottom. The walls were painted in drab colour; a large chandelier hung suspended from the ceiling, which was also painted with landscapes.

In the centre stood a long, narrow, plain white marble table, standing on gilded legs, on which was placed a superb beautiful Sevres china painted vase, with jugs to match, similar in shape to those used as ale tankards in England, but as large as ordinary toilet ewers; also a small bottle containing otto of roses; two cordial cups, with lids and saucers, which are used to contain water, and serve the purpose of glasses; and two very elegant damask napkins, richly embroidered in gold, with deep bullion fringe.

Opposite to it, but against the wall, stood a

similar table, on which rested a large mirror. In the centre stood an enormous vase, on each side of which were placed coloured fancy wicker-work baskets, lined with crimson and blue silk, filled with bonbons. They were covered over with pieces of silk of the same colour, which were looped up at the handles with bunches of ribbon and artificial flowers. On each side stood silver candelabra.

On the opposite side, facing it, stood another table, similarly arranged. At the bottom of the room was a divan, covered with stamped red velvet, ornamented with gold leaves, ranged underneath the four great windows that looked into the garden, very small, and anything but cheerful-looking, which also commanded a view of the lovely heights.

On a fancy table was placed a superbly-gilded musical-clock, indicating Turkish time, which played tunes instead of striking the hours, half-hours, and quarters.

About half-a-dozen chairs, covered to match the sofa, were placed about in various parts. At the top stood another divan, having cushions as large as mattresses at each end (on which

squatted the ladies in attendance), much smaller than that which we have previously described, but similarly covered. This was arranged under the three large windows, from which the *mucharabiehs* were removed, and overlooked the Bosphorus, commanding one of the finest views the eye ever looked upon.

Out of this large room branched off four corridors, two leading to the right hand, and two to the left. One of the rooms on the latter was appropriated to the Validè Princess, as her private sitting-room. And here I may as well remark, that I was extremely fortunate in having accompanied their Highnesses; for, otherwise, I should never have had the opportunity of entering the Imperial Harems, this being the first time in the annals of Turkish history that any Egyptian Princess had had the honour of having one of the Imperial Palaces appropriated for her reception, and of a *Nazarani kelb*, "Christian dog," having defiled them with her presence.

Why such a mark of favour was shown to the widow of Ibrahim Pacha, I know not, unless, indeed, it was that the *poor* sovereign,

who on his flying visit to Egypt, on his accession to the throne, had looked with a jealous eye upon the riches of his Cræsus of a vassal; for then, if report speaks truth, His Majesty urged that wealthy Prince to give him more tribute. That request was met with a most courteous negative; and the expediency of which was based upon the following clause of the Firman of May, 1841—viz. :—

“As each of the conditions settled as above is annexed to the privilege of hereditary succession, if a single one of them is not executed, that privilege of hereditary succession shall forthwith be abolished and annulled,” so Ismael Pacha, Viceroy of Egypt, had no idea of acting contrary to the letter of that document. We know that large presents were made to the Sultan at that time; and there is not a shadow of a doubt but the Validè Princess, whom His Majesty Abdul Aziz on this occasion “delighted to honour,” was invited as an Imperial guest from political as well as personal motives; but what they were, time will, no doubt, disclose.

Well, to continue our description of the Viceregal guests' apartments. The hangings

were of yellow stamped velvet, embossed with silver leaves and flowers. The furniture of the divans and chairs corresponded. The floor was matted, and covered with the usual pieces of Brussels carpet. The walls were covered with embossed velvet of the same kind; the ceiling, which was very lofty, and from which hung suspended a massive silver chandelier, was beautifully painted. In the centre of the room stood a round inlaid table, supported on gilded legs; on each side were ranged two similar ones, on one of which stood a superb gilt clock, that chimed the hours; and each side of it was similarly ornamented to that which we have previously described as being in the Grand Reception-room, with the exception that a large mirror, reaching down from the ceiling, rested on each table.

Crossing the Grand Reception-room, and passing into the second corridor, we entered, on the right hand, Her Highness's bedchamber. The floor was matted with the usual carpeting. The gilded iron bedstead was ornamented with sky-blue silk hangings, bespangled with silver crescents; at the foot and sides were gilded crescents,

holding plumes of ostrich feathers. Rich Persian rugs were placed at the sides of the bed, and by that of the divan, which stood underneath the three large windows which overlooked the garden and heights. The divan, chairs, and cushions were covered with sky-blue satin, fringed with silver. A small inlaid console-table stood on one side of the room, on which rested a large mirror, and on the top of the table were placed three inlaid caskets on gold legs, the largest of which contained Her Highness's treasure, and the others, jewellery, essences, and narcotics. On another table, facing the foot of the bed, stood a handsome gilt clock, having on each side a small elegantly-painted Sèvres china jug and basin, used for holding the perfumed water which is poured over the hands.

Then we passed into the room on the left hand, which was assigned to Her Highness's Lady of the Bedchamber, whose office it was to relate tales to her, rub or shampoo her limbs until she fell off to sleep, which operation had a mesmeric effect upon the Validè Princess.

In the row of rooms that led straight along

on the left-hand side, were placed the ladies of Her Highness's suite. The room on the right-hand side, adjoining that of Her Highness's, contained her wardrobe. Her wardrobe-women slept in it, and there were ironed out daily the crumpled dresses, linen, &c., belonging to the Princess and her retinuc:

The bath-room, which was fitted up with a marble bath, arranged with taps for cold and hot water, was situated opposite Her Highness's chamber. A small door opening out of it led into the boudoir, which was a moderate-sized room. Out of that a door led into the *cabinet d'aisance*, arranged *à la Turque*, having a small marble fountain in the centre; on a table stood two silver basins, one empty, and the other filled with small calico napkins, fringed with gold thread, and on a silver rod hung several towels embroidered with gold. Passing along the other corridor on the same side, we entered the Princess Epouse's apartments. The sitting-room was similarly fitted up to the Grand Reception-room, the folding-doors in which led into another sitting-room similarly arranged, only having the hangings and furniture covered with pink satin.

Then we passed into the bedchamber, arranged like that of Her Highness the Validè Princess, the hangings and furniture of which were of crimson silk bespangled with gold stars and crescents. The cases of all the beds, which were left in the bedsteads without any coverlets, were of blue satin interwoven with bouquets of flowers.

Then we entered the Grand Pacha Ibrahim's sitting-room. The hangings and furniture were of red embossed satin with white lace curtains. Over the doors and windows were elegant gilded cornices. The floor was covered with matting, and round the sides were placed pieces of Brussels carpet. In it stood an English fireplace with a bright steel registered stove; on the chimneypiece, which was of white marble, rested a large mirror, and at each end stood a large silver branch candelabra. In the centre was placed a large elegantly-painted Sèvres jug, on each side of which stood two essence-bottles and drinking-cups of the same material. The walls were covered with red embossed paper. On the ceiling was painted Mazceppa and the wild horse, and beautiful vignettes of the fine arts filled up the corners.

Half a dozen elegant light fancy gilded occasional chairs, of English manufacture, as also twelve rosewood ones, covered with embossed crimson satin, corresponding with the *musnuls* which fitted up each corner of the room, were scattered about the apartment. In the centre stood a round marble table.

Then we passed into the Hall of Audience, which was lighted with ten immense windows. The floor was matted, the walls plainly painted, as also the ceiling, from which was suspended a large chandelier. A marble table stood in the centre; and two dozen heavy-looking square-seated chairs, covered with silk and ornamented with figured gilt-headed nails. In a square recess stood three marble fountains, used for ablutional purposes, and up to which the slaves climbed as the sun set, and washed their feet. Leading out of it was a double staircase, covered with matting, which led down into another hall running parallel to it. Passing into a corridor having rooms on both sides, like the saloon of an American steam-packet, (which were appropriated for the use of the upper slaves,) we entered at its extremity

another spacious hall, and crossing that proceeded into other corridors.

The first on the right hand led into my chamber, and here, as had elsewhere been my fate, one of the worst furnished rooms in the palace was set apart for me. In fact, the apartment was similar in every respect to those occupied by the ladies of the Sultan's Harem, who were attached to the suite of their Highnesses the Egyptian Princesses, some of whom might, for aught I knew to the contrary, be His Majesty's *ikbals*. So that I should most unquestionably have been called fastidious, since I murmured at being treated as if I were one of the Sultan's favourites, which, *Dieu merci!* I was not; although perhaps for many reasons, they might have wished I had been. But, as Harem life had no charms for me, there was no more chance of my pleasing "the Sovereign of Sovereigns, the Light of the World," than there had been of my pleasing the Viceroy Ishmael Pacha, in the sense that the sister of His Highness's civil aid-de-camp evidently meant.

The floor was matted, and the ceiling painted. The hangings of the doors and the two large

windows which overlooked the Bosphorus, together with the furniture, were of brown and black cotton, giving it a most dismal appearance. Everything European was excluded from it, as it was furnished with a divan, and on the floor lay two thin mattresses covered with the same fabric. These, with the addition of two large silver-gilt candlesticks with glass shades, constituted all the effects; and, as usual, I had to do battle for the deficiencies, which I did, and came off victorious.

Proceeding across the hall, and facing my apartment, were the chambers of the ladies belonging to the Sultan's Harem, the floors of which were matted, and the walls and ceilings, painted. The hangings of the doors and windows, which overlooked the Bosphorus, were of figured cotton. The only furniture in each were two mattresses laid on the floor, which served them as divans by day and beds by night.

We then returned to the double staircase from whence we had descended. Opening a door on the left hand, we passed through a large room, then through another on the right, and thence down a long corridor; then we ascended six stairs, and entered the apartments occupied by

the Validè Princess's Grand Eunuch, which comprised a sitting-room, the floor of which was covered with matting, and the walls and ceiling whitewashed. The hangings of the windows and doors were of white and crimson striped satin, the divans and chairs were covered with the same costly material.

At the side stood a marble console-table, on which was placed a handsome gilt clock, two beautiful Sèvres china jugs, two essence-bottles, and two drinking-cups to match, and two silver branch candelabras; leaving which we passed along another corridor to the right, the first door in which opened into the Grand Eunuch's bed-chamber. The floor was matted, and had strips of Brussels carpet laid down around the sides. In it stood a gilt iron bedstead with crimson silk hangings, on which was laid a wadded coverlet of the same material, and at each side was spread a fine Persian rug, a crimson figured satin divan, chairs with gilded backs covered with the same material, an ebony chest of drawers with white marble top, on which stood an elegant gilt clock and two large silver candelabras, a marble-top washing-stand with Sèvres

china toilette service, two water-bottles, and drinking-cups to correspond.

Quitting this apartment we entered that of Koorshid Pacha, the Validè Princess's Chamberlain's bedchamber, similarly arranged, and opening the door opposite, we walked into his sitting-room. The floor was covered with matting, the walls papered, and the ceiling beautifully painted. The divan and chairs, which were of ormolu and gold, were covered with faded blue satin, and the console-table was similarly fitted up to that in the Grand Eunuch's room.

Then descending down a flight of steps we reached the promenade, proceeding along which we entered the apartments of the Princess Epouse's Grand Eunuch's house, which was detached from the Palace, the basement floor of which was occupied by the officers belonging to the Sultan's household, who were in attendance on their Highnesses the Princesses and the Grand Pacha.

Ascending a flight of stairs, we entered the sitting and bedrooms of our Grand Eunuch, which were similarly arranged to those of the Validè Princess's Grand Eunuch, except

that the furniture and hangings were of plain red satin. The other rooms, both on the right and left, were occupied by the other eunuchs and male attendants.

Leaving this house, we ascended a steep, chalky hill, and opening a large pair of gates, we entered the grounds belonging to the Harem, which consist of a long walk lined with avenues of plane-trees, under which were placed two square marble baths, and at the extremity of the walk we passed into a large neglected kitchen-garden, which is situated upon the heights, and commands a view of the Palace, and one of the finest views of the Bosphorus and the city of Constantinople.

Then descending a noble avenue, we entered a small garden adjoining the Palace, in which stood two marble baths. It contained an immense number of lime, orange, almond, and tamarind trees; also beds of double-headed poppies. Then descending down a noble flight of marble steps, we crossed a large courtyard covered with sand like shingles. Then ascending another flight of steps, we re-entered the Palace by the grand entrance hall.

As soon as the Grand Pacha and myself had finished our inspection of the royal Palace and grounds, we returned to Her Highness's sitting-room, where I found dinner served up upon a large round tray with a silver rim. It contained the usual viands, but was placed upon a large table, at which the whole party was seated. This comprised not only the Viceregal children, but also the black nurses, all of whom made a most ludicrous group; for they were seated on chairs with their legs cocked up like hens at roost, the seats not being wide enough to admit of their doubling themselves up like clasped knives, *à l'Arabe*. Had the chairs, however, been as large as those which the late Viceroy Said Pacha was accustomed to sit in, they might have indulged in that mode, for all of them are of an enormous size. Now and then the slaves kept swinging one leg about, and after the lapse of a few minutes, they wound it round the leg of the chair, but becoming tired of that operation, they all rose up and changed their legs, sat down again, and then resumed their hen-roost postures.

The little Prince and myself could not help

bursting out into a fit of laughter at their *gaucherie*. The table not being furnished with either knives, forks, or spoons, the whole of the party, except the Viceregal children, (whose spoons, &c. had been unpacked,) set to work at their dinner like savages, dipping their fingers into the dishes, helping themselves to whatever they liked, and then conveying those tit-bits to their mouths in a disgusting manner.

After I had witnessed these barbarians partake of their meal, I waited to see what had been provided for me, and, on inquiry, was told nothing! that I must “pig” it with the nurses in that manner, “sans fourchette, sans couteau, sans rien.”

