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THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
CONDITION OF WOMEN,  
IN VARIOUS AGES AND NATIONS.

BY  
MRS. D. L. CHILD,  
AUTHOR OF "MOTHER'S BOOK," "FRUGAL HOUSEWIFE," ETC.

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I am a slave, a favored slave  
At best, to share his splendor, and seem very blest;  
When weary of these fleeting charms and me,  
There yawns the sack, and yonder rolls the sea.  
What! am I then a toy for dotard's play,  
To wear but till the gilding frets away?—*Byron's Corsair.*

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VOL. I.

COMPRISING THE WOMEN OF ASIA AND AFRICA.

THIRD EDITION.

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## CONTENTS TO VOL. I.

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	PAGE.		PAGE.
AFGHANISTAN . . . . .	43	Courdistan . . . . .	42
Africa . . . . .	245	Druses . . . . .	34
Amazons . . . . .	176	Dutch settlers in Af-	
Amboyna . . . . .	202	rica . . . . .	298
Arabia . . . . .	36	Egypt . . . . .	216
Armenia . . . . .	48	Fox Islands . . . . .	214
Assyria . . . . .	23	Georgia . . . . .	47
Babylon . . . . .	23	Hindustan . . . . .	86
Bali . . . . .	203	Hottentots . . . . .	287
Barbary States . . . . .	232	Japan . . . . .	212
Bedouin Arabs . . . . .	38	Java . . . . .	187
Birmah . . . . .	133	Jews . . . . .	1
Borneo . . . . .	199	Kurile Island . . . . .	215
Caria . . . . .	28	Loo Choo . . . . .	210
Carthage . . . . .	231	Lycia . . . . .	27
Celebes . . . . .	201		
Ceylon . . . . .	186		
China . . . . .	143		
Circassia . . . . .	44		
Cochin China . . . . .	137		
Corea . . . . .	160		

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Malacca . . . . .	141	Sumatra . . . . .	195
Moors of Africa . . . . .	232	Syria . . . . .	31
New Guinea . . . . .	206	Tartary . . . . .	162
New Holland . . . . .	207	Thibet . . . . .	130
Palmyra, Queen of . . . . .	30	Timor . . . . .	204
Persia . . . . .	72	Troy . . . . .	29
Philippine Isles . . . . .	209	Turkomans . . . . .	34
Siam . . . . .	139	Turkey . . . . .	52
Siberia . . . . .	177	Van Diemen's Land . . . . .	208

# HISTORY OF WOMEN.

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Rebecca bringing water for the camels of Isaac.

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## ASIA.

THE ancient patriarchs led a quiet pastoral life, far removed from those excitements which kindle the avarice and ambition of men in modern times. Their chief care was to increase their flocks; and for this purpose they removed their tents, from time to time, near the most verdant pastures and abundant fountains. Their habits and manners

partook of the simplicity of their occupations ; of this there is sufficient proof in the story of Jacob's courtship and marriage.

In those times, when the earth was thinly peopled, an increase of laborers was an increase of wealth ; hence, physical strength, being the quality most needed, was most esteemed. To be the mother of a numerous family was the most honorable distinction of women ; and the birth of a son was regarded as a far more fortunate event than the birth of a daughter. Under such circumstances, women were naturally considered in the light of property ; and whoever wished for a wife must pay the parents for her, or perform a stipulated period of service, as Jacob did for Rachel. Sometimes, when parents were desirous to unite their families, the parties were solemnly betrothed in childhood, and the price of the bride stipulated. Marriage in those primitive times consisted merely in a formal bargain between the bridegroom and the father of the maiden, solemnized by a feast.

We are not told how far the affections of women were consulted in these arrangements, but there is every reason to suppose that they were passively guided by others.

Among the Israelites, as well as among the nations with whom they sojourned, innocence was by no means universal. The world seems very soon to have grown old in sin. Even in the remotest times, there are allusions to a class of women openly and shamelessly vicious ; and it is

hardly possible for the imagination to conceive of a crime that is not mentioned in the laws of Moses. The deception practised by Abraham and his son Isaac, lest the beauty of their wives should be the occasion of their own death, betrays habits and manners sufficiently violent and profligate. That the husbands of Sarah and Rebecca should have been willing thus to consult their own safety, at the risk of exposing them to insult, is by no means extraordinary among a people where polygamy prevailed; for in all such countries the value placed upon women has an origin essentially low and depraved. We are told that Sarah herself consented to pass for the sister of her husband; and both in Egypt and in Gerar the handsome stranger was ordered into the household of the king. That marriage was acknowledged as a protection, and that the concealment of it left her defenceless, is shown by Pharaoh's earnest expostulation with Abraham: "What hast thou done unto me? Why saidst thou, She is my sister? Why didst thou not tell me she was thy wife?" The same is likewise implied by the reproof which Abimelech, king of the Philistines, gave to Abraham, and afterwards to his son Isaac, under similar circumstances.

The occupations of the ancient Jewish women were laborious. They spent their time in spinning and weaving cloth for garments, and for the covering of the tents; in cooking the food, tending the flocks, grinding the corn, and drawing water from the wells. When Abraham entertained the three strangers under

the tree before his dwelling, "He hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth." Jacob found Rachel tending the flocks of her wealthy father; and when Abraham's servant sought the beautiful Rebecca as a wife for Isaac, the damsel not only drew water for him, but for his camels also.

The performance of these tasks does not necessarily imply a deficiency of respect for women, for at that period kings and princes were in the habit of reaping their own grain, and slaying their own cattle. The condition of women then bore a general correspondence to that of the men, as it ever since has done.

The manners were generally rude, and females of course were not treated with the politeness which has prevailed in modern times. Thus when the daughters of Jethro came to draw water for their flocks, the shepherds of Midian drove them away, notwithstanding their father was high priest of the country.

Jewish husbands seem to have had a discretionary power of divorcing their wives; and no bargain or vow made by a woman was binding, unless made in the presence of her father or husband, and with their sanction.

Before the time of Moses, women appear to have been incapable of inheriting the estates of their fathers, even when he died without other heirs. The daughters of Zelophead brought before Moses, the

priests, the princes, and the congregation a petition, setting forth that their father had died in the wilderness without sons ; on which account they thought themselves entitled to a share of his possessions. Moses granted the petition, and ordained that in future, when a man died without sons, his inheritance should descend to the daughters.