I quitted the room in absolute disgust, nay, in anger. I could not but think that this insult must have been premeditated, for there were about us the same domestics as we had had in Egypt. The Grand Eunuch was with us, the nurses all knew how I had been treated in the Palace at Ghezire—how my meals had been served up to me—what complaints I had made at being obliged to sit down at table with the European menials; and therefore there

really was no excuse for my being placed upon a par, and made to hobnob it with black nurses of the lowest caste.

As I have stated before, I knew that there had been an under-current at work; still it worked steadily on; but my patience was not exhausted, and I was resolved to stem against it. I perceived that the impetuosity of its course was becoming much more rapid since my arrival in what is styled, *par excellence*, the Ottoman dominions, and now I resolved to crush this hydra on the head, if possible. Leaving the room, I proceeded to the Princess Epouse, to whom I complained most bitterly, and point-blank told Her Highness that I could not, and would not, partake of my meals in that disgusting manner.

At first the Princess began to remonstrate with me, alleging that the slaves had not had time to unpack my luggage; for all the glass, china, plate, &c. which had been provided for me in the Harem at Ghezire had been sent on in the other frigate that had accompanied us, and therefore I must put up with it; and as to my viands, why, no others could be cooked, and

I must partake of the leavings of those slaves. “*Malesch, Malesch!*” “Madame, what does it matter!—what does it matter!”

But I now knew the character of the individual with whom I had to deal, so I replied, “*Mafesh, Mafesh, hanem Effendi!*” “Nonsense; nonsense, your Highness!” and as I still insisted, orders were instantly given to have the knives, &c., unpacked, and other viands served up to me; and at the same time she instructed the slaves to go and fetch my dinner, and place it upon the table, and never again to attempt to take their meals until I had finished.

I salaamed, and left Her Highness; but not until she had given orders that the Grand Eunuch should go and purchase me articles of the same furniture that I had had provided for me at Cairo, all of which had been left behind; and when I obtained them, my chamber soon assumed a European aspect.

Her Highness was, as I have already shown, ever ready to do her utmost to contribute to my comfort—she did all that lay in her power; so that it was not she who set the under-cur-

rent in motion (oh, no, not she, indeed!—I had been tried, and found “true as steel,” and she placed the greatest confidence in me), but it was the clique about Ismael Pacha who had been setting it running all this time, and, ignoramuses as they were, they thought I had not sense enough to know it. It was to them that I was indebted for all my sufferings, both mentally and bodily, while an inmate of the Harems of Egypt and Constantinople.

Cui bono? Woman is an enigma, and so I proved to them. I had been cajoled and flattered into the belief that when I went to Constantinople, all would be “*Guzel! guzel!*” “Pretty! pretty!” but I had found it “*Batul! batul!*” “Bad! bad!”

Well, things went on rather more satisfactory for a few days; but as Arab and Ethiopian nurses are like our neighbours on the other side of the water, who invariably *verieiment à leurs moutons*, so did those black denizens. For they soon took every opportunity of annoying me, by bringing a host of the low-caste slaves into my room, dipping their fingers into the dishes before they were placed upon my table, squat-

ting themselves down upon the divan in and on the floor of my chamber; in short, making it "the servants' hall," where they smoked and chattered away in high glee, to my extreme discomfort and abhorrence. Often when I held my finger up to them, as was my custom at Ghezire, and told them to leave my room, instead of obeying my injunction, they stared and grinned at me like idiots.

Things went on in this manner for some time, until I was obliged to call in the interposition of the Grand Eunuch, who ordered them to leave the room, and desired them not to repeat such conduct. Then for a while they would discontinue making my room a "liberty hall," and I was freed from all annoyance; but after a lapse of time they would break out again into their vagaries, slip sily into my chamber, whenever they could gain access thereto, and repeat their annoyance.

The sovereign ruler of the Ottoman dominions, Prince Baksheesh, was the instigator. In Egypt, they obtained baksheesh through my means, because I never despoiled the Grand Pacha, as Shaytan did, but then distributed a

portion of her purloinings among them, and they were content; but now they did not obtain any, as the Prince had no *Baba* near him to fill his pockets with silver or golden coins. So Shaytan could not propitiate her host of evil spirits, and they thought that poor I should be made to do so; but as I received no baksheesh, I had none to dispense.

Our daily life at Bebek was not quite so monotonous as it had been at Ghezire, and, but for my falling ill, it would have passed away most agreeably; for the Viceroy had sent a pony for the Prince, and a sweet pretty Arab steed for myself; both of which were never used during my sojourn at Istamboul.

We rose (I am speaking of myself and the Prince) at six in the morning; when, through the kind attention of one of the ladies of the Sultan's Harem, whom I will call Selina, I was served with a bottle of new milk, and a salver of *symnets*, "rings of milk-bread," like that which is so delicious in Italy, but having seeds on them, which taste like fresh pork.

At half-past seven we breakfasted, and at nine we went for a walk on the promenade,

then, passing along a road on the left hand, we proceeded through a large gate, which led us into the Palace grounds, which were laid out as a fruit and kitchen-garden. They were kept in a high state of cultivation, and being, in fact, neither more nor less than a part of the Heights, presented a most picturesque appearance, many of those elevations being covered with strawberry beds.

Here we used to purchase for a few *paras*, a plentiful supply of fresh-gathered fruit every morning, from the *bostandji*, "gardener," as those grounds did not, as I first imagined, belong to the Sultan. Here, seated on mats, on which the *bostandji* laid Persian rugs, which, when he knew that our visits were almost diurnal, he procured from the Grand Eunuch, I often passed many hours with the Prince, he playing and enjoying his fruit by my side.

After we had partaken of what the Grand Pacha called his *Yorton Cilék*, "Strawberry Feast," we wandered about the Heights, on the top of which stood a small Greek *café*, which commanded an extensive and lovely view of

the Bosphorus, and the cluster of picturesque villages which stood on its banks—there we rested.

We afterwards passed on to a market-place, which was in a most filthy and dilapidated condition; but in rambling about it the Grand Pacha took great delight.

At twelve o'clock, we returned to the Palace, then partook of dinner, the Prince dining with me, to the utter horror of the nurses, who did all in their power to prevent, as they termed it, such an abomination, as the believer and the unbeliever eating together. But the Princess Epouse's *Malesch! Malesch!* frightened them out of their superstitious horror, and so far enlightened them, that they were obliged ever afterwards to look upon such as being perfectly orthodox, which perplexed and puzzled them not a little; and then they thought that wonders would never cease, and would often exclaim, "What is written, is written!" *Bismillah! Bismillah!* "In the name of the most merciful God!" *Allah! il Allah! Mahomet Resoul Allah!* "There is but one God, and Mahomet is His prophet!"

CHAPTER IX.

ONE day, after the Grand Pacha had dined, he told the Grand Eunuch to send up into his apartment an immense chest, which had just arrived in a caïque. Upon being opened, it was found to contain some magnificent toys mechanically constructed, the value of which must have been upwards of 100*l*. I did not learn the name of the donor, but I think they were presents from one of His Highness's reputed partners. With these the little Prince often amused himself in the afternoons.

At five o'clock he supped; after which, we again sallied forth, sometimes on the promenade, and at others we went for a row in a caïque on the beautiful Bosphorus.

At eight o'clock we returned; but it was quite impossible to get His Highness to retire to

rest at any stated period, so that I was obliged to request the *Hekim Bachi*, the Physician to the Viceregal family, who, unknown to the Viceroy, was also the medical attendant on Mustapha Pacha's family, to give the Grand Eunuch instructions that the little Prince should retire at nine o'clock.

These pleasant and agreeable times, however, soon came to an end; for, as I had foreseen, when the *Babai* had ordered his hair to be cut, when on the eve of the departure of the Viceregal party from Alexandria, the Prince caught a slight cold during the voyage. This could have been easily cured had I been permitted, as I suggested, to give him a cordial-cup full of arrow-root at night, and a warm bath before retiring to rest. To this however the Princess Epouse would not consent, but called in the *Hekim Bachi*, who immediately placed him on starving diet, and ordered him to live on chicken broth, braed, and milk. He then gave me a packet of tasteless powders, some magnesia, and a bottle of syrup, with strict injunctions not to give the Prince more than a teaspoonful at a time; to put his feet in hot water, to let him have a basin

of arrow-root when he retired to rest, and to have his chest and back rubbed with green oil.

The *Hekim Bachi* was a strange character; it was only of late years that he had resumed his professional pursuits; for, finding that medicine did not bring sufficient "grist to the mill," he had turned his attention to farming. He was a clever man, but considered "the germs" of a disease quite beneath his treatment. In desperate cases he was extremely skilful; but he was not a proper person to be called in to attend upon any person with whose constitution he was unacquainted. How he managed to hold the appointment of *Hekim Bachi* to the Viceroy's Harem, while he was the medical adviser to Mustapha Pacha, the brother of Ismael Pacha (between whom there existed at that time a most deadly animosity) I am at a loss to know.

Preparatory to retiring to rest, Shaytan undressed him, and the Princess Epouse, accompanied by the ladies of both Harems, and a host of old crones, entered the room. Then a large brass basin was brought into the room by several slaves.

On one side of the foot of the Prince's bed

sat his illustrious mother, the Grand Pacha sitting in the centre, and on the other side was the governess. A slave then advanced and cast some fuller's earth into the brass basin, while the whole assembly exclaimed, *Bismillah!* *Bismillah!* Then hot water was poured upon it, after which a thick wadded coverlet was drawn over the whole party, and thus they had the pleasure of nothing more nor less than a vapour bath, while His Highness kept sipping some lime-flower tea; then his feet and legs, which had remained in the hot water for some time, were taken out and rolled up in the coverlet, which had served the purpose of a vapour-bath. After this a brazier of live charcoal was brought in, into which some ground coffee was thrown, white candied sugar, aloe-wood, myrrh, some peculiar aromatic resin and gum, the fumes of which were wafted into the Prince's face by the Princess Epouse, and his night attire was held over it. Some large pieces of cotton wadding were now held over the brazier until they became thoroughly impregnated with its fumes, and then placed on his chest and back; and in that state His Highness was

put to bed. The whole of the spectators present kept continually exclaiming, *Bismillah! Bismillah! Bismillah!* which brought to my recollection the celebrated incantation scene in Weber's opera of 'Der Freyschutz.'

The next day Shaytan, the head-nurse, contrary to the strict injunctions of the governess, carried the Prince down into the apartment of one of the black slaves, where he caught a fresh cold, owing to the windows being open. As soon as I entered my chamber I missed the Grand Pacha, and proceeded down the grand entrance-hall, in quest of the Prince. That vestibule at the moment looked as if harlequin with his magic wand in a Christmas pantomime had been at his handiwork; for there stood huge bales of the most costly silks, rich satins, soft velvets, fine French merinoes, nets, lawns, linen, calicoes, muslins, both white and coloured, India and Cashmere shawls, silk stockings, huge bales of Parisian boots and shoes of almost every size and description. There were rich chased caskets, whose contents comprised tiaras of magnificent diamonds, almost priceless in value, earrings, bracelets, belts, clasps, chains, rings,

necklaces, sword-hilts, amulets, zarfs of unparalleled beauty, encrusted with most precious jewels, and numerous other gems of art, the brightest and most elegant of which the Grand Eunuch kindly handed to me to feast my eyes upon. All of them were most unique specimens of the handicraft of man and of the mineral kingdom. In short, not being an *artiste*, I cannot give pen-and-ink drawings of them.

Boxes covered with silks, containing Japan china *jindjans*, gold filigree *zarfs*, most richly encrusted with diamonds and precious stones, gold salvers, silver ewers and basins, caskets of jewels, and a host of magnificent miscellaneous objects of *virtu*. In short, the sight of them made me think that I stood on fairy ground. It seemed as if the Viceroy Ismael Pacha had suddenly become the master of Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp, which he must have found in one of the newly-excavated caves on the banks of the Nile, and, having rubbed it as the genii of old did, had become possessed of untold wealth, and thinking perhaps that His Majesty the Sultan Abdul Aziz ought at least to have a share of the treasure trove, he despatched the precious

coin dug out of the bowels of the earth of Egypt to England, France, Italy, in short, all over the continents of Europe and Asia, which enabled this Sinbad of the nineteenth century to collect together the most costly manufactures of the world, and had sent them as presents to his suzerain the poor Sultan, from his Cræsus of a vassal—for the estimated value of them, now a well-established fact, was upwards of half a million of English pounds sterling. It is, indeed, no fiction when I say that were it possible to strike the spades upon the right spots, the whole sod of Egypt would, if turned up by manual labour, become a rival to California—for the cotton mania has sent such heaps of gold into the land of the Pharaohs, which the Arabs have buried in the earth, that it may be said to be coated with that precious metal.

The supposed object of these valuable presents was not an ostentatious desire to display the prosperity of Egypt under the paternal administration of the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, but to manifest that prince's paternal solicitude that His Majesty Sultan Abdul Aziz, "the light of

the world, the sovereign of sovereigns," would take unto his holy keeping (for is he not the Commander of the Faithful?) the Pacha, the Head of the Mahometan religion! that "dot of humanity," the Grand Pacha, and bestow upon him the coveted nomination to the Viceroyship.

All these commodities had been shipped in Alexandria on board the frigate *Ibrahim*, that had accompanied us. The Prince I found busy examining several beautiful articles; and holding up some elegant diamond branches, made in the shape of small parasite plants, to me, he exclaimed, *Ay, Madame, Guzel! Guzel! Ay, Madame!* "Beautiful, Madame! Beautiful, Madame!" I kissed him on the cheek, but scolded him for having left his room, which imprudent act of the head-nurse rendered him an invalid to the time that I quitted the Old Palace.

The domestic life of the odalisques in this palace commenced at four o'clock in the morning, when the ladies of the Sultan's Harem left their couches, repeated their *namuz*, which they did every two hours during the livelong day, (for all of them were fanatics and most religiously

inclined.) partook of *jindjans* of coffee, and smoked cigarettes. At five, the whole of the inmates rose; at six our Grand Eunuch (I call him such in contradistinction to that cunning, crafty "spectre of a man," the Validè Princess's) said prayers to the ladies of all the three Harems, touched the centre of their foreheads with his finger, in which *kohl* had been placed, which left a small black spot upon it like a piece of sticking-plaster. One morning when he drew near towards me, for I had risen much earlier than usual, and happened to be present in the room with the Prince, he was on the point of bestowing upon me the caste-mark of the believer, but I drew back: he smiled and passed on. It was always after she had attended this prayer meeting that Selina, the lady of the Harem to whom I have already alluded, like a charitable geni came with new milk and hot buns, "Exclaiming, 'Eat and drink, in every bit and drop life's essence burns.'" At seven the Grand Paeha, his sister, and myself breakfasted together. At eight we took a promenade, but generally returned at ten. Sometimes we walked up and down the Esplanade, where

stood near to the edge of the azure water of the lovely Bosphorus. And often, ah! too often to be pleasing to the sight, baskets came floating past, most of which, gentle reader, in all probability contained the heads, and many of them the trunks, of human bodies. For it is no uncommon sight in Turkey, "where women always pay the penalty of their misdeeds" by a most severe and summary punishment, which, horrible to say, is privately enforced. Their bodies then are invariably placed in large baskets or sacks, which are thrown into the lovely sapphire-looking river to feed the fish, which swarm here in shoals, against the catching of which there is an Imperial edict.

May not that injunction of the Padishahs have been occasioned by their Majesties' knowledge that the depths of that clear, bright stream is but too often converted into an immense city of the dead? And yet both I and the Prince had often watched with intense interest the singular manner in which the Moslems catch those forbidden tenants of the dreaded Bosphorus. Their mode of taking

them is by smearing a piece of calico about the size of a table-cloth with the roe of some fish, then launching it into the river, and after the lapse of a few moments hauling up a most miraculous draught of fishes. But Europeans eschew them as they do the prawns out of the Ganges, which feed on the corpses cast into it, and which float past the ghauts at Calcutta as the wicker baskets do down the Bosphorus.

When the Grand Pacha saw those baskets float rapidly by the edge of the Promenade, he inquired of me what they contained? I informed His Highness that they contained the corpses of culprits (but what culprits I did not mention) who had been killed, as I supposed, for some crimes that they had committed. And yet most likely many of those baskets contained the murdered bodies of persons perhaps almost as innocent as the little Prince himself.

The basket and the sack in Turkey contain the victims of jealousy, which the handiwork of the eunuchs has sent to their last account! for these spectres of men are, like the Thugs in India, adepts at strangulation. It is no un-

common thing in the Harems to hear them relate to each other, if not their own exploits, at least those of their predecessors in office, and I have often seen the elder ones give their fellow-phantoms illustrations of the manner in which those deeds have been accomplished. This they do with the utmost *sang froid*, while the spectators exclaim, *Aferin! Aferin!* "Well done! well done!"

The little Prince also took great delight in looking at the *Kachumbas* as they glided along filled with *galiondji*, "sailors," belonging to some of the different European vessels at anchor off Galata; for, contrary to the general custom of the Turks, he did not possess such a hatred for all who differed from him in point of faith. He did *not* dislike the Franks, but he abhorred those unclean beasts! those misbelieving dogs! —the Jews; and on one day, when he pointed his little hand to a headless corpse that we saw floating by a *caïque* which lay at anchor in the stream, he inquired of me, if that were not the body of a *kopek*, "dog of an Israelite?" I replied that I did not know. *Basham itchiam*, "By my head!" *jehenum* "Hell" "will be the

portion of that accursed band, as there is but one Allah," added the little Pacha, clapping his tiny hands.

Time after time, barges passed close to the promenade, filled with *araki*, "corn-brandy," and freighted with that harmless-looking white colourless liquid, the wine of Carnabat, for which Carnabat merchants find a ready market, and many a cask of which is kept lodged in the well-secured cellars of wealthy Turks, although it was the *Kishmet* of that extract not to be drunk by all good Mussulmans.

After that we went and climbed up to the Greek café, and there we sat gazing with wonder and delight on the surpassing loveliness of the picturesque scenery by which it is surrounded.

At noon their Highnesses the Princesses dined; but if (which frequently happened) they went out in the morning in caïques or carriages, and did not return until late, none of the ladies of the Harem were allowed to partake of either dinner or supper, as the case might be, until their return. If they were absent much beyond the usual dinner-hour, the

ladies of the Harem would pay a visit to the governess (*cocana*, "lady," as they termed her), and ask her to allow them to partake of her dinner, which being cooked *à l'Arabe*, they enjoyed with much *gusto*; and then the Grand Pacha's and my own slaves had short commons.

I am always ready to bestow praise where praise is due, and must acknowledge that while a guest within the precincts of the Sultan's palace at Bebek, there was abundance of everything and the Turkish and Arab *cuisine*, for its kind, was exceedingly good.

When dinner was finished, the ladies of the Sultan's Harem went about their usual occupations. They had no slaves to attend upon them—I am only speaking of those who resided with us at Bebek. They employed their time in filling the Sèvres china jars in the apartments with fresh water, setting up the wax candles in the chandeliers and candelabras, arranging their chambers, decorating the rooms with fresh-gathered bouquets; in short, their lives may not inappropriately be likened to those of nuns in a convent.

The younger slaves officiated as chambermaids. The aged ladies, however, did nothing; but were waited upon most attentively by the younger ones.

The washing and ironing of the linen of the Viceregal family and suite was carried on at the old palace, on account of the badness of the water for that purpose; so that on Wednesdays and Thursdays the whole of the slaves belonging to the Egyptian Harems went over to that palace, which greatly inconvenienced the Grand Pacha and myself, as then we had not a single attendant to wait upon us. On these two days the whole establishment was up and about at break of day, the rooms were turned topsyturvy, the matting taken up off the floors, and the whole of the interior of the palace swept and garnished, "when disorder reigned throughout the Harem's curtained galleries."

The slaves belonging to the Sultan's Harem washed and got up their own linen in the Harem. The general appearance of this bevy of ladies was not, as Tom Moore, in his 'Lalla Rookh,' describes,

“Maids from the West, with sunbright hair,
And from the garden of the Nile,
Delicate as the roses there ;

for they were indeed very plain—nay, ordinary, and some absolutely ugly.

His Highness the Prince and myself dined punctually at twelve o'clock, at which repast we were waited upon by slaves belonging to the Sultan's Harem. The Validè Princess always took her meals alone, and the ladies of her Harem and her suite regaled themselves off the scraps. Sometimes the Princess Epouse would invite some of the aged ladies of the Harem to dinner ; but the ladies of her Harem and slaves were also fed with the scraps. So that as regards “the table” (to use a sea-phrase), there was but one, which showed that strict economy was the order of the day in the Imperial as well as the Viceregal household.

It was highly amusing to see the ladies of the Harem and slaves squat themselves down upon the floor in a circle, holding most elegant Sèvres china cups and saucers, with gold spoons, in their hands ; while the freezing pail of lemon

ice stood in the centre, into which they dipped their spoons, filled their cups, and even their saucers (as most undoubtedly they thought that it was impossible to have too much of a good thing), with that refreshing condiment, and handed them round to each other; and ever and anon they dipped the gold spoons into the pail, and regaled themselves to their hearts' content.

Their Highnesses, both before and after dinner, went out for an airing, either in caïques or carriages, down to Stamboul, each attended by their respective Grand Eunuch, and other attendants. Sometimes they were accompanied by a few of the ladies of the Harem; then they went shopping. At other times they would receive visitors, both rich and poor; give audiences to their dressmakers, to whom all their dress-pieces were sent from Egypt to be made up; and also to their bootmaker's wife. At four o'clock they lay down, after having smoked their pipes.

“Then their pure hearts to transport given,
Swell like the wave, and glow like heaven.”

At six o'clock they rose, dressed themselves in

their evening toilette, and went out in caïques on the beautiful Bosphorus; sometimes to pay visits to the different Harems and at others they accompanied their visitors to their Harems. (The Validè Princess very seldom went out in the evening, but often sent for the governess and the Grand Pacha.) At eight o'clock they supped.

The ladies of the Sultan's Harem were much more civilized than those of the Viceroy's; for they amused themselves of an evening singing songs to their own accompaniments on castanets; while others sat quietly in a group, not like the dames of olden times, plying at their distaffs and spindles, but industriously employed in useful needlework, repairing their own garments; others again played at cards and dominoes;—all smoking, and sipping *jindjans* of coffee out of *zarfs* of gold, encrusted with diamonds.

At ten o'clock our Grand Eunuch, who appeared to have taken upon himself the office of Mufti ever since our arrival at Bebek, shouted forth the call to prayer; “and down upon the fragrant sod kneels with his forehead

to the east, lisping the eternal name of God." After that the Harem's gates and doors were locked.

One morning, soon after our arrival at Bebek, and when the Viceregal children were suffering from severe colds, they were playing in the Grand Pacha Ibrahim's apartment, which was filled with white and black slaves, both of the upper and lower class, some running about the room like mad creatures, others squatting down in dirty crumpled muslin dresses, of the introduction of which heterogeneous assembly into His Highness's room I had already complained to the Princess Epouse, but without effect, as it was always stated that they came to pay their respects to the Grand Pacha.

After the young slaves had been romping about for some time, one of them came running up to me, and informed me that the large diamond in the waistband of the little Princess, which had only been fastened on a few moments before, by her own nurse, was missing. That seemed to me rather a singular incident, as the Princess had never quitted the apartment. Search was immediately made for the *elmas*,

“diamond,” but it could nowhere be found. The matting and carpets were removed, the divans, chairs (their cushions), tables, corners, crevices, and every place were examined, and the room swept, but still no traces of it could be discovered. The slaves were questioned, but denied all knowledge of it.

The head-nurse, Shaytan, with all the effrontery in the world, walked up to me, and with one of the cunningest leers imaginable, inquired of me whether I had taken it? I replied, very coolly, “No! I have not! and what is more, I have never set eyes on it to-day, as I did not see the little Princess after her nurse had dressed her.”

Her Highness the Princess Epouse was sent for, and as soon as she became aware of the loss, she burst into a flood of tears, for that *elmas* had been the gift of the Viceroy to her before they were married, and therefore she prized it greatly, and not for its intrinsic value, which was, however, estimated at 500*l*. The Grand Eunuch was sent for, and then another search was made, but with no better success. At length it was given up as a bad job.

The little Princess's nurse, who was an honest, upright woman, cried most bitterly; upon seeing which, the Grand Eunuch approached her, exclaiming, *Malesch! Malesch!* But the poor creature continued to weep, as she well knew that if it were not found she would be most frightfully branded: Shaytan looked most angrily at her, but uttered not a syllable.

At length the Princess put herself into a towering passion, and told the eunuch, that if it was not forthcoming on her return, (for she was then on the eve of her departure, to accompany the Validè Sultana in her yacht,) she would have the whole of the nurses and slaves flogged.

Then a slave approached the Princess, and handed her a *zarf*, with a *jindjan* of coffee. She sipped it, but not relishing the taste of it, or else not having overcome her passion, she spat into it, as was invariably her custom when she disliked anything, threw the beautiful Japan *jindjan* with its contents on the floor, and stamped her feet upon it, which broke it into a thousand pieces, which the slaves quickly removed.

I was quite aware in my own mind that Shaytan had wrenched the diamond off the band. I said not a word, as that would have been dangerous to myself; but told the Princess's nurse, that she had better watch an opportunity, and look into the head-nurse's *sarat*, "trunk," when she found it open. Poor thing, she cried for days and nights, most piteously. About two days before I left the Palace, the Princess's nurse made another search, "swept and garnished" the apartments, and lo and behold! by the side of Shaytan's *sarat*, there lay the diamond, just as if it had been dropped there by pure accident. The artful Shaytan, not feeling inclined to undergo a flogging, for she knew that the Princess Epouse always kept her word, whether for good or evil, had disgorged her prize. But it is impossible for me to describe the excessive delight of the Princess's nurse when she found it—then indeed did she "weep for joy."

Another day we sauntered up the flower-enameled heights, and the lovely view which I there beheld will never be effaced from my memory. As I scanned the horizon, at one

moment I caught sight of the Muezzins on the balconies of the minarets, taking their Asmodeus-like observations of the doings of the denizens who were perambulating about the three cities; for they are the most arrant spies and busybodies alive, scarcely anything or object escaping their observation. This knowledge they are ever ready to turn to the most profitable account, for they are devout worshippers of the Sovereign Prince Baksheesh, who here reigns as dominant as in Egypt.

Here I gazed on the crowds of people embarking in caïques from the numerous *scales*, now and then several *arobas*, "covered carts," drawn by bulky bullocks, ascending the various steep elevated ascents; I saw also closely-veiled figures, flitting about the *Cities of the Silent*, to which I observed numerous processions depart from the *scale* of the *Meit Iskellese*, "Ladder of the Dead." Then, listening to the various sounds that vibrated on the clear atmosphere, I heard the *improvisatori* chanting of the *cackdjis*, one of which commenced with--

"My childhood's home was 'mid the isles
That gem the bright Ægean sea;"

then the rude singing of the sailors hauling up the anchors of their ships, at the mast-heads of which floated the Blue Peter, that signal of departures to distant lands; the buzzing of the dense population of the bay's three cities (Stamboul, Pera, and Galata); the howling of the legion of mongrels that prowled about in all directions; the booming of distant cannon; the soft music of the military bands at the different barracks, floating on the rippling waters; the hallooing of the *Hamalls*, as they wended their way with their heavy loads up the steep ascents; the bleating of the sheep grazing hard by; the trampling of horses' hoofs; the words of command, as the troops were being drilled on the parade-grounds; and now and then the stentorian howling of those incorrigible beggars, the Howling Dervishes, with whom it is almost as dangerous for a Frank to trust himself alone (unless well armed), as it now is for a tourist to perambulate about the environs of Naples, lest he fall into the hands of the Italian banditti.