We know little of the amusements of Israelitish women; but in the early periods of their history, when both sexes were almost constantly occupied in procuring the means of subsistence, it is not probable that amusements were either frequent or various. Music and dancing were unquestionably among the most ancient recreations of human beings. I imagine they were coeval with language itself ; for they were but varied manifestations of those emotions and thoughts which words were framed to express. Among modern highly civilized nations, dancing is indeed regulated by merely artificial rules, and has as little to do with character as the projection of a map ; but in more simple forms of society, the national dances, like national tunes, are an embodiment of the characteristic passions of the people : such are the war dances of the Indians, and the voluptuous dances of the East.

Moses speaks of singing men and singing women ; and throughout the Old Testament there is frequent mention of music and dancing at sacred festivals. After Pharaoh and his host had perished in the Red sea, we are told that “ Miriam the prophetess took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went

out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously."

Deborah and Barak likewise joined in a song of triumph, after the defeat of Sisera.

Whether music and dancing were entirely confined to public and solemn occasions, is uncertain; but we can hardly imagine that it was so. The ancient Israelites, like other people who live in similar climates, no doubt highly enjoyed family meetings in the open air, each one under the shadow "of his own vine and fig-tree;" and to have had musical instruments, without using them on such occasions, would have been a strange perversity.

In the later periods of Jewish history, a class of public singers probably existed, whose character was similar to such classes now found in the East; this may be inferred from the words of the son of Sirach, "use not much the company of a woman who is a singer."

In the patriarchal ages the Jewish women must have enjoyed a large share of personal freedom; for we read of all ranks engaged in the labors of the field, and going out of the cities to draw water. That they were not usually secluded from visitors seems to be implied by the question which the strangers asked Abraham, "Where is Sarah, thy wife?" Indeed, living as they did in tents, and removing so frequently, it would have been no easy matter to have preserved the complete privacy that exists in the seraglios of the East. But as the Jews grew more



numerous and wealthy, the higher ranks indulged in a much greater number of wives, and kept them more carefully secluded. Solomon had seven hundred wives, and three hundred mistressés; but these, like horses and chariots, were probably valued merely as the appendages of ostentatious grandeur. To prevent the increasing tendency to polygamy, a law was made forbidding any man who took a new wife to diminish the food and raiment of his other wives, or in any respect to treat them with less attention.

The part of the house appropriated to females was called the armon. It was universally toward the east, and entirely separated from the apartments of the men. None but the nearest male relations were ever allowed to pass the threshold. Any infringement of this law was punished with great severity.

The houses in Palestine were built with flat roofs, and in such a manner as to inclose in the centre a large, open, quadrangular court, called the chazer or thavech. This court was as completely sheltered from public observation as the most private apartment. It contained a fountain shaded by palm trees, and screened by an awning which could be drawn over it whenever occasion required; it was ornamented with columns, vases of flowers, and tessellated marble, according to the wealth of the owner. Here the women pursued their occupations, played with their children, and enjoyed the cool evening air, at seasons when there was no danger of the approach of strangers. The arrival of male visitors was

doubtless proclaimed in season for them to retire, as it now is in Christian convents and eastern seraglios. When king David went out against Absalom, his women assembled on the house-top to witness his departure, as they are now allowed to do in oriental countries, when they wish to see any procession or show. From various passages of Scripture there is reason to suppose that people generally slept on the house-tops in summer, as they still do in many of the fine climates of the East.

The occupations of women during the prosperous reign of Solomon may be gathered from his Proverbs: "Who can find a virtuous woman? Her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband shall safely trust in her, and he shall have no need of spoil. She seeketh wool and flax, she worketh willingly with her hands. She riseth while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and tasks to her maidens. She stretcheth forth her hand to the distaff; her fingers hold the spindle. She openeth her hand to the poor, yea, she stretcheth forth her hands to the needy. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. She looketh well to her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Give her of the fruit of her hands; let her own works praise her in the gates."

That women sometimes transacted business, and made bargains in their own name, seems to be implied in the Proverbs: "She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She maketh fine linen and selleth it. She

delivereth girdles to the merchant." It is likewise certain that women went with their husbands to Jerusalem, and worshipped in the temple on solemn festivals.

Even in those days there was no dearth of invective against the follies and vices of the sex. Solomon praises good women in the most exalted terms ; but he implies their extreme rarity by the question, " Who can *find* a virtuous woman ?" The son of Sirach says, " All wickedness is but little to the wickedness of a woman." " From garments cometh a moth, and from women wickedness." " A loud crying woman and a scold shall be sought out to drive away the enemies." " A drunken woman and a gadder abroad causeth great anger."

Perhaps it never occurred to those wise men, that the system of polygamy was calculated to stifle the best emotions of the female heart, and to call all its worst passions into exercise. But even under the most barbarous and tyrannical forms of society, the salutary influence of good and sensible women is felt and acknowledged. The son of Sirach says, " Blessed is the man that has a virtuous wife, for the number of his days shall be doubled ;" and the Old Testament abounds with similar remarks.

The spirit of that age was not favorable to intellectual improvement ; but as there were wise men, who formed exceptions to the general ignorance, and were destined to guide the world into more advanced states, so there was a corresponding proportion of wise women ; and among the Jews, as well as other

nations, we find a strong tendency to believe that women were in more immediate connection with Heaven, than men. Miriam, the sister of Aaron, was a prophetess, and seems to have possessed great influence. Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth, was not only a prophetess, but for many years a judge in Israel; and we are told that Barak refused to go up with his army against Sisera, unless she went up with him. At a later period, there was Anna the prophetess, who for many years remained in the temple of the Lord, night and day, in fasting and prayer. When Joseph and Mary brought the child Jesus into the temple, she immediately "gave thanks to the Lord, and spake of him to all them who looked for redemption in Israel." The belief in women who were under the influence of evil spirits, is shown by the story of the witch of Endor.

That women were imbued with the sternness which marked the barbarous character of men, is evident in the story of Jael, who drove the nail through the temples of Sisera, her sleeping guest; and of Judith, who deliberately bewitched the senses of Holofernes, that she might gain an opportunity to sever his head from his shoulders.