Sometimes the Prince partook of his supper

at five o'clock, as he was not made to conform to the rule laid down by the precept of the *Suna*: "Eat not till the planet of the fourth heaven, the all-beneficent sun, hath hidden his rays behind the mountain Kaf." When that was the case, we sallied forth for an evening ramble on the Esplanade, which was generally thronged with loungers at that period of the evening. But whenever their Highnesses the Princesses and *Kadins* ("the ladies of the Sultan's Harem") thought proper to frequent it, then the *Kislar Agha*, and his formidable guard, with their drawn scimitars, stationed themselves on the heights, and no individual was allowed to approach there, which was on other occasions a public promenade. Sometimes they entered one of the caïques, and took an excursion on the Thracian Bosphorus, when the beautiful moonbeams reflected their soft light on the sparkling waves.

At other times they visited the lovely shores of Beshik-Tach, and its palace; Istenia, with its beautiful suburbs; Therapia, and the splendid palaces of the foreign ambassadors; nor did they omit to wander about Buyuk-Deri.

We often entered some beautiful and large gardens belonging to some of the wealthiest Turks, which were laid out in the Oriental style; and as it was summer-time, the air was impregnated with the delicious and powerful odours of citrons, roses, myrtles, jasmynes, azalias, lovely passion-flowers, almond-flowers, rose laurels, pomegranates, cedars, &c. The well-kept avenues were refreshingly shaded with large bananas, lofty palms, tall cypress, and the banian-spreading *tehinars* (plane-trees). Dotted about were several gilded aviaries, full of birds of most superb plumage, and lively songsters; and here and there the air was cooled by the flowing of the waters which were spurted forth from numerous elegantly-sculptured fountains. While gazing upon this scene, the Prince prattled away, asking me the names of the exotics that bloomed around them, and inquiring if I had such lovely flowers in my own country.

At times he would go and seat himself in one of the kiosks, in which he generally found a crimson satin cushion, which the owner, who had watched the little Prince at the time of his first visit to his pleasure-garden, had ordered

to be placed there, as also one for the *Khatoun Inglese*, "English lady," as he designated me.

On the last occasion when he went there, a short time before he fell sick, he found a basketful of strawberries, and porcelain cups filled with iced sherbet, in his favourite kiosk. Then he ran up to me, exclaiming, "Oh, madam, pray do not laugh at me, but only see! My *djin*, 'spirit,' fairy-like, has laid luncheon for us in the kiosk; and I have placed all the chocolate buttons, that you are so fond of, on a plate for you!" Upon which I followed His Highness: and, true enough, there I found the frugal repast, of which we both most cheerfully partook.

Frequently we were rowed in a caique, which transported us to the beautiful Asiatic shores, where His Highness loved to sit down upon his Persian rug, beneath the wide-spreading and luxuriant *tehinars*, at Hunkiar Eskellesi; and often under the shade of the noble *tehinars*, "plane-trees," I also sat and contemplated the beauties of nature as well as the Grand Pacha, Ibrahim; for, young as he was, he possessed that inherent characteristic of his race,

the study of Nature in all her pristine loveliness, and which was here presented to his gaze in most variegated shapes and forms.

Sometimes we selected the Valley of the Grand Seignor as our retreat, and then the banian-like foliage of the great walnuts afforded us most grateful shelter. Now and then he would climb the Giant's Mountain, which commands one of the most incomparable panoramas ever beheld; and when he caught sight of the tapering minarets of the white marble mosques, on the balconies of which stood the muezzins, ready to chant the *Esan*, "call to prayer," then, in an ecstasy of delight, he would clap his tiny hands, and exclaim, "Oh, madam, look! the mesjed! — the mosque!" Calling attention to the steamers on the river, he would begin to imitate the captains, and shout out, "*Aivali! Aivali! Di! Imote!*" "Bravo, boy! Courage! Go on!"

At other times he would look up at the cloudless sky, and then inquire of me if I did not think that the heavenly Paradise Mahomet had promised to the faithful must not indeed be "*Pek quiyis! pek quiyis! Mashallah!*"

Allah karim!” “Very pretty! very pretty! How wonderful is the wisdom of God! God is merciful!” But then added His Highness, “No *kopek* (dog) of a Jew can enter there;” for he had an abomination of the Hebrew race.

One day the Grand Pacha took it into his head to have the whole of his little female slaves dressed in male attire, and, sending for the Sultan’s court *terzi-ile*, “tailor,” he ordered him to take their measures for two suits. After that was done, he had his own taken for half-a-dozen private suits, and for all the uniforms of various regiments in the Sultan’s service, the patterns of which were placed before him. Then his male attendants underwent the same ordeal.

The Validè Princess’s Grand Eunuch being in the apartment at the time, but not understanding French, could not speak to the *terzi-ile*, so he requested me to have the kindness to become the interpreter, and to explain that he required him to make him several suits of clothes, also a mantle, which he wanted to wear on the approaching state occasion of his having to attend the Validè Princess on her visit to the

Sultan. I accordingly made the tailor understand that the Grand Eunuch had seen the portrait of the late Prince Consort, dressed in his Field-Marshal's uniform, and wearing the blue mantle of the Knights of the Garter, and that he desired to have one of a similar shape, only of crimson instead of blue velvet; and, it should be added, the *terzi-ile* executed the order with great ability.

After His Highness had amused himself by looking attentively at the minuteness with which the "schneider" used his tape-measure, he turned round to me, and entreated me also to be measured for a suit; then coming up close to my side, and looking into my face with a most winning smile, he added, "Do, madam: you will look so *guzel! pek guzel!* ('pretty! very pretty!') in a richly-embroidered male attire." But I declined the honour he intended me, with many thanks.

One morning I was surprised, on entering His Highness's room, to find that the ceremony of breaking bread over His Highness's head was being performed. In a basket were placed about a hundred small loaves (similar in size to

the five-centesimi loaves sold in Italy) of European bread, nine of which were broken by Shaytan—that very impersonification of the Angel of Darkness—over the Grand Pacha's head; the head-nurse counting their number in Arabic as they were broken up. Only seven were broken over the head of Her Highness the little Princess. This ceremony was performed with European bread, because no Arab bread was ever provided in the Sultan's palace; but I was unable to learn the origin of that superstitious rite.

One day His Highness the Prince perceived a very pretty small gold ring which I wore on my little finger. It was twisted in the shape of a serpent, having two rubies placed in the head for the eyes, and the scales were exquisitely enamelled. His Highness took a fancy to it, upon which I took it off my finger, made him *bokshalik*, “a present” of it, and placed it on the second finger of his right hand, with which he salaams.

Her Highness the first wife having admired it, owing to its being in the form of a serpent (as such is valued by the Arabs as a token of

immortality, because snakes shed their skin annually), offered to give me a superb diamond ring, valued at 500*l.*, off her own finger, if the little Prince would let Her Highness have it; but that he most positively refused to do, at which his mother, the Princess Epouse, smiled. The head-nurse, Shaytan, having seen me place it upon the Grand Pacha's finger, and hearing that Her Highness the Lady Paramount had coveted it, as soon as she took him into his bedroom, under pretence of changing his pantaloons, began to wrench the ring off his finger, as it fitted tight, and His Highness was reluctant to part with it. In the struggle to accomplish her vile object of stealing the ring, she tore away a piece of his flesh, as she lacked the sense to moisten his hand with water, in order to slip it off easily, and he shrieked out most lustily, which brought myself, the ladies of the Harem, Grand Eunuch, and slaves, into his apartment.

As soon as I looked at his finger, I perceived that the ring was missing, when I immediately desired her to produce it. The Princess Epouse, who had by this time entered the room, glanced most angrily at the head-nurse, who then handed

me the ring, which the Princess took into her own keeping, and ever after it remained in her jewel-case, and was only worn by the Grand Pacha on grand occasions, but is highly prized on account of its shape, for anything in the form of a crocodile is considered by the Egyptians as a very lucky omen. Hence so many of the doors at Cairo have figures of that animal sculptured over them.

CHAPTER X.

LONG before break of day, on the morning after the loss of the *Elmas*, the whole of the inmates of the Harem at Bebek were up and stirring, as their Highnesses the Validè Princess and the Princess Epouse were going to pay their state visit to the Validè Sultana (the Sultan's mother), at the Sultan's Palace, as the Imperial Harem, at which the Validè Sultana was then staying, is situated within the palace. It is entered by two most exquisitely-gilded bronze gates, the portals of which are strictly guarded by several eunuchs, who will not even allow the *Kislar Aqaci* to enter therein without the express orders of His Sublime Majesty.

It is almost impossible to describe the hurry and confusion that reigned in the whole esta-

blishment. At five o'clock upwards of fifty caïques, of various descriptions, were ranged about the palace landing-place, and two regiments of soldiers, in full-dress uniforms, mounted guard. Then commenced the loading of the heavy caïques with those costly treasures of which I have previously given a description, as having been shipped on board the frigate at Alexandria.

Her Highness the Valide Princess wore on this grand occasion a most magnificently rich white satin robe, elaborately embroidered with gold thread, pearls, diamonds, and various coloured silks. Her long train was trimmed with flounces of very deep point lace and flowers, and the bodice was ornamented with a rich lace bertha and gold ribbons. The stomacher was composed of large diamonds, sapphires, and rubies, which matched the rich embroidery of the dress most admirably.

Her head was covered with a beautiful pink gauze handkerchief, around which was placed a splendid tiara of costly diamonds, composed of crescents, stars, and palm-leaves, forming the Sultan's crest. Her arms were ornamented

with beautiful sapphire and spotless opal bracelets. Her feet were encased in white silk stockings, white satin shoes, embroidered with coloured silks, pearls, gold and silver thread, with high gold heels, over which she wore a pair of yellow morocco boots. Her waist was encircled with a belt of sapphires. On her fingers she wore several diamond rings, many of the stones of which were almost as large as the celebrated Koh-i-noor diamond, since it has been cut. Her cloak was of rich sky-blue satin, lined with white satin, and over her face she wore a superb Brussels veil, one end of which was placed over the head, and the other crossed over the mouth and nose, then passed round the back of the neck and tucked down under the cloak.

She carried in her hand a very handsome blue silk parasol, lined with white satin trimmed with rich bullion fringe, and having a gold handle, encrusted with agates, amethysts, corals, diamonds, emeralds, hyacinths, jaspers, opals, pearls, rubies, topazes, and turquoises.

Her Grand Eunuch carried over her head a rich sky-blue silk umbrella, with a mother-of-pearl handle, quite as large as those used for

carriages in Europe. Her eyelids were blackened with kohl, and on her forehead was the sectarian kohl spot.

Her Highness the Princess Epouse wore a most superb thick white moiré-antique silk robe, with a long train, trimmed with handsome point Alençon lace, having rich ruches of tulle and pink artificial daisies all round it. The body and sleeves were also trimmed with silver ribbon and daisies. The bertha was composed of rich lace, ribbons, and daisies. Her slender waist was encircled with a ceinture composed of sapphires and diamonds.

On her arms she wore diamond bracelets. Around her neck was clasped a superb diamond necklace. Her head was adorned with a tiara of diamonds, arranged in the shape of Indian wheat, the weight of which was very great. An immense branch, forming a geranium flower in full blossom, composed of opals, diamonds, emeralds, rubies, amethysts, formed the stomacher of her dress. A pink satin Turkish cloak, with sleeves and cape, was placed on her shoulders. Her face was covered with a rich Brussels lace veil, one end of which was placed

over the head, and the other end crossed over the mouth and nose, passed round the back of the neck, and tucked down behind the cloak. Her feet were encased in white silk stockings, white satin shoes, richly embroidered with coloured silks, pearls, and gold and silver thread, with high gold heels, over which she wore a pair of yellow morocco *papooshes*, "slippers."

In her hand she held a rich pink silk parasol, lined with white satin, trimmed with a deep silver fringe, with a gold handle, inlaid with a great variety of precious stones. On her fingers were a large yellow diamond and a beautiful sapphire ring. Her Grand Eunuch held over her head a handsome large pink silk umbrella.

I assisted at Her Highness's toilette, and when she was dressed, she turned round and asked me if her costume was *à la Franca*, and like those worn by any of our European Princesses. It is almost impossible for me to give a correct pen-and-ink drawing of the splendour of the costumes of these Princesses, who looked the impersonification of

for the appearance of H. H. the Princess Epouse was that of

“A beauty for ever unchangingly bright,
Like the long sunny lapse of summer day's light,
Shining on, shining on, by no shadow made tender,
Till love falls asleep in its sameness of splendour;”

while that of Her Highness the Validè Princess, the idol of Ibrahim Pacha's devotion, was

“Like the light upon autumn's soft shadowy days,
Now here, and now there, giving warmth as it flies
From the lip to the cheek, from the cheek to the eyes;
Now melting in mist and now breaking in gleams,
Like the glimpses a saint hath of Heaven in his dreams.”

These two beauteous courtly dames were “the Stars of Egypt.”

When their Highnesses entered the Grand Reception-room, prior to taking their departure, they were joined by the ladies of both the Sultan's and Viceregal Harems, to whom

“they turned, and as they spoke,
A sudden splendour all around them broke,”

for the whole of them were dressed in most magnificent variegated coloured brocaded silks

of the costliest kind, wearing large Turkish cloaks, *feridges*, of the same materials.

Their heads were covered with small coloured gauze handkerchiefs; their faces veiled with superb Brussels net veils; their foreheads were ornamented with tiaras of diamonds, emeralds, rubies, sapphires, turquoises, pearls, and other precious stones; their arms, fingers, and ears were ornamented with diamond bracelets, rings, earrings, and their waists and necks were encircled with ceintures of precious stones and diamond necklaces. Gold watches hung at their waistbands, suspended from massive gold chains. Many of them wore two chains attached to them, all of which marked the Turkish time. Their fingers were tinged with the scarlet *henna*, their eyelids dyed with *kohl*, and the sectarian *kohl* spot was on their foreheads. Their feet were encased in white silk stockings, and embroidered white satin slippers, over which they wore a pair of yellow morocco *papooshes*.