Josephus tells us that Mary, the daughter of Eleazer, who dwelt beyond Jordan, of eminent wealth and rank, fled away to Jerusalem during the Roman invasion, and was there when the city was besieged by Cæsar's troops. The little property she had been able to bring safely out of Perea was seized by the rapacious guards, from whom she received continual

insult and injury. At last famine prevailed to a dreadful degree in Jerusalem, and it became impossible for her to obtain any food. Goaded to madness by long continued hunger, she killed her own infant for food, saying, "Why should I preserve thee, miserable babe! If the Romans spare our lives, we must be slaves; and the seditious villains among us are more terrible than either of these things. Be thou my food and a by-word to the world, which is all that is now wanting to complete the calamities of the Jews." The soldiers perceived that food had been cooked in her house, and demanded their share of it. She produced the remnant of her horrid meal, saying, in mockery, "This is mine own son; and what has been done is mine own doing. Eat of this food; I have eaten of it myself. Do not pretend to be more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother."

The seditious soldiers, accustomed as they were to bloodshed and crime, went out trembling and afraid. When the famishing people heard of it, they desired to die, and esteemed those most happy who had died before such miseries were witnessed.

The dress of the ancient Hebrew women probably differed but little from that worn by the daughters of Israel at the present day. A robe which fell in ample folds, fastened by a girdle; loose flowing sleeves confined by bracelets; braided hair; and a turban, from which descended a long, transparent veil. Garments of silk and fine linen, of scarlet and purple, are often mentioned in connection with people of rank;

and we are told that Tamar wore a robe of divers colors, according to the custom of the king's unmarried daughters. Jewels were in use, even in the days of the patriarchs; for when Isaac sent his servant in search of Rebecca, he sent bracelets and earrings, of silver and of gold; and when Moses built a tabernacle for the Lord, "Both men and women came, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought bracelets, and ear-rings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold, an offering unto the Lord. And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen." The Israelitish mirrors were made of polished brass, and the women were so partial to them that they carried them everywhere, even to the most solemn places of worship. The use of false hair among the ancient Jews seems to be implied by the fact that Absalom's hair sold for two hundred shekels.

The Jews endeavored, both by law and custom, to keep their nation unmixed by foreign intermarriages; and it was a favorite plan with them to unite different branches of the same family. Thus the wife of Abraham was his sister, by the father's side; and Isaac and Jacob both sought wives among their kinsmen. When a man died without heirs, the nearest relation was bound to marry the widow; and if he refused to do so, she publicly accused him before the elders, loosed the shoe from his foot, spat in his face, and said, "So shall it be done unto the man that will

not build up his brother's house." And his name was called in Israel, "The house of him that hath his shoe loosed."

Notwithstanding the effort to keep the blood of the nation, and even of individual families, unmixed from generation to generation, the rule was sometimes broken through. Thus Moses married an Ethiopian woman; the wife of Joseph was daughter of the priest of On; and Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

It is generally supposed that formal ceremonies at a wedding were first prescribed by Moses. According to the rabbies, the appointed days were Friday for a bride who had never been married, and Thursday for a widow. The contract was read and signed by ten witnesses, who were free and of age. The bride was veiled and given to the bridegroom by her parents. Her father said, "Take her according to the law of Moses;" and the husband answered, "I take her according to that law." Benedictions were then pronounced both by the parents and the guests. The maidens sang a marriage song, and the men danced around the bridegroom, while the women danced around the bride. The feasting continued seven days, unless the bride were a widow, in which case they continued but three days. If a man married a number of wives in quick succession, he was bound to allow a feast of seven days to each. At a later period the form was somewhat changed. In the presence of ten witnesses, the bridegroom said to the bride, "Be thou a wife to me according to the

law of Moses, and I will worship and honor thee, according to the word of God, and will feed and govern thee, according to the custom of those who worship, honor, and govern their wives faithfully. I give thee fifty shekels for thy dowry."

The story of Samson and Delilah seems to imply that custom did not allow a young man to seek a girl in marriage without the intervention of his parents. He said to his father and mother, "I have seen a woman of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore get her for me to wife;" and when his parents started objections, he still pleaded, "Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well." The idea of applying to the beautiful Delilah in person does not seem to have occurred to his mind.

During the magnificent prosperity of Israel, marriage ceremonies were conducted with more pomp than they had been in the days of the patriarchs. Instead of the bridegroom's paying a certain sum of money, or performing a certain period of service for his bride, it became customary for wealthy parents to give a handsome dowry with their daughters. This is the natural tendency of society; because with the progress of wealth and refinement women become expensive, rather than profitable, in a pecuniary point of view.

On the day of the nuptials, the bride was conducted by her female relations to the bath, where she was anointed with the choicest perfumes, her hair perfumed and braided, her eyebrows deepened with black powder, and the tips of her fingers tinged with



rose-color. Her companions then arrayed her in a marriage robe of brilliant color, which fell in ample folds to her feet. The girdle and bracelets were more or less costly, according to the wealth of her parents. A flame-colored veil was surmounted by a crown, usually of gold; for this reason, a bride among the Hebrews was called *the crowned*. Before she left the bath, her friends from all quarters sent in their wedding gifts. The bridegroom was anointed and crowned in a similar manner, by the young men of his family.

The bride, accompanied by her nurse, was conveyed in a litter from her father's house, followed by all her female friends and relations closely veiled. The procession was headed by seventy young priests bearing flambeaux of oil and pitch, and by a multitude of persons carrying the clothes, jewels, and furniture, which had been presented to the bride; each person carried but one thing. Next came the bridegroom and his friends, in their richest apparel. Then came the bride in her palanquin: and servants and children closed the train.

When they arrived at the bridegroom's house, the bride anointed the door-posts with oil, and adorned them with woollen fillets. Then the maidens lifted her over the threshold, which formed the boundary between her single and married life. The nuptial train entered the courts, and the bride solemnly took possession of her apartments in the armon, where a feast was prepared for her and her female friends. When all had partaken plentifully, both men and

women assembled in the inner court. The maidens led the bride, and the young men the bridegroom, to the parents, who placed the right hand of the wife within the right hand of her husband, and pronounced upon them the paternal blessing. "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, who didst create Adam and Eve! Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, who causeth Zion to rejoice in her children! Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, who makest the bride and the bridegroom to be glad together! The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, be with you, and help you together, and give his blessing richly upon you! Jehovah make the wife that comes into thy house like Rachel, and like Leah, who built up the house of Israel!"

The marriage festivities continued seven days, during which time numerous gifts were exchanged between the newly married and their guests.

When a man believed he had reason to be jealous of his wife, he could at any time compel her to submit to the public ordeal of drinking the water of jealousy. On such occasions, the wife was brought before the priests and elders, in the midst of a crowd of men, women, and children, who collected from curiosity. When the culprit stood in the presence of her judges, she was left alone, and if neither persuasion or sternness could extort from her a confession of guilt, they decreed that she should drink the water of jealousy, and take the oath of purgation. Being then led forth from the sanctuary, the priest, who was appointed for the purpose, threw her jewels,

veil, and turban on the ground, dishevelled her braided hair, rent her garments from the top of the neck to the breast, and bound a strip of bark about her, in place of a girdle, saying, "Thou hast forsaken the manner of the daughters of Israel, who cover their heads, and hast followed the manners of the heathen, who go with their heads uncovered."

Then the men spat on the ground, and the women uttered cries of abhorrence. The husband gave the priest the "offering of jealousy, the tenth part of an ephah of barley-meal, with no oil or frankincense poured thereon." Then the priest filled an earthen vessel with holy water from the laver beside the altar, and put into it dust from the floor of the tabernacle. With an elevated and solemn voice he said, "If thou art innocent, be thou free from the curse of this bitter water; but if thou art guilty, may Jehovah make thee a curse among thy people, and bring on thee all the curses written in his law."

If the woman answered, expressing her willingness to submit to the ordeal, the priest waved the "offering of jealousy" before Jehovah, and mixing the meal with salt, he burned it in the fire. Then the curses of the law were written on a roll, and washed off in the vessel of water wherein dust had been mingled. The woman drank the water of cursing, with her eyes lifted toward the holy of holies.

If, after a long pause, she was perceived to be unharmed, a shout of joy burst from the multitude, and hallelujah resounded from the temple through the streets of the city. Her parents and husband

congratulated her on this proof of innocence, her hair was braided anew, her jewels and veil restored, and she was conducted home in triumph.

There was such a firm belief that any guilty person who drank the "water of cursing" would be immediately swollen with painful and loathsome disease, that few would have ventured to abide by the ordeal, unless they were conscious of innocence; and if any one had been sufficiently daring to run the supposed risk, the priests would not have been easily deceived by a bold woman, who tried to imitate the quiet fearlessness of virtue.

By the Mosaic law, an unfaithful wife was stoned to death, and the partner of her guilt shared the same fate.

Among the customs of Jewish women, it is mentioned that "the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, four days in the year." It is well known, from Scripture history, that Jephthah's daughter went out with timbrels and dances to meet her father, when he returned victorious over his enemies; and that she cheerfully consented to be sacrificed, in order to fulfil a vow he had made unto the Lord.

It is not recorded what ceremonies were observed in commemoration of her death; but it was probably done after the manner in which they were accustomed to bewail women who died unmarried. The procession were clothed in mourning garments, with dishevelled hair, and ashes upon their heads, and as they moved, they wrung their hands and uttered loud

lamentations. It was not allowable to bathe, or anoint, during the days appointed for mourning. Jewish widows mourned for their husbands at least for the space of ten months, and it was deemed extremely indecorous for them to marry again in that time.

Children mourn a year for their parents. They do not put on black, but wear the same clothes they had on at the death of their father, however tattered and dirty they may be. Mourning for children, uncles, and aunts, lasts one month, during which period they do not cut their nails. When a husband returns from the funeral of his wife, he washes his hands, uncovers his feet, seats himself on the ground, and remains in the same posture, groaning and weeping, until the seventh day.

The custom of hired mourners to weep at funerals, and excite others to tears, was common with the Jews, and other ancient nations. Jeremiah says, "Call for the mourning women, that they may come; and send for cunning women that they may come; and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with water."

Women while in captivity wore their hair shaven, and nails cut close, in token of grief. A new-born Hebrew infant was washed and rubbed with salt. When it was forty days old, the father offered a lamb of the first year and a turtle-dove, the first as a burnt-offering and the latter as a sin-offering for the mother. She prayed while the victims were

slain by the priest, who afterwards sprinkled her with the blood. At the feast of Pentecost an infant child was solemnly presented by its parents before Jehovah, in the temple.

There was a Jewish sect called Essenes, who were similar to the Pythagoreans, and in many points resembled the Shakers of modern times. Their name was derived from a Persian word signifying resemblance to a hive of bees. There was an entire community of goods among them, and very strict subordination to their elders. The tendency of their doctrines was to keep the body in complete subjection to the soul, which they believed to be immortal. They lived in seclusion, never mixed with the world, drank only water, ate only bread and hyssop, and had great contempt for women. They always wore white garments, and spat behind them, in token of abhorrence to the world they had left. Marriage was entirely forbidden among the higher class of this sect, and among the inferior classes it was allowed only with very strict limitations and severe restraints. This society was kept up by people who, from various motives, left the world to join them, or saw fit to intrust them with the education of their children.

None of the priests of Israel were allowed to marry a widow, or a divorced woman, or one whose character was not irreproachable.

The Jews are now scattered all over the earth; but they everywhere adhere to their ancient faith and usages; even in the United States, where every thing

is in the most direct opposition to the old Hebrew spirit of regulating, defining, bounding, and limiting.

This singular people are very numerous in Poland, where they have erected stately synagogues and academies. The city of Hamburgh has been called the "lesser Jerusalem," on account of the number of Jews who reside there. They are numerous in Turkey, and have colonies in India.

A German traveller gives the following enthusiastic description of the Jewesses in Poland: "I may here say a few words about the fair daughters of Israel, whom I saw at Kalish, decked in ornaments and rich apparel, in honor of the Sabbath. The pearl bands, worn as head ornaments by the Polish Jewesses, are so peculiar, that it is almost impossible to convey a correct idea of them by mere description. These bands are seen only in Poland, and their form obviously denotes their ancient and oriental origin. They consist of strings of pearls intermingled with gold, forming altogether an elaborate piece of architecture, whose construction it is not easy to describe.