Each carried in her hands a coloured silk parasol to match her dress, with gold ferrules and mother-of-pearl handles, inlaid with precious stones. There, as they stood, they looked like

a galaxy of beauteous sprites, the denizens of a fairy land, and the attendants of two fairy queens.

At ten o'clock their Highnesses' caïques, with the Turkish standards floating at the prow and stern, were hauled along the side of the landing-place, the whole length of which, from the threshold of the grand entrance, was covered with rich Brussels carpet. The Caidjis who rowed the Princesses were dressed in richly-embroidered sky-blue silk velvet jackets, trimmed with silver buttons, and white silk trousers. They wore on their fingers beautiful diamond rings, their baksheesh from their Highnesses, and sat on cushions of blue satin, fringed with gold, and ornamented with gold tassels.

At the grand entrance two regiments of infantry were drawn up in full-dress uniforms, and as their Highnesses descended the staircase and passed out on to the landing-place, (which was covered over with an awning,) attended by their elegantly-attired suites, the band struck up the Sultan's March, the soldiers presented arms, and shouted "Long live the Princess Validè Kanum Effendi, the Princess Epouse!"

Her Highness the Validè Princess entered her caïque first, then Her Highness the second wife followed. They were both attended by their Head Eunuchs, who were dressed in European costume, each wearing over his shoulders a large crimson velvet cloak embroidered with gold, lined with white satin, trimmed with ermine, and fastened round the throat with bullion tassels and cord, the tassels hanging over the right shoulder, similar in shape and form to that worn by the Knights of the Garter, wearing their diamond-hilted swords sheathed in gold scabbards, hanging from gold belts fastened with diamond clasps. Each had a pair of gold epaulets upon his shoulders. They took with them no less than ten different suits of habiliments, each suit having gold cords and tags to correspond, in order that they might appear in a new uniform daily during the Vice-regal visit to the Sultan's Harem. They were also accompanied by their attendants. They knelt in the stern, each holding the large umbrellas over their Highnesses' heads. Then followed the ladies of the Harem, four of whom occupied a caïque.

Then followed a caïque with four officers, two Turks and two Arabs, holding drawn swords in their hands. The rear guard of this river procession was brought up by numerous other caïques, containing the guard of infantry and the attendant slaves. The Princesses and attendants also took with them upwards of ten different kinds of new dresses, all of which were worn during their visit.

Then they proceeded to the Sultan's palace, the new one, or Palace of the Bosphorus, as it is called *par excellence*. It is an immense pile of buildings, the marble steps by which it is entered bathing in the sapphire and rapid-flowing river. It is of *plateresco* style of architecture, and resembles a huge model of the finest workmanship of a Lisbon goldsmith. Its windows, balconies, pilasters, festooned frames, sculpture and arabesque-work, remind one of the beautiful Palazzo Doria of Venice, except that the former is a large stately structure, and the latter but a diminutive model. The hybrid composite front is rich and elegant in appearance, and to sum up all, it is, as that gifted author Gautier has stated, "a palace which might be the work of an orna-

mentist who was not an architect, and who spared neither the hand, nor labour, nor time, nor yet expense."

The wings of this enormous building are neither so lofty, nor in unison with the centre-piece. A noble terrace runs along the whole extent, "bordered on the side toward the river with a line of columns, linked to each other by an elegant rich wrought-iron balustrade railing, in which the iron curves and twines in a thousand arabesques and flowers, like the figures which a bold penman traces with free hand upon the paper."

Landing on this terrace their Highnesses were received with all the honours due to their exalted rank. The steps were covered with Brussels carpet, a guard of honour consisting of eunuchs lined the approach, and their band struck up the Sultan's March as they landed and proceeded across a spacious marble hall, the floor of which was covered with matting and strips of carpet. The ceiling was beautifully painted in fresco, as also the walls.

Proceeding' up the grand staircase they were ushered by the *Kislar Agaci* into the Grand

Reception Saloon of the Sultana Validè, which is a lofty room looking upon the Bosphorus. The ceiling is in elegant and fresh coloured fresco, and is, as Gautier has most naïvely and accurately described it. "a perfect marvel of elegance and ingenuity; for now they are skies of turquoise, streaked with light clouds, that form depths of inconceivable profundity in their intervals; then immense veils of lace of marvellous design; next, a vast shell of pearl irradiated with all the hues of the prism, or imaginary flowers hanging their leaves and tendrils through trellises of gold." The floor was covered with handsome Brussels carpet, the walls hung with immense mirrors, which reached from the ceiling down to the floor. The whole of the furniture, which is ormolu and gold, is of French manufacture; the covers of the chairs and sofas are of white satin, embroidered with gold crescents and bees. The hangings of the doors and curtains correspond, and are lined with rose-pink silk. The tables are similarly ornamented to those in the palace at Babec (Bebek).

Her Highness the Validè Sultana, who was

richly but plainly dressed in a pink satin robe elegantly trimmed, and wearing a profusion of diamonds and other precious ornaments, received the homage (for here the Viceroys of Egypt have only the rank of Viziers, and their mothers and wives are placed on a footing of equality with those of the other Viziers) of the "Stars of Egypt," and pointed to them to be seated on the divan on each side of her. She is rather handsome, about the same age as the Validè Princess of Egypt, equally as shrewd in character, and bearing a family resemblance to her. Then the usual refreshments were handed round, and pipes smoked. After the Princesses had remained here some time sipping coffee, eating *boupons*, "Turkish sweetmeats," and puffing away at their pipes, the Sultana Validè rose up, and followed by her Viceregal guests and staff of attendants, passed into another reception-chamber, which Gautier has most accurately described as being "a casket, the jewels of which are spread about in picturesque disorder; necklaces, whose pearls have broken from their chain, and rolled forth like drops of hail, while a perfect flood of diamonds, sapphires,

and rubies forms the basis of the decoration. Censers of gold painted upon the cornices, send forth the blue or clouded smoke of their perfumes, and cover one ceiling with the varying tints of their transparent vapour."

There they were received by the Sultana of the year, who was doubled up on the divan like a clasped knife; by her side lay the ivory sceptre, the emblem of her rank. She pointed to her guests to be seated; the Valide Sultana occupied the seat of honour, and the "Stars of Egypt" sat on the other side.

In this apartment were assembled the Ladies of the Harem, who are divided into five classes. Those of the highest rank, who are called *Kalens*, chiefly natives of Salonica and Circassia, are the Sultan's mistresses; close by stood the *Odalisques*, about seventy in number, all of whom attend upon the Sultan, and form, as it were, his personal staff. The favourite of the period is termed the *Ikbal*, who, if she become *enceinte*, is raised to the rank of a *Kalen*, and behind them were a whole host of *Oustas*, "upper domestic slaves," who form the Valide Sultana and the Harem's household staff. A

little in advance of them stood the *Daulas*, "nurses," with the children, and bringing up the rear were the *Ghez-Metkian*, "the lower caste slaves," who perform all the drudgery in the household.

The census of the Imperial Harem must be about three hundred souls, the majority of whom are of Circassian, Greek, Caucasian, Egyptian, and Ethiopian origin. Most of them are totally unacquainted with their parentage, or even the land of their nativity. They are all subservient to the *Kadens*, who in their turn pay implicit obedience to the commands, whims, and caprices of the Sultana of the year, "the lady with the ivory sceptre," whose exalted position is by no means an enviable one, as the other Odaliskes adopt all kinds of intrigues, plots, and often have recourse even to poison to supplant her; but the moment that she becomes *eneinte*, all their vile machinations cease, and they bow their knees before her with submission and respect.

The usual refreshments, pipes, and cigarettes were served round to their Highnesses. I then accompanied one of the Ladies of the Harem

into one of the large corridors, and entered her apartment, the door of which, like those of all the others, led into it like the cells of nuns in a convent, and at the end of each corridor were the eunuchs' quarters.

Then we passed into another reception-room, where Phingari bursts through the opening of the cloud, and displays the silver bow, so dear to the Moslem; Aurora tinges with blushes a morning sky; or farther on, a piece of embroidery, glowing with light, shows its golden texture, confined by a clasp of carbuncles. Arabesques with countless interlacements, sculptured caskets, masses of jewels, wildernesses of flowers, vary these subjects in innumerable ways, totally beyond the reach of description. In short, it is impossible that my feeble pen-and-ink drawings can give the imagination of the reader a correct idea of the gorgeous and fairy-like magnificence displayed here.

Amidst the luxury of this regal splendour, and the enjoyment of profuse hospitality, their Highnesses the Princesses and the numerous suites whiled away a fortnight. The time was passed in paying visits, making excursions on

the Bosphorus in caiques, promenading about the gardens, and shopping; for the reader must know that the ladies in Turkey go about freely, and are not caged up in Harems, as they are in Egypt.

All the Ladies of the Harem soon fraternized together, and accompanied their Highnesses the Princesses in their perambulations.

I and the Prince soon took our leave, and returned to the Palace at Bebek, and on my arrival I was informed that I must get ready to accompany the Grand Pacha and his suite to pay their state visit to the Sultan. Next morning I was rather surprised at the Grand Eunuch entering my room very early. He apologized to me, and hoped that I would not feel offended, but I was not to accompany their Highnesses to the Sultan's, as he would take charge of them, and I was to *go alone* to pay my respects.

Very early the next morning, the Grand Eunuch came into the reception-room for their Highnesses. He was in one of his best humours, and amused me very much by the droll manner in which he attempted to salute the Prince

according to our European mode. He advanced close to him, then bowed most respectfully, at the same time exclaiming, "Gud mourning, gud mourning, your High—ness, your High—ness"—drawing back until he reached the door.

Another eunuch, the second in rank, and who would become the Grand Eunuch should that official die or retire, had picked up a few words of English, and he also saluted the Prince in the same manner, at which he was quite pleased; but he had that morning been guilty of a breach of etiquette, for which I reprovod him. The fact was, that in the hurry of the moment he had forgotten to leave his overshoes at the door, so I sent him back, knowing full well that no European should ever allow a native to show less respect to him than he is obliged to show to persons of rank in his own country, or he would abuse his calling, and treat him contemptuously, if not with positive disrespect. It was, however, quite an oversight on the part of this eunuch, whose name was Southcote for he always behaved most kindly to me.

In a few moments Shaytan entered the room

with the Grand Pacha, who was dressed in the splendid uniform of a Grand Pacha of the highest rank. He wore a dress black coat, the front of which was completely covered with one mass of gold embroidery, trimmed with gold buttons. The corners of the tails were richly embroidered, having two gold buttons fastened behind at the waist. It was buttoned up close to the neck, the collar also being embroidered with gold. His trousers were of black cloth, decorated with strips of gold lace down each side; his feet were encased in silk stockings and patent-leather boots, with high heels and gold spurs; on his shoulders were placed two gold epaulets, his small diamond-hilted sword was sheathed in a gold scabbard encrusted with diamonds, and girded round his waist by a gold belt, fastened with a diamond clasp in the shape of a crescent.

A small diamond star hung on his breast, attached to a blue ribbon, which was placed across his left shoulder. His head was covered with a *fez*, and on his forehead was placed the sectarian black spot, which was *not* made of *kohl*, as it ought properly to have been done,

for the head-nurse, not having any of that pigment by her, was obliged—oh! “say it not in Gath, tell it not in Ascalon!”—to make it with the *black ink* taken out of the Dog of a Christian’s inkstand, miscreant, “*Ghannou*,” though she was. His overcoat was of black velvet, lined with crimson silk.

He was accompanied by the young Princess, his sister, who wore a white satin dress, with a long train richly embroidered with gold leaves. round her waist was a gold belt, fastened with a diamond clasp in the form of a crescent; her tiny feet were encased in white satin embroidered shoes with gold heels, like those of their Highnesses the Princesses, over which she wore “*paipoushes*” of yellow morocco. Her head was covered with a small sky-blue velvet *fec*, encircled with a band composed of small pearls, diamonds, and gold thread, the tassels being made of similar stones. Their cloaks were of light mauve-coloured silk, lined with pale green satin. In her hand she carried a parasol of the same material with a pearl handle, studded with pearls and diamonds. Her beautiful jet black hair hung down her back in long curls.

She was accompanied by her own young slaves, and the Prince's attendants, all of whom were dressed in male attire, made expressly for the occasion by the Sultan's *terzi-ile*. The female slaves were attired in most costly silks of various colours. Then they descended into the grand entrance-hall, and I accompanied them down to the terrace, where I saw them safely seated in their caïques.

Upon their Highness's arrival at the Sultan's palace they alighted at the terrace, were received with due honours, and then ushered by the Grand Eunuch into the Sultan's apartments. These are all superb rooms, and furnished in the most costly modern manner, in imitation of those at Versailles, only considerably Orientalized. The whole of the ceilings are painted in fresco, and from them hung suspended magnificent gilt chandeliers: the floors are covered with rich carpets, the walls decorated with beautiful mirrors, the tables in the rooms are all inlaid with mosaics, and similarly arranged to those in the Palace of Bebek, but with richer ornaments. The doors and framework of the windows, the hangings of which are of

rich silk to correspond with the furniture, and fine white lace curtains, are of the finest cedar, violet, ebony, and mahogany woods, beautifully carved, and the shutters are handsomely gilded. But the view is the most beautiful that has ever gladdened the sight of man, the picturesqueness of the panorama is unsurpassed in the whole universe.