"A Jewess of the higher class, adorned with her pearl hair-band and gold neck-chain, from which is frequently suspended an ancient gold coin, is an object of no common interest, especially if she be as beautiful as I have often seen Jewesses in Poland. The events of thousands of years seem to be recorded in their soul-beaming countenances. They deserve to be stored in the memory, as a portion of the pure, beautiful, and sublime of this world. Dignity,

feeling, tender melancholy, and, not unfrequently, deep-seated sorrow, is expressed in the features of the fair daughters of Israel, whose notions of virtue and decorum are as rigid as the laws of their forefathers. This rule, like every other, has of course its exceptions. Few will deny that beauty consists more in expression than in the form of the features. Many women who are pronounced beautiful produce but little, or perhaps even an unfavorable impression, merely from the want of intellectual spirit. But the utmost beauty of form combined with expression leaves nothing to be wished for; and this will be acknowledged by all who have seen the Jewesses of Poland."

"A faithful adherence to their national costume serves to heighten their natural attractions."

The modern Jewish women light a lamp every Friday evening, half an hour before sunset, which is the beginning of their Sabbath. The custom is said to be in remembrance of their original mother, who first extinguished the lamp of righteousness, and to remind them of their obligation to rekindle it. Instead of the scape-goat, they now use white fowls. At the appointed season every mother of a family takes a white hen, and striking it on the head, says, "Let this die for my sins; she shall die, but I shall live."

Women did not succeed to the Jewish crown; two instances, however, occur in their history, where the supreme power was in female hands. Athaliah, the daughter of king Omri, and mother of Ahaziah,



nearly destroyed the royal family, and usurped the throne for six years. At a later period, Alexander Jannæus left the crown to his wife Alexandra during her life, and then to either of his sons whom she might think proper to appoint.

The ancient Jews were of the same dark complexion as the Arabs and Chinese; but their history furnishes a remarkable exemplification of the influence of climate. They are dispersed all over the globe, and wheresoever they sojourn, those who marry among Gentile nations are cast out of the synagogue; therefore whatever changes have taken place in their color must have been induced by climate and modes of life. There are now Jews of all complexions, from the light blonde of the Saxon to the deep brown of the Spaniard, and the mahogany hue of the Moors. The black Jews of Hindostan were originally slaves purchased by the Jews who sought shelter in that country, and who, with more consistency than Christians have manifested, emancipated their bondmen when they became converts to their religion.

Little is known of ancient Assyria, and of Babylonia, which was at first a part of Assyria. Being a wealthy and luxurious nation, their women were of course treated with a degree of consideration unknown among savage tribes. The manner in which Babylonish women are spoken of in the Bible implies great magnificence of apparel; and as there is always a correspondence between the moral and intel-

lectual condition of the sexes, it is not probable that women were universally and totally ignorant in a country where the sciences made such advancement, and written laws were used.

The Babylonians manufactured rich embroidery, tapestry, fine linen, and magnificent carpets. They were distinguished for elegance and refinement of manners; were very fond of music, and had a great variety of instruments. Singing and dancing girls were selected from the most beautiful to entertain the wealthy at their meals; but we have no means of knowing whether ladies of high rank considered it a degradation to dance and sing before strangers. It is generally supposed that the Babylonian women were admitted to social and convivial meetings with men; and it is on record that they sometimes drank too freely of the wine. Weaving and embroidery were no doubt generally practised by women, either for amusement or profit. With regard to marriages, they had a yearly custom of a peculiar kind. In every district three men, respectable for their virtue, were chosen to conduct all the marriageable girls to the public assembly. Here they were put up at auction by the public crier, while the magistrates presided over the sales. The most beautiful were sold first, and the rich contended eagerly for a choice. The most ugly or deformed girl was sold next in succession to the handsomest, and assigned to any person who would take her with the least sum of money. The price given for the beautiful was divided into dowries for the homely. Poor people, who cared

less for personal endowments, were well content to receive a plain wife for the sake of a moderate portion. No man was allowed to provide a husband for his daughter; and no man was permitted to take away the woman he had purchased, until he had given security to make her his wife. The feasts by which wealthy Babylonians commemorated their marriages became at last so extravagant that laws were made to restrain them. The Assyrians worshipped Venus under the name of Mylitta. Some of the ceremonies observed in her temple are unsuitable to be described in these pages.

When the Babylonians were besieged by the Persians, they strangled all the women except their mothers, and one other in each family, to bake their bread. This was done to prevent famine; and the lot fell upon women probably because they were of less importance in carrying on the war.

It is not known whether females were admitted into the priesthood; but a woman always slept in the temple of Jupiter Belus, whom the Chaldean priests declared to have been chosen by the deity as his especial favorite from among all the nation.

Two remarkable women are mentioned in the brief records we have of Assyria and Babylon. Their names are Semiramis and Nitocris.

When Ninus, king of Assyria, besieged Bactria, it is said the attempt would not have been successful, had it not been for the assistance of Semiramis, who was at that time the wife of one of his principal officers. She planned so skilful a method of attack,

that victory was insured. Ninus became a passionate lover of the sagacious lady, and her husband committed suicide. Soon after this she became queen. Some say she requested the monarch to invest her with uncontrolled power merely for the space of five days; and as soon as a decree to this effect had been made public, she caused him to be put to death; but other authors deny this. She succeeded Ninus in the government of the Assyrian empire, and to render her name immortal, she built the great city of Babylon in one year. Two millions of men were constantly employed upon it. Certain dykes built by order of the queen, to defend the city from inundations, are spoken of as admirable.

Altars were built and divine honors paid to the memory of Semiramis.

The other celebrated queen was Nitocris, wife of Nabonadius, who in the Scripture is called Evil Merodach. She was a woman of great endowments. While her voluptuous husband gave himself up to what the world calls pleasure, she managed the affairs of state with extraordinary judgment and sagacity. She was particularly famous for the canals and bridges which she caused to be made for the improvement of Babylon.

Such instances as these do not indicate a degraded condition of women. Yet the Assyrian monarchs had seraglios, at least in times later than Nitocris; for we are told that the effeminate Sardanapalus spent his chief time in the apartments of his women, learning to handle the distaff, and imitating their

voice and manners. This fact proves that spinning was not unusual with women of high rank. The exceeding love of perfumes which prevails in the East characterized Assyria. When Babylon was conquered, all the evils arose which might have been expected among a voluptuous people so long accustomed to luxurious living. Fathers and husbands, rather than relinquish their own expensive habits, were not unfrequently willing to receive the shameful price of a wife or daughter's beauty.

The ancient Lycians, supposed to be descendants of the Cretans, always took their names from their mothers, and not from their fathers. When any one was asked to give an account of his ancestors, he mentioned the female branches only. If a free woman married a slave, the children were free; but if a citizen married a concubine or a foreigner, his children could not attain to any political dignity. The inheritance descended to daughters, and sons were excluded. Some say the Lycian women were treated with this remarkable degree of respect, because their prayers to Neptune once removed an extraordinary salt blighting dew from the fields. Others suppose it was because their ancestors, the Cretans, descended from the goddess Thetis. A woman presided over the different companies into which the Cretans were divided, had the entire management of the household, and at table gave the choicest food to those who had most distinguished themselves. The origin of these peculiar customs is obscured by fable,

but they probably arose from some great benefit early conferred upon the state by women. The Lycian men mourned for the dead by assuming female garments.

Artemisia, queen of Caria, so famous for her wisdom and bravery, was descended from the Cretans on the mother's side. By the death of her husband she was left with the government of the kingdom, until her son should be of age. She served with Xerxes in his expedition against Greece, and furnished five of the best ships in the fleet. She endeavored to dissuade the Persian monarch from venturing a naval battle at Salamis; but her judicious advice not being accepted, she commanded her portion of the fleet, and fought with the utmost bravery. When her vessel was pointed out to Xerxes, he exclaimed, "The men on this occasion behave like women, and the women like men." The Athenian conquerors considered themselves so much disgraced by having a female antagonist, that they pursued her with the utmost vengeance, and offered ten thousand drachmæ to whoever would take her alive. But she escaped in safety to her own kingdom by means of an artifice; for having attacked one of her own allies, with whom she was displeased, the Greeks supposed her vessel to be one friendly to their cause. Some other stratagems, which she used to obtain power over her enemies, were entirely unworthy of a generous mind.

Xerxes entertained so high an opinion of Artemisia, that he confided to her care the education of the young princes of Persia. Her statue was erected at Lacedæmon, among those of the Persian generals.

She became in love with a young man of Abydos, who did not return her passion; in consequence of which she caused his eyes to be put out while he slept, and then, in a fit of remorse, jumped from the promontory of Leucas into the sea.

There was another Artemisia, daughter of a Carian king, who married Mausolus, famous for his beauty. She was so much in love with her husband, that after his death she mixed his ashes with her drink. She erected a monument to his memory, so magnificent, that it was called one of the seven wonders of the world; and from this circumstance the word mausoleum is derived. She offered large rewards to the literary men of the age, for the best elegiac panegyric on her husband. Two years after his decease, she died of grief.

Little is known of the Trojan women. Their condition was probably very similar to that of women in other nations of the same period. Andromache, though a princess, and well beloved by her husband, fed and took care of the horses of Hector. It is to be presumed that she had a good deal of skill in embroidery, for we are told that she made a representation of the death of Hector, surrounded by garlands. The dreams and prophecies of Cassandra, daughter of king Priam, betray the usual tendencies to invest women with supernatural powers.

The Asiatic Greeks, particularly those of Ionia, were distinguished for voluptuous refinement, and

the beauty and gracefulness of their women. The celebrated Aspasia, first the mistress, and afterwards the wife of Pericles, was of Ionia. Her wit and eloquence must have equalled her beauty; for we are told that Plato loved to discourse philosophy with her, and that Pericles sought her advice in great political emergencies.

Zenobia, queen of Palmyra and the East, is the most remarkable among Asiatic women. Her genius struggled with, and overcame, all the obstacles presented by oriental laws and customs. She is said to have been as beautiful as Cleopatra, from whom she claimed descent. She knew the Latin, Greek, Syriac, and Egyptian languages; had drawn up, for her own use, an abridgment of oriental history; and read Homer and Plato under the tuition of Longinus. She was the companion and friend of her husband, and accompanied him on his hunting excursions with eagerness and courage equal to his own. She despised the effeminacy of a covered carriage, and often appeared on horseback in military costume. Sometimes she marched several miles on foot, at the head of the troops. Having revenged the murder of her husband, she ascended the throne, and for five years governed Palmyra, Syria, and the East, with wonderful steadiness and wisdom. After a long and desperate resistance she was conquered by the Roman emperor Aurelian, who had grown jealous of the increasing wealth and power of his rival.

The conduct of Zenobia after her capture tarnishes



all the lustre of her character. She who had conducted many battles by her wisdom, and gained them by her valor, trembled when she heard the ferocious Roman soldiery demand her death; and she sought to save herself by sacrificing her best friends to the resentment of the conqueror.

Zenobia, almost weighed down with jewels, and chained with gold, walked, a splendid captive, in the triumph of Aurelian. That emperor, however, treated his unfortunate rival with a degree of clemency unusual in ancient times. He gave Zenobia a very elegant villa, about twenty miles from Rome. The great Queen of the East sunk into the obscurity of private life, and her daughters married into noble families.

Many of the customs of the ancient Jews still prevail in Syria. The rude mill by which they grind their corn is turned by two women, as it was in the days of our Saviour. The excellent wells in the neighborhood of mount Lebanon are still the resort of women, who carry thence large jars of water on their heads, as the daughters of the patriarchs did of old. They are very timid; and if a stranger approaches the fountains they immediately draw their veils. In common with many other Asiatic nations, they bake their bread in small cakes against a heated brick wall. When the cake is sufficiently done, it drops of itself. This no doubt was the manner in which Sarah "baked cakes on the hearth" when Abraham entertained the strangers in his tent.

When a Syrian lady is betrothed, her lover sends her a ring and other jewels, according to his rank and wealth. After these are accepted, she is not allowed to see her intended husband, or any gentleman but her nearest relatives, until the wedding ceremonies are completed. There is no period fixed for the bridegroom to send for the bride; but during the fourteen previous days he repeatedly sends presents to her; and five days before she is summoned from her father's house, he sends a confidential woman with jewels for her head, neck, and arms. Under the care of this woman, the bride is bathed, her hands stained red, and her face painted like a doll. Presents from friends are sent to the bath, and the bride walks several times round the fountain, adorned with a succession of new dresses and ornaments, accompanied by lighted candles, and the joyful cries of her attendants. After this, she is required to sit in a corner with closed eyes the whole day, except at the hours of eating. The relatives of the bridegroom escort her to his house, mounted on a horse, with her eyes still closed, accompanied by musicians, women bearing torches, and mules loaded with the dresses, ornaments, or household utensils, which she has received. As the procession passes along, the people invoke blessings on the bride.