Looking out of those immense windows we behold the Asiatic coast looming from amidst a mass of superb dark cypresses; then Scutari comes forth with all its pretty objects; the rapid azure waters of the dreaded Bosphorus flowing swiftly on, bearing on its sapphire-looking bosom vessels of all denominations, from a caique to a steamer, above which, poised up in the balmy air, are seen flights of albatrosses, gulls, mews, &c. Then, as we stretch forward, a fine view of both shores is obtained, lined with pretty country-seats, kiosks of almost all the hues of the rainbow. Over those terraces of fairy palatial structures the most singular rays are cast, both by the sun in the day and the lovely moon at night, which "lend enchantment to the view."

As Abdul Aziz was closeted with some of his ministers their Highnesses had to wait for their audience, and in the mean time the Grand Eunuch undertook to escort them through several of the other apartments. At first he led them into the Red-glass Saloon, which is without exception the most extraordinary apartment in the whole pile, and which should be seen as Gautier saw it: "When the sun streams through this dome of ruby, then all things within blaze with strange light; the air seems to be on fire, and you almost imagine yourself breathing flame; the columns shine like lamps, the marble pavement reddens like a floor of lava, a fiery glow devours the walls, and the whole wears the aspect of the reception-hall of a palace of salamanders, built of metals in a state of fusion."

The pictorial "hell" of a grand opera, or the glare of a mass of Bengal lights, can alone convey an idea of this strange and startling effect; and in order that the visitor should behold everything in keeping it only wants the owner of this most singular-looking apartment, the Sultan, to be seated there on the

magnificent divan, when, like Zamiel in Weber's opera of 'Der Freyschutz,' (and which is the custom in Turkey,) the scarlet-clad odalisque with her flaring red turban glides alone, and lifts up the flaming coloured hangings of the doorway, standing like a phantom before him. Her visit warns "the light of the world" that the lugubrious cry of *Stamboul hâtepin var!* "Constantinople is on fire," resounds from street to street, and that he must do his duty and proceed to assist at extinguishing the flames. Then, indeed, it might well be designated "the palace of the prince of salamanders."

Their little Highnesses were not in the least frightened at the singular appearance of this chamber; on the contrary, they appeared delighted at it. Then that good-natured functionary took them into what has been considered by some writers, who went over this noble pile of buildings when in course of construction, as the *bijou* of the place (such however is not my opinion, now that the whole of the rooms are occupied), the bath-room. Théophile Gautier has described this so accurately that I shall quote his account of it. "It

is in Moresque style, built of veined Egyptian alabaster, and seems as if carved out of a single precious stone, with its colonnades, its pillars, with graceful overhanging capitals; and its arch, starred with eyes of crystal which sparkle like diamonds. It is in those transparent flags, shining like agates, that 'the sovereign of sovereigns' surrenders up his frame to the, to him, delicious and skilful manipulations of the *tillaks*, 'rubbers,' surrounded the while by a cloud of perfumed vapour, and beneath a gentle rain of rose-water and benzoin!"

Then the Grand Eunuch, leading their Highnesses by the hand, retraced his steps back to the apartment into which he had first introduced them. There they found the Sultan Abdul Aziz seated *à la Turque* on a divan, attended by a whole host of Houris, who were most assuredly no Peris of loveliness.

He was about the same age as the Viceroy, a noble-looking personage, of middle height, piercing dark eyes, but most courteous and amiable in his manners. His costume was simplicity itself: it consisted of a frock coat of dark blue, almost black; white trousers; patent

leather boots; and a fez, in which the imperial aigrette of heron's feathers was fastened by a large button, formed of diamonds of the first water. He received the homage of their little Highnesses with a smile, and pointed to the Grand Eunuch to seat them by his side on the divan. Then coffee and sweetmeats were served, but not pipes, as both their Highnesses were as yet too young to indulge in the luxury of the weed. The Sultan, however, puffed away at his pipe.

At the end of an hour their Highnesses took their leave, salaamed, and were conducted by the Grand Eunuch into the Harem, where they found the Validè Sultana, together with their Viceregal grandmother and mother, squatting on the divan, puffing away at their cigarettes, while a whole host of Kadens, Odalisques, Ladies of both the Viceregal harems, Oustas, Dadas, and low caste slaves were ranged about the apartment in the form of a crescent. Then they went and fraternized with the bevy of little children, whose relationship to the late or present Sultan I was unable to ascertain;

they appeared to have formed on that day, at least, a joyous group.

At eight o'clock at night their little Highnesses returned to the Palace of Bebek. As to myself, after I had witnessed the departure of their water pageantry, as it glided swiftly in the basin of the Bosphorus, I roamed about the beautiful heights, then rested myself on the green sward near the Greek café, gazed in raptures at the picturesque and extensive views before me, and, as evening drew near, returned to my solitary chamber, pondering on my strange position, and wondering how soon I should be released from my gilded cage.

The scene I had witnessed put one in mind of the Lord Mayor's procession on the Thames on the ninth of November, only with this difference, that the lovely sky was azure bright, the river of a sapphire colour, and the weather warm and cheerful.

CHAPTER XI.

AFTER the lapse of ten days, their Highnesses the "Stars of Egypt" and suite returned to the Palace at Bebek, with the same pageantry as they had left it. The Grand Pacha was still suffering from a severe cold, brought on, as I have previously stated, by having his hair cut, and considerably increased by the dampness of the rooms in which we were located, as the Palace, being of stone, was always damp. In short, the furniture had become quite covered with mildew, and the divans and sofas were spotted all over with it.

The Hekim Bachi ordered the Prince to be removed to the Old Viceroyal Palace, which stood farther up the Bosphorus, and orders were given for our immediate departure. Well,

thought I, so then the Old Palace is to be our dwelling! and those words tell me enough of misery, as I fully expected to enter another "mansion of discomfort;" and not feeling in good health myself, I regretted our removal.

Before the necessary preparations for our flight were completed, I fell sick, and finding that the Hekim Bachi, whom the Princess had sent to attend upon me, did not treat me properly, I became alarmed, and informed the Princess Epouse that I must quit my post. Her Highness having told the Validè Princess of my determination, the latter, contrary to all precedent, sent for His Excellency Khoorshid Pacha, the Chamberlain, who entered the Harem, and proceeded to have a conversation with the widow of Ibrahim Pacha. I add conversation, because His Excellency did not see that Princess, for she held the door of the room ajar, and keeping in the background gave him her instructions, Her Highness being Lady Paramount here.

His Excellency informed me that Her Highness wished me to have every attention shown me, and asked me to remain; saying that when

we removed to the Old Palace I should soon recover, as the place would not be so damp.

I yielded to Her Highness's remonstrances, although I felt quite convinced that, lacking the necessary "creature comforts" (for even in Constantinople I had been obliged to live upon bread, fruit, and a little pigeon or fowl, those being the only eatables that approached to anything like European diet), her kindness and sympathy would avail but little, and that the change to the Old Palace would not benefit my health, whatever it might do that of the Grand Pacha. He would have remained in robust health, had I been allowed to treat him as I wanted to do; but no, the Hekim Bachi thought that was a capital opportunity to reap a golden harvest, and so he made the most of that accommodating disease—a cold.

Many a time and oft would the Validè Princess come into my chamber, sit upon my couch, and do all she could to cheer me. One day she ordered her jewel-keeper to fetch her jewel caskets, and showed me all the costly presents that the Sultan had sent her. They were most beautiful; some of them superb

tiaras of diamonds, consisting of large sprays of the lotus-flower; magnificent stomachers, made in the shape of jasmine, myrtle, and rose-buds. Then she would place before me her trays of rings, which comprised sapphires, diamonds, opals, emeralds, rubies, &c.

At length I managed to leave my bed, and then I began to pack up my *penates*, for removal to the Old Palace.

About six o'clock the next morning I was awoke by the eunuchs, who had brought several slaves to my room to remove the furniture, bed and bedding, out of the chamber. I was in so weak a state, that I requested them to let them remain a few hours longer; but, as they explained to me that the Grand Pacha would leave at eight o'clock, I dressed myself as quickly as possible, and let the slaves enter, who stripped the apartment of everything except the divan, and left it in the same state as I had entered it on my arrival from Alexandria. Soon afterwards Zenana brought me my breakfast; but as spoons, knives, &c., were all packed up, I dipped my bread in the coffee, and partook of it in that manner.

Looking out of my window, I beheld a complete fleet of sailing-boats at anchor off the Palace landing-place, into which I watched the slaves put the *penates* of the Princess Epouse, the Grand Pacha, and the Princess, his sister, and the whole of *my* Princess's suite. The Validè Princess did not accompany us, but remained behind at Bebek, until she returned to Egypt, which did not take place for some time after I had quitted Constantinople.

Scarcely had the boats been loaded, when the wind began to rage with great fury, the clouds lowered, the hitherto sapphire-looking Bosphorus assumed the dark, indigo-coloured tinge of the angry ocean; and yet, amidst the warring of the eternal elements, the flashing of the forked lightning, and the rolling of terrific thunder, the hardy *galiondjis* weighed anchor.

The storm continued to rage for many hours with unabated fury, so that the Viceregal party had to remain at Bebek until six o'clock in the evening before they could start for the Old Palace. I had just descended the landing-stairs, and was on the point of entering the caïque in which I had placed H. H. the Grand

Pacha, when I had to stand back and allow His Excellency the Chamberlain (who had just come out from Egypt), to take my place, as he wished to accompany the Prince. I therefore entered another caïque, and, after a smart row of twenty minutes, the whole party arrived in front of the Old Palace.

It is a most singular-looking, tumble-down structure, closely resembling in its exterior appearance an old English gable-ended farm-homestead, *minus* the thatched roof; for it was slated. The caïques came to an anchor off a dingy-looking wooden pier, about 14 feet long by 10 feet wide, lined with lofty iron palisades, the spikes of which were richly gilded. It was entered by the everlasting iron prison-gates, richly ornamented with gilded crescents, which led to the grand entrance.

It must be confessed that a kind of shudder thrilled through my veins as I gazed upon that mean, common-looking, wooden barn of a place. It looked like the den of a miser. It was composed of two long storied tenements, the interior of which was admirably in keeping with the exterior, which was in a most dila-

pidated condition. It evidently looked more fit to be burnt down to the ground, which I afterwards most fervently wished it had been before I had ever set my feet within its miserable walls.

Opposite to it lay at anchor a noble-looking new screw Turkish frigate, her port-holes bristling with heavy guns, the salute from which always shook the rickety old palace—oh, what a misnomer! “barn” would have been the proper appellation—to its very foundation.

Landing on the pier, we entered an immense door, or gateway (not unlike the Traitor’s Gate, in the Tower of London, as it was thickly studded with huge nails); then we passed into a magnificent marble-paved hall, lined on both sides with rooms. The apartment on the right-hand was appropriated as the Grand Eunuch’s reception-room, ever memorable, as the reader will presently learn, as the hall in which I was forced by one of the Viceroy’s reputed partners to sign the resignation of my appointment, in order to gain my liberty, not from “a gilded cage,” but from this old barn.

The only furniture it contained was a divan

and a large table. The floor, like that of all the other rooms, was matted, and the windows (which commanded a full view of the pier, and its prison-looking gates) were, together with the doors, hung with dark-brown curtains.

On the left hand were the rooms appropriated to the use of His Excellency the Chamberlain, his secretaries, the officers, and male attendants on their Highnesses the Princesses and the Grand Pacha.

Turning round an angle in the hall, we approached a doorway, just like the entrance to a cellar, but so low that the men were obliged to stoop to pass through it. Then, descending two steps, we passed into a long underground apartment, in which were located the male attendants, who were obliged to remain almost bent double, on account of the lowness of the ceiling. It was so dark, that a lighted lamp hung suspended from the roof both day and night.

This subterraneous vault reminded me most forcibly of the underground cavern into which the banditti led Gil Blas. It had evidently been used in olden times as a dungeon; for chains

and rings were still, hanging to the walls. It looked like the *carceri* of the palace of an Italian nobleman, in the days of the Medici. The very sight of it was enough to give the spectator the horrors.

Facing the grand entrance was a noble flight of marble stairs, covered with new matting, and the walls had been freshly whitewashed. Ascending the stairs, we approached a large door, at which we were obliged to knock for admittance. On its being opened, it led us into the grand entrance of the noble marble hall of the Harem, along which ran a corridor, the entire length of which faced the Bosphorus.

It was lighted by five spacious windows, all of which commanded views of the sapphire-looking river, and the lovely heights on the opposite side, dotted about with trees, from out of which peered forth the white tapering minarets of many a beautiful mosque and the variegated roofs of pretty country-houses. In the centre stood a large marble fountain; at each end rooms branched off both right and left.

On the right-hand of the entrance were the

Grand Pacha's suite of rooms, and those of his little sister. They were all most wretchedly furnished (the noble reception-room was the only apartment carpeted); the walls and ceilings were whitewashed; the hangings of both the doors and windows were of blue and white cotton chintz, as also was the divan, which was placed under the windows that looked into a very tiny garden. Such parsimony and meanness in the furnishing of this palace was totally incompatible with the dignity of Ismael Pacha, as Viceroy of Egypt; but I am fain to believe that he thought that the Grand Pacha's visit to Constantinople was an excellent opportunity for him to learn an apt lesson in practical political economy.

On the left-hand were the attendants' apartments, all destitute of furniture except divans. On the right-hand was the Princess Epouse's sitting-room, which was covered with matting. In it stood a divan covered with old worn-out faded crimson damask. A door led into the bedchamber, which was furnished with a plain iron bedstead, with crimson mosquito-curtains, a large mirror, and a divan covered with dark-

brown chintz. The hangings of the doors and windows were of the same material, with the addition of white muslin curtains; no other furniture of any kind.

It is almost impossible to imagine the bare and miserable appearance of this barn, or the parsimony displayed in the arrangements in this "Mansion of Wretchedness." The accommodation that had been afforded to us in the palace at Bebek, where merely necessary comforts for the Egyptian Princesses, and plenty of discomforts for the miscreant of a Christian, had been provided, was superfluous compared with the fitting-up and *ménage* arrangements of this Turkish workhouse for the Egyptians. And this, reader, was the Elysium, the Abode of Bliss, which was to restore health to my shattered constitution, and prove a sanatorium to His Highness the Grand Pacha.

At the extremity of the hall was a large apartment, used as Her Highness's wardrobe-room, in which the *Kaştandji Ousta*, "Mistress of the Wardrobe," slept. Across it hung several lines on which were placed the Princess's jackets, dresses, &c. It was matted, and

contained a divan covered with faded damask. Opening a door on the right, we entered another large room similarly fitted up. Passing through it I reached my own miserable chamber; it was, like all the others, the worst in the whole building, except the subterraneous cavern. It was of very small dimensions, not a quarter of the size of that I had occupied at Bebek, about 12 feet long by 12 feet wide, having four windows all destitute of hangings, but with cotton blinds. The floor was matted, the walls whitewashed, and it contained an old worn-out divan, covered with washed-out chintz.

The furniture which had been supplied me at Bebek stood outside the door, and when it was placed therein I found it very difficult to move about, especially when I was attired in a walking-dress with a moderate-sized crinoline on. Two of the windows faced the door, and looked into a square piece of a wilderness of a garden, which divided the two tenements forming the palace. Among the weeds were grazing two very old lanky-looking sheep, perfect skeletons, who now and then found shelter beneath the

shade of the sycamore and cherry-trees which stood therein.

Privacy was out of the question in that chamber; for one of the two windows looked into the corridor, and the other into another room. When I first put my feet in it, I entertained some slight misgiving that I should not find the comfort and repose the Princess Epouse had promised me, as I soon found that everybody had to pass by both my door and windows, so that the constant flitting to and fro of human forms past the double frames of the windows, (the old ones being broken were left, and the new ones placed over them,) together with the trampling of the heavy feet of the attendants, increased instead of lessening the nervous fever under which I was then labouring, and which made me much worse.

Passing along a short passage, I entered the room into which one of my windows looked, which was similarly furnished to the others, but having in the centre a marble fountain, with water laid on to it. Then turning to the right I proceeded along an extensive corridor, having numerous rooms leading off from it on the left.

hand, in several of which I observed piled up quantities of beds, coverlets, iron bedsteads, &c., and at the extremity of this was another chamber, the door of which led into a short corridor.

Passing along this I entered a noble-looking reception-room in the second tenement, as it were, of the palace. It was similarly furnished to the others, only having two or three console-tables, and branch candelabras standing on them. Other rooms branched off both right and left. In the centre stood the grand staircase, which was well lighted by a handsome stained-glass cupola; and in the corridor, round which stood several marble fountains, the windows were decorated with dark-brown hangings.

Descending this marble staircase, which was matted, we entered a large hall. On the right we passed into the most singular apartment in the whole palace; the atmosphere of which, on entering it, struck so icy cold, that I turned round to the little Princess's Greek attendant who had accompanied me, and asked him what made it feel so cold. He then, as he had visited this palace before, warned me that some of the marble slabs with which it was

paved were removable at pleasure, like the flooring at Sadler's Wells Theatre. This proved correct.* One day, when I was in that room with some of the eunuchs, I asked them to show me how the water was let in, when Southcote pressed the springs, slid the bolts back, and then one of the largest marble slabs sank down, as it were, into the river. This, however, was not the case, as it rested upon a marble flooring, so that all persons standing on the sunken slab found themselves suddenly let down into an immense room of marble, like a swimming-bath, filled with the water of the Bosphorus, which flowed into it through the five upright iron gratings outside, which are fastened by bolts, and if those bolts were drawn back, the individuals bathing, if they were not expert swimmers, would be carried away into the dreaded Bosphorus, and inevitably drowned.

I stared vacantly at that abyss, wondering how many a beautiful slave, the victim of jealousy or treachery, had in that manner found a watery grave. I was then suffering from nervous fever, and my imagination became

troubled and diseased. I remembered the sad fate of poor Amy Robsart in Sir Walter Scott's beautiful novel of 'Kenilworth'—how she had crossed the treacherous planks and had been suddenly launched into eternity. My blood curdled in my veins, my debilitated frame shook like an aspen-leaf, and it was several moments before I could recover strength of mind to know that it was a reality—that the yawning water-abyss lay at my feet. But there it was, sure enough.

Recovering my self-possession, I remembered the story a Russian nobleman had related to me, of his having been*inveigled into a palace on the Bosphorus, and after having passed some hours with a Princess, had been let down into the river by means of a similar trap, but being a good swimmer had escaped unhurt. Then I thoroughly understood that I was an inmate of one of those old yet mysterious palaces whose rooms are built over the Bosphorus, and down which river I had seen sacks and baskets floating almost daily. I hastily returned to my own chamber, and a kind of presentiment came over me that I

must quit that palace as soon as I could gain strength enough to enable me to do so. I had been advised by the Hekim Bachi to take baths, but I declined, for I had seen quite enough of the bathing establishments of the Viceregal Palace. I conversed with some of the aged women of the Harem, and when I told them of the marble slab, they shook their heads, and uttered that significant word, "*Mulesch, Muhame, Mulesch, Madame;*" and they told me horrible tales of that room, into which none of them would ever venture. It was suggested that the Grand Pacha and I should have our meals laid there, as it was so cool, but I refused to allow the Prince to do so, and would never permit him to enter that apartment unless I was with him, and we were accompanied by the Grand Eunuch.

One day, prior to my taking to my bed, I took a walk, accompanied by the Grand Pacha. We passed the subterraneous dungeon I have previously described, and there I saw through the dark iron-grated windows congregated together the Grand Eunuch not, reader, with his band of forty thieves, but his corps of

forty "spectres of men" like himself, to whom he was reading the *Koran* as was his daily custom. Then we proceeded along a covered-in stone passage, and shortly afterwards we entered the gate of a small flower-garden, most beautifully arranged, in which stood a square marble bath. At the further extremity was another large square marble bath, and also an immense shed (boat-house), under which were moored the caiques, up to which the river flowed.

Adjoining was a large *kiosk* and a lofty pair of gates, which constituted the back entrance to this palace, as the attendants, and slaves embarked in the caiques from the flight of stone steps that lead down from it into the river. Both sides of the walk down it were pleasantly shaded with a great variety of beautiful trees, and one side was lined with a number of arbours, having small divans around them, and *soofras* in the centre. They reminded me of the tea-gardens in England, especially those at the Spaniards Inn on Hampstead Heath.

Traversing the grounds we ascended the

lofty hill, at the top of which stood a pair of large lofty gates, and these being open I passed through and entered the stables, which contained accommodation for fourteen horses. There were also several loose boxes and two immense carriage-houses.

At the side of the outer gates stood a large well-built modern house, in which the coachmen, grooms, and helpers lived. The stable-yard led into the Stamboul Road, which was down hill, but one of the most execrable imaginable, much worse than that from Haverfordwest to St. David's, full of ruts, loose stones, and clods of hard mud, up and down which the carriages were constantly bumping, so that the Viceregal family but seldom traversed it. The rides and drives about the vicinity were exceedingly picturesque, as all of them commanded most lovely and extensive views of the Bosphorus.

CHAPTER XII.

THE morning after my arrival at the Old Palace I found myself so weak as to be obliged to lay myself down upon my bed on attempting to unpack my trunks. In short, I was obliged to get Zenana, the slave who waited upon me, to do it. Previous to placing my body linen in the chest of drawers, she laid it upon the divan, from which I had only a few moments before risen up, and when she went to remove it she found the whole completely covered with a family of the Browns, who rejoice in the patronymic of bug. Not only were the pieces of linen the slave held in her hand covered with them, but the whole of the divan swarmed with them. It put me in mind of an ant-hill in the interior of India, and if the reader has ever been the tenant of a mud-built hut in any of the suburbs of

Bombay, Madras, or Calcutta, he will be able to form some idea of the spectacle which was presented to my sight.

Like most people I have a most intolerable aversion to all the members of that disgusting family. Fortunately I had taken the precaution to provide myself with several tin cases of Keating's Insect Powder, which I strewed upon the divan, and after having left it there a few moments I had the satisfaction to find that it had so stupified them that Zenana was enabled to sweep them away in her dust-pan. Whenever I began to write a letter, the whole of the paper was covered with them. To sum up all, I was never free from them all the time I remained there. Their Highnesses the Princesses were equally tormented. Glancing at my mosquito-curtains, which were as white as the driven snow when put up, I found them perfectly brown, as the bugs clung to them as tenaciously as a miser does to his gold, and the slaves were obliged to sweep them off into pan after pan.

One night the whole of the Palace was besieged by them, and their Highnesses, who could

not sleep for them, ordered a regular hunt, which the slaves continued until daybreak, using their dust-pans to take them up and slop-pails to drown them in. The next morning, after we had all been employed in that manner, we were doomed to be completely besieged by them; for, owing to its being the anniversary of the accession of the Sultan to the throne, it was a gala day; in honour of which the frigate fired a royal salute, when down came the whole race of Browns like a flight of locusts—rooms and persons were all covered with them. It was a sight I never shall forget were I to live for a hundred years. Their Highnesses shuffled about the place as if they were mad, and the poor slaves worked, as the expression is, “like niggers.”

Preparations had been made for several weeks for the illumination, which took place that evening. It was a most lovely sight. The whole of the iron palisades and gates of the landing-place was covered with innumerable variegated coloured lamps; scaffoldings were erected in front of the palace, which being ornamented with various Turkish devices, all lighted up with

those lamps in festoons, gave it a beautiful appearance. On the iron palisades, which extended along the whole length of both tenements, hung coloured glass lanterns, lighted with wax candles, many of which were knocked down into the Bosphorus by the two old lanky sheep which grazed in the small garden by my room; for not being able to reach their usual provender, the vine-leaves, they butted their heads against the lanterns and sent a score of them into the river, scattering the *débris* of several others about in all directions.

Facing us lay the frigate, which was one mass of light, for she was decorated and festooned with variegated lamps up to her royal mast-head. The military bands played the Sultan's March, polkas, and other noisy airs, the officers and crew were all *en grande tenue*, and on the other side the palace of the Sultan's nephew, which was most brilliantly illuminated, gave enchantment to the scene, as it was beautifully reflected in the river.

The scene up and down the Bosphorus all day long was exceedingly enlivening, but at night grand and picturesque, for there on its azure

blue bosom lay thousands of caïques, with lamps at prow and stern, all filled with elegantly-dressed Turkish ladies. The steamers, brilliantly illuminated, were plying up and down, decorated with flags; bands of music played on their decks, which were thronged with crowds of well-dressed persons. It was a brilliant sight.

I have omitted to mention that the Sultan passed up early in the course of the day in his elegant yacht. He was standing on the deck, and the Prince and I being at the pier had a good view of His Sublime Majesty as the boat drew very near to the Palace. As soon as I perceived the Padishah, I made the Grand Pacha salaam His Majesty three times, and I curtsayed to him. He most graciously returned it by waving his hand several times, a mark of very great honour, as the Sultans are seldom in the habit of returning any salutations. The frigate, which was dressed and decorated, fired a royal salute and manned yards, and the band played the Sultan's March, and the whole of the crew vociferated with stentorian lungs, "May he live a thousand years, and may he see his grandson's hairs as white as the driven snow."

Late at night the Old Palace pier was absolutely swarming with caïques full of musicians, who serenaded their Highnesses, from whom they received baksheesh. The Princess Epouse, attended by a bevy of the ladies of the Harem, and accompanied by the Grand Eunuch, went in caïques down the river to witness the illumination, which is the sight *par excellence* of the year, and were thoroughly gratified at that display of Turkish patriotism, if I may be allowed the expression.

The next day, happening to be in the reception-room where we had had such a levée of the Browns when the frigate fired the royal salute, I saw Her Highness give the Grand Eunuch a handful of sovereigns, which I perfectly understood was baksheesh for having accompanied her to see the illumination.

And now I must explain to my readers, that it is almost impossible for them to understand the power the Chief Eunuch of every Harem possesses, whether he belong to the Viceregal or to a plebeian one. The whole of the women, Princesses, ladies of the Harem, and slaves, are entirely under his control. His word is law, his

smile sunshine ; and that is always obtainable by bestowing a proper amount of baksheesh. Well do I know it, for often and often have I seen the Kishlar Agaci salaam their Highnesses the Princesses, smile, and hold out his hands to them, exclaiming, *Sish! Sish!* “baksheesh,” when they invariably sent for their cash-box, and, opening it, placed handfuls of bright new sovereigns into his hands.

His frown, however, is dark as a stormy cloud ; for if he declines to allow them to go out, either into the grounds, in the caïque, or carriage, they have no remedy, but must, like all poor prisoners, submit to his will and pleasure. As regards myself, they were almost powerless ; I repeat almost, because on my wishing to return to my chamber in the Harem at Ras-el-Tin, when on the eve of my departure for Alexandria, he positively refused to allow me to do so ; and again I experienced the force of their power when in the Old Palace, as I shall presently have occasion to relate.

They all had orders given them by the Viceroy to allow me to do as I liked, and I shall not soon forget the astonishment of some

of the inferior eunuchs, when one day the Viceroy ordered the Grand Eunuch belonging to the Harem at Ras-el-Tin to have a carriage ready for me to take the Grand Pacha out for an airing; whereupon that functionary turned round to His Highness, and inquired if it were to be a close one, whether the blinds were to be drawn down, if the governess (meaning myself) was to sit outside on the box with the Arab coachman, while he himself sat within? The Viceroy looked at him for some time, then burst out into a fit of laughter, and told him very curtly, "No, you are not to accompany them; never to interfere with Madame; the carriage is to be an open one, and whenever it is a close one, the blinds are not to be pulled down, unless Madame orders them."