The Syrian women ride astride on horseback, veiled; but they are less scrupulous than most Asiatic women about removing their veils, when comfort or convenience requires it.

Miss Abbot, the British consul's daughter, who

made a journey into the mountains of Syria, speaks of the inhabitants as remarkable for their kindness and simplicity. They had never before seen a European lady, and their curiosity was much excited. The men stopped her horse to present bouquets and benedictions; and the women crowded her apartments, bringing baskets full of delicious grapes and figs. The young lady says: "As I passed, blessings were invoked upon me, as upon an Arab bride. I was everywhere received with the affectionate welcome of an old friend, rather than with the courteous greeting of a stranger. The women were extremely neat in their appearance, and though evidently very poor, would accept of no remuneration for their offerings."

The Syrian women wear a very high odd head-dress, called the *tantoura*, not unlike the horn of a unicorn. It is made of wood, pasteboard, and tinsel, or of the precious metals set with gems. The inhabitants of the mountains are less tawny than those who live in the plains. About Lebanon their complexion resembles that of the French. The women of Damascus and Tripoli are celebrated for their fairness, and for their beautiful dark eyes, which are usually visible, though a veil covers the rest of the face.

Among many sacred relics which abound in Syria, they profess to show the kitchen and fireplace of the virgin Mary, and the fountain where she was accustomed to draw water.

In the mountains of the Anti-Libanus are a pecu-

liar class of people called Druses. They have scarcely any religion, observe neither fasts nor festivals of any kind, and allow brothers and sisters to intermarry. They live in a very secluded manner, and rarely take several wives. The women are extremely modest and industrious. They grind corn and make bread after the old scripture fashion.

The Druses divorce their wives on the slightest pretext. If a wife ask her husband's permission to go out, and he says, "Go," without adding, "but come back again," she is divorced. Though both should wish it, they cannot live together again, without being re-married according to Turkish forms. These people are very jealous, but rarely punish a criminal wife with death; divorce is the usual penalty.

The Turks in Syria, as well as in other parts of their empire, kill a woman as soon as they suspect her; and the fine incurred by a seducer is enormously heavy.

The Turkomans are a wandering tribe, living in tents like Bedouins. They are peculiar for giving a dowry with their daughters, instead of receiving a price for them. They are exceedingly scrupulous about the honor of their women. If a brother should see his sister receiving a kiss even from her betrothed lover, he would shoot the poor girl on the spot; yet, with the usual inconsistency of mankind, they are themselves extremely fond of intrigues, and pride themselves not a little on success.

The Turkoman women are very industrious and

ingenious. They make the tent-coverings of goat hair, and weave carpets scarcely inferior to those of Persia. They use no shuttle, but pass the thread with their fingers. They have peculiar skill in dying various brilliant colors. Nearly all the labor falls upon them. The men do nothing but feed the horses and camels at sunset.

Syria is a part of the Turkish empire, and of course governed by Mohammedan rulers.

Dr. Clarke gives the following account of a pacha whom he visited at Acre. "The harem of the seraglio is accessible only to himself. Early every evening he regularly retired to this place, through three massive doors, every one of which he closed and barred with his own hand. Even to have knocked at the outer gate after he had retired would have been punished with death. No person in Acre knew the number of his women, but from the circumstance of a certain number of covers being daily placed in a kind of wheel or turning cylinder, so contrived as to convey dishes to the interior, without any possibility of observing the person who took them. He had from time to time received presents of female slaves; but after they entered his harem, none but himself knew whether they were alive or dead. If any of them were ill, he brought a physician to a hole in the wall, through which the sick person was allowed to thrust her arm, the pacha himself holding the hand of the physician while the pulse was examined. He put seven of his wives to death with his own hand, after his return from a

pilgrimage to Mecca, during which the janizaries had obtained admittance to the harem. From all the information we could obtain, he treated the tenants of his harem like the children of his family. When he retired, he carried with him a number of watch-papers he had amused himself by cutting with scissors during the day, as toys to distribute among them."

The same traveller says: "In the evening we took some coffee in the house of the imperial consul, and were introduced to the ladies of his family. We were amused by seeing his wife, a very beautiful woman, sitting cross-legged by us on the divan, and smoking tobacco with a pipe six feet long. Her eyelashes, as well as those of the other women, were tinged with the black powder made of sulphuret of antimony. Although this has by no means a cleanly appearance, it is considered as essential to the decoration of a woman of rank in Syria as her ear-rings, or the golden cinctures of her ankles. Dark streaks were likewise pencilled from the corners of her eyes along the temples. This reminded us of certain passages of Scripture wherein mention is made of '*putting the eyes in painting.*' English translators, unable to reconcile this with their ideas of a lady's toilet, have rendered it '*painting the face.*'"

The Arabs, though Mohammedans, seldom have more than one wife. Divorces rarely take place, **unless** for misconduct, or for not being the mother

of children. If the Arabian women are fortunate enough to have several sons, they are almost idolized by their husbands. The little girls are fair, but they are almost universally exposed to hardships, which soon spoil the complexion. When young they are very lively and agreeable, and sing almost perpetually. In cities the marriage ceremonies are similar to the Turkish. The processions are gay according to the wealth of the parties, and blessings are invoked on the bride as she passes.

The Bedouins live in tents, divided into three apartments, one for the men, one for the women, and one for the cattle. Though often ragged and half clothed, the Bedouin women generally manage to have jewels of some kind or other, for the neck, ears, nose, and arms. Those who cannot afford gold or silver, wear a nose ring of iron, sometimes two or three inches in diameter. The wives of sheiks, and other men of rank, generally wear rows of sequins across their foreheads, and fastened in bunches to the ends of their long braided hair. Rings in the nose, and very large clumsy glass bracelets about the wrist, are common. Their manner of churning butter is curious. They put the milk into a goat-skin with the hair all on. This is suspended by strong cords to the branch of a tree, and a woman shakes it with all her might, until butter is produced. These skins are seldom washed, and the butter, of course, is none of the sweetest.