It was utterly impossible to obtain any candles in the Harem on the evening after the illumination, as the whole quantity in store had been consumed in the lanterns, so that the Prince and myself had to burn whatever few pieces could be collected out of the lanterns. Not a drop of oil was to be had, and, extraordinary as it may appear, all the sugar had

been consumed, so that even the Princess Epouse had to sip her *jindjans* of coffee minus that condiment, for the slaves, being on the alert, had taken advantage of the fête, and had purloined all they could lay their hands on.

The *ménage* in His Majesty the Sultan's Palace at Bebek was admirably conducted, but here it was carried out in the most harum-scarum manner imaginable; there was neither order nor regularity; all was discomfort, confusion, and disorder. There were times when neither bread, meat, coffee, sugar, candles, nor oil could be obtained; and then everybody, even from the Princesses, the Prince, and myself, down to the slaves, had to go without whatever articles were deficient, until an arrival of bum-caïques—for caïques plied at the palace gates with almost every article of consumption, from a sheep down to a lemon, so many times weekly (which put me in mind of the bum-boats at Portsmouth)—from whose owners the Grand Eunuch made purchases.

Here we partook of our daily meals at the same hours as we had done in Egypt. The Princess squatted herself down upon the divan,

made the slaves do needlework, and partook of cigarettes and coffee,¹ refreshed herself with her siesta, enjoyed her kef, went out on the river in her caïque, paid visits to the Valide Princess at Bebek, and to numerous other Harems.

Soon after the illumination was over I fell so ill as to be obliged to take to my bed. The Hekim Bachi was called in by the Princess Epouse to attend me, but I gradually became worse. A thorough prostration of body, loss of appetite, spinal complaint, and nervous fever had all preyed upon me, until I was reduced to a mere skeleton, and I found myself sinking fast. The Hekim Bachi either did not know how, or would not, treat me properly. When the Princess asked him what ailed me, he replied, "Nothing; that it was only a cold. I then asked Her Highness to allow me three months' leave of absence, promising to return as soon as my health was re-established. This Her Highness granted me, and accordingly I began to prepare for my departure for Alexandria, whither I purposed returning, in order to place myself under the care of Dr. Ogilvie, Physician to H. B. M. Consulate.

One day, prior to my *départure*, as I was dressing, Her Highness, accompanied by the Grand Eunuch and a lady, came and knocked at my chamber-door. I opened it; but being at that time *en deshabelle*, Her Highness did not enter my room, but stood at the door. Then the lady in question asked me if I would return at the expiration of that time? to which I replied in the affirmative. Soon afterwards, that lady left the corridor, without showing the Princess the slightest respect as she marched away before Her Highness, and left her to close my door: but that I prevented, as I took hold of it myself, and that was the last time I had the pleasure of seeing my Princess, that kind lady who had always treated me like a sister, for the next morning she went in the Sultan's yacht to his summer palace at Ismid, in company with the *Validè* Princess, the *Validè* Sultana, and attended by the Grand Eunuch.

Ill as I was, I rose early the next day, packed up my *penates*, resting every now and then; and when I had finished I descended into the Grand Eunuch's room, and ordered one of the eunuchs to fetch me a *caïque*. I asked, but

asked in vain—none came, not a eunuch stirred. This was the second, but it was the last time that any of those spectres of their race had shown me their teeth. At length I was quietly told that I could not leave the Palace until His Excellency the Chamberlain came from Bebek; that they had sent for him, and that he would soon arrive; and thus I was checkmated; but not for long, however. After the lapse of a considerable period, Khoorshid Pacha made his appearance, accompanied by the Hekim Bachi and Mr. H., the Viceroys Ismael Pacha's reputed partner; now I knew that the under-current was flowing rapidly towards its mouth. To sum up all, Mr. H. positively refused to let me leave the palace, unless I would resign my post. So to save my life and release myself from perpetual imprisonment I signed, under protest made to my own "Special Prince" at Constantinople, the form of resignation that Mr. H. himself drew up, glad to escape from Harem life; and proceeded to Alexandria, where I placed myself under the treatment of Dr. Ogilvie, who gave me a medical certificate, although the Hekim Bachi, who attended the

Harem at the Old Palace, had said in my presence, before His Excellency, that there was nothing the matter with me. Yet he had previously told me in my own chamber, that I wanted rest and good European diet, and had himself been prescribing for me. Dr. Ogilvie ordered me to Europe as soon as I was in a fit state to undertake another sea voyage.

All my attempts to lay a statement of the treatment I had received before His Highness the Viceroy, failed during my sojourn at Alexandria. I petitioned His Highness for redress, since my resignation was not a free, but a coerced one, brought about by "one of those diplomatic manœuvres which occur nowhere so suddenly, nor so fatally as in the East," and I am up to this moment ignorant of the result.

Brilliant as are the pen-and-ink sketches that our poets have painted of Harem life, I have visited and resided in three of them, which ought to have been, and most undoubtedly are, the most magnificent of all those gilded cages, and I have no desire to visit or live in a fourth. I did not set my foot in the second with the same interest which my ignorance of

daily life therein had inspired me on entering the first.

I found, when I became acquainted with their language, that the conversation of the Odalisques was most indelicate, and when bearable, was directed principally to external matters. I soon discovered that it would be most impolitic for me to ask any questions; but, as I have previously stated, I learned by indirect means all that I required to know, and everything that interested me. Their conversation, which becomes absolutely tiresome, continuing from hour to hour, invariably touched upon things which in Europe are regarded as criminal, abominably indecent, filthy, and disgusting.

It is almost impossible to conceive how difficult it is to talk with individuals, who usually contemplate the world only from behind grated windows, or the curtains of carriages, or caïques, and who so far from being removed from worldly interests, are, to all intents and purposes, living in, and stirring in them. For here even more than the body is the female mind immured. Existence in the Harems becomes frightfully

monotonous; it engenders melancholy madness; an utter carelessness of worldly things creeps over the senses, a total indifference to everything around you, and a lethargic stupor enshrouds the mind. From what else can this arise, but from breathing an atmosphere redolent with the perfume of tobacco, and the powerful narcotics with which the air is impregnated?

I have minutely detailed their daily social, and domestic life. They did not seem to experience any *ennui* in their monotonous seclusion, which robbed them of all participation in the life of their liege lord and master. They knew very little of his daily life. And His Highness shared nothing with them, but yet they shared him with his slaves—of which sensual intercourse the *Ikkals*, “favourites,” made no secret, for they would very coolly approach and inform me whenever they were commanded to attend His Highness the viceroi in his pavilion—which they considered a great honour.

The Princesses never took the slightest notice, nor made any allusion to me about such visits; but I have already explained how I knew when they took place. If I had asked them if they

were weary to death of so degrading an existence, they would have answered, *Majesch, Madame! Majesch, Madame!* "What does it matter! What does it matter!"

True it is that they have at their command that *succilaneum* of all women who lack interest in life, that which European society avails itself of as readily as do the inmates of the Turkish and Egyptian harems,—I mean, intrigue; which in the East, and especially within the halls of the "Enchanted Castles," in which I have been lately immured, commences "below stairs," among the slaves; but within these secret institutions for the corruption of women, a hundred, nay, a thousand by-ways and cross-roads are taken to secure the object in view, even if it be the supplanting of an *Ikbal*; especially if such occurs within the splendid halls of the Imperial "Bower of Bliss," where no fair Sultana reigns paramount for a longer period than a year, for the Sovereign of Islam has no consort. The Sultan's mistresses are but purchased slaves—(he is himself the son of a slave),—the more fortunate of whom by beauty, intrigue, or the birth of sons, raise themselves to

be *Ikbals*, "favourites;" or, as it often happens, the single favourite has, many a time and oft, governed the Empire.

Petticoat-government, as history tells us, is nothing new here. And not only under weak governments and in times of decline, as for example, under Murad III., who had for his mistress the charming Venetian, Baffa; and under Achmed I., whose favourite was the high spirited Greek, Kösseus—women who, in the seventeenth century, misused and abused their power—both were strangled in insurrection: but when Suliman I. the Great, the conqueror, the lawgiver, was so completely in the chains of his beloved and darling French actress, Roxalana, that he murdered his two sons by another slave, in order to secure the throne to those of Roxalana.

The downfall of a Minister, the spoliation of the goods and chattels of an Egyptian Prince, the removal of a hated rival, the substitution of one infant for another, the sending of an heir apparent to his last home, the poisoning of the reigning Sultan or Viceroy, in short all crimes are hatched in the lower regions. It is probable,

• that the very condition of slavery renders the practice of trickery, subtlety, and artifice, unavoidable, and makes easy the science of weaving nets which cannot be broken through; that dreadful science not so well understood where the relations of mankind are more free. In all this you may be satisfied that the women of the Harems evince the same deep interest in the private affairs of their neighbours, as we in civilized society are accustomed to feel.

CHAPTER XII.

It is very easy to understand how Harems become the very hotbeds of every wicked quality, the seeds of which are already slumbering in the heart of woman. The inmates are surrounded by rivals, always watched, for the surveillance surpasses even that of the secret police in Russia, where the very walls have ears, and spies, most emphatically termed by our neighbours the French *Jes mouches*, buzz about as thick as mosquitoes in India and Egypt. They are encompassed by those cunning shrewd, and merciless monsters of humanity, the eunuchs; and being always without any profitable or suitable occupation, jealousy, envy, asperity, hatred, an innate love of intrigue, a boundless desire to please, inflamed with sensual passion, must blaze up like flames. One will

vanquish a hated rival, either by a display of personal charms, the poisoned cup, or by the all-powerful influence of baksheesh over the human spectres that guard those "Castles of Indolence," and who, as I have shown, like the once dreaded Thugs of India, are adepts at strangulation.

Is not all this natural to the heart of Eastern women? especially in marble halls, where many a Lucretia Borgia abides her time to turn to account her intuitive knowledge of poisons and acts of cruelty. And say as often as you please that Eastern Houris are accustomed to the Harem, and that "custom makes all things tolerable," nay, light and easy, I look upon the assertion as one of the many threadbare phrases which are current. Yes, reader, they come under the yoke of the Harem, and they are by degrees habituated to its form; but against the essence their very instinct revolts. I cannot say their conscience, for that may sleep in all but a very few, but their untameable and all-powerful instinct.

Since there is no culture of the intellect or soul to restrain or regulate its aspirations,

how is it possible that there should not be violent outbreaks, shameless coarseness, great barbarity? And this is the opinion I have formed, after having witnessed both Egyptian and Turkish women at home, and their deportment towards each other and strangers. I have taken part in their daily life; observed their bearing towards each other, and how far the dominion of lawful wives (for with the exception of the Sultan, every Turk has one or two) extends over the female slaves, which amounts over their own to life and death, but over those belonging to their liege lords none, absolutely none. They, in like manner, possess no control over theirs, with whom they must not attempt to intrigue, except at the penalty of a divorce, ah! and perhaps the certainty of being sooner or later the victims of their own audacity (as has but lately been the case at Constantinople) and the instant disappearance of that slave who has so boldly coveted the honour of becoming the *Ikkal* of her lord, and so heedlessly attempted to supplant her mistress in her lord's affection.

It is an incontrovertible fact, that the walls

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of the Harems have, and still do conceal, sad and terrible secrets. 'One most wretched fruit which has grown out of the Harems, and mainly contributed to the decadence of the Ottoman dominions, is the result of the neglected education of the Princes, or, properly speaking, their very existence in the State. To sum up all, the wings by which we are enabled to raise ourselves from the dust, and to develop which is, or ought to be, the end and aim of all culture and of all education, are crippled by the Turk.

Turkish history shows us that no Sultan brought up by Turkish Thugs (the mutes), intriguing lewd women, and those spectres of mankind, the eunuchs, in or out of the Princes' Cage ever attained to that development which at the same time discerns and wills. And the same will be the result with all Egyptian Princes nurtured within the baneful influence of the Harems, even in this the nineteenth century.

It is true that heavenly gifts, the free grants of God, are chiefly needed for such consummation, and that the regenerating genius of a Prince depends as little upon inclination, caprice, and

education, as the genius of a financier, or artist, or any other character; nevertheless, having lived in the Harems, I am satisfied that the soil is capable of producing only crippled plants, and we know that almost all the Sultans and heirs presumptive to the Viceroyship vegetate upon it until they are called from that noxious atmosphere to the throne; and although the Egyptian Princes quit that institution for the corruption of women and young princes at ten or twelve years of age, still the recollection of the indelicate scenes in which they daily took a part have become too deeply rooted in their minds ever to be eradicated.

But if their Highnesses were removed at the tender age of four years old from the Harem, and placed, together with their Moslem nurse, under the care of a European, with a European staff of attendants about them, and had an establishment suitable to their rank and position assigned them, then we might look forward to such a course producing more healthy plants, from which, in each succeeding generation, would spring lasting benefit; but until some such measures are adopted, all hope for the

future regeneration of the Sultans or Viceroys of Egypt is vain.

The same observation is applicable to the whole of the *noblesse* of both those countries. Most of the great functionaries of both Egypt and Turkey are, or at least their forefathers were, but purchased slaves. A slave, we know, has no fatherland, and can have none. He lives for himself, as all the Moslems do. He must in some degree keep himself within the circle of his obligations; but whence shall he obtain the incitement to activity and efficiency which refuses to be bound within the old beaten track? If the wheels of the state machine, which for so many years have kept affairs in motion, should, through age, be tottering and feeble, not turning with due regularity and vigour, he takes good care to leave them as they are. If, in addition to this, you consider that the population of Turkey diminishes every year, as is always the case in all ill-governed countries; and here it is positively alarming, partly from polygamy, and partly from infanticide—(for women in the Harems who have had one or two confinements, and have grown tired of child

bearing, as they soon do, especially if they have been daughters, think it no sin to destroy their unborn offspring), for I have known even Princesses to leave their only sons when they were dying to the care of Moslem nurses for a whole week together, while they went out visiting ;—if you consider this, I say, does it not become natural to ask, How is it possible for future hopes to knit themselves to young branches, to fresh roots, when the pith of the tree has lost all its vital powers ?

THE END.

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