The Bedouins consider their wives as slaves, and exercise arbitrary power in punishing them for any

fault. One of them is said to have beat his wife to death merely because she had lent his knife without permission, though she begged pardon and offered in the humblest manner to go and bring it for him. Being called before a council of the chief men of the tribe, he acknowledged the offence; saying he had told the deceased never to meddle with any thing of his, and he was determined to have a wife who would obey him better. The chief reproved him for not first making a complaint to him; adding that if his wife should, after such a step, be guilty of disobedience, he had a right to kill her if he pleased. The murderer was ordered to pay four sheep, as a penalty for not making application to the sheik or chief; and soon after he married another woman.

They are married by a priest, who joins their hands, and reads certain verses from the Koran. The bride is blindfolded by the priest, and the bridegroom leads her into his tent, on the top of which a white flag is displayed; he seats her on a mat, saying, "You are at home." He then returns to the assembled company and joins with them in feasting, singing, shouting, firing guns, and performing rival feats on horseback, until after midnight. The bride remains blindfolded during an entire week, her husband merely removing the bandage from her eyes for a moment, the first time he enters the tent, that she may be assured of his identity. Some female friend cooks the food, and performs other domestic duties for her, until she is allowed to see the light of day. The Arabs have many superstitious obser-



vances respecting marriage. On such occasions they apply to old women skilful in sorcery, who are supposed to have the art of tying and untying the knots of fate. In cities, the Arabian women cover their faces with a cloth, with two holes worked for the eyes, which are almost always bright and beautiful. Their complexion is lemon-colored. They stain their fingers and toes a yellowish red, and blacken the joints of the latter. The eyebrows are stained black, and the lips blue; and a small flower or spot is often painted or stained on each cheek, the forehead, and the chin.

The following is a picture of an Arab beauty:—  
“Her eyes are black, large, and soft, like the antelope; her look is melancholy and impassioned; her eyebrows are curved like two arches of ebony; her figure is straight and supple as a lance; her step is like a young colt; her eyelids are blackened with kahol, her lips painted blue, her nails stained a gold color with hennah, and her words are sweet as honey.”

The Arab women are said to be generally graceful in their motions, and in the adjustment of their drapery. On entering an apartment, they carelessly fling off their slippers, and show a naked foot peeping from beneath the loose ample drawers, which fall below the ankle. Mr. Madox, who visited the grand sheik, says: “His daughters sat on a sofa with him; not after the Turkish fashion, but with feet to the ground. They were rather pretty, gaily dressed, with coins suspended on gold chains by the sides of

their faces. One of them, seeing I had some difficulty in detaching a piece of meat from the bone, offered me another piece with her stained and jeweled fingers. After dinner, when they washed their hands, they made a great lather with the soap offered by the attendants, which they put in their mouths, and cleansed their teeth with their fingers. After this they smoked."

When the wives of Arab chiefs accompany their husbands in devout pilgrimages to Mecca, they are carried in a litter borne by two camels. Fifteen miles from Mecca is a small hill, much resorted to by the devout, called Djebel Arafat, or the Mountain of Gratitude. On this spot, according to Mohammedan belief, Adam and Eve met, were reconciled, built a house, and lived together, after a separation of forty, or, as some say, five hundred, years. The women of Mecca are said to be free in their manners, even to boldness. This may be partly owing to the constant sight of strangers, who visit the city as pilgrims, and partly to the dullness and indifference of the men, induced by their abject poverty and ignorance.

But the Arabs are in general extremely jealous of the honor of their women. They would immediately stab a wife or daughter, who was supposed to have disgraced herself. A single life is considered so disrespectful, that a woman, in order to avoid it, will marry a man very much her inferior, or even consent to be the second wife of one already married.

The poor Arabs live in small thatched huts, and sleep on straw mats. Those who are richer have

low houses of stone with terrace roofs; and here and there may be found an extraordinary individual, who has sofas, carpets, mirrors, and fountains. Those whose circumstances do not admit of their having separate apartments for women, are careful, when they invite any one to the house, to enter before him, and cry aloud, *Tarick! Tarick!* (Retire! Retire!) At this warning all the females immediately hide themselves.

If the wife of a Bedouin is seduced, the laws allow him to kill any of the offender's family whom he may happen to meet. Sometimes the affair is settled by the seducer's father giving the injured husband three or four of his daughters to sell, for as high a price as he can obtain.

The Kereks are not so kind to their wives as the Bedouins, with whom they often intermarry. A woman cannot inherit the merest trifle of her husband's property. Even during his lifetime he does not supply her with necessary clothing; she is obliged to beg of her father, or steal her husband's wheat, and sell it clandestinely. No greater insult can be offered to a Kerek than to tell him he sleeps under the same blanket with his wife; for they do not allow the women to share their apartments. When a wife is ill, they send her back to her parents, saying they paid for a healthy woman, and cannot have the expense of an invalid. Butter is used very freely by this tribe, and they consider it the height of meanness to *sell* it. A butter-seller is a most contemptuous epithet; and the daughters of

such a parsimonious person would have no chance to get husbands.

The Courds, who dwell in the mountains between Turkey and Persia, live in tents, and subsist by plunder, like the Bedouin Arabs. Their women are of a pale mahogany hue, with very fine features. The nose is generally aquiline, the eyes bright and mild, and the whole countenance expressive of kindness and frankness. The Courds have the utmost confidence in their wives and daughters. They may be seen at the tent-doors and in the fields, without veils, and always ready to answer a civil question, or pay a stranger the simple duties of hospitality. Both as maidens and matrons they are very virtuous and modest. These women are active, vigorous, and fearless, and they educate their children in the same way. "Our boys will be soldiers," say they; "and they must learn to bear and dare every thing. We show them the way."

The Courds, like most people of similar habits, receive a certain price for the daughters they dispose of in marriage.

The inhabitants of Afghanistan are Mohammedans; of course women are considered as property, and the higher classes are kept scrupulously concealed. But they are an active, romantic people, and have more gallantry than usually characterizes the Moslem religion. The women are industrious in household avocations, and the labors of the distaff

and the loom ; but they are not required to perform out-of-door work. Owing to the nature of Mohammedan customs and institutions, love and courtship are little known in Moslem nations ; but among the Afghans a man often plights his faith to a young woman, goes off to remote provinces, and makes the most laborious exertions to earn money sufficient to purchase her of her friends.

People of all tribes and languages may be found about the beautiful regions of Caucasus. They are generally handsome, vigorous, active, hospitable, cunning, and dishonest.

The Circassians and Georgians have been most celebrated. Among the Circassians, pride of birth is carried to such an extent, that it is said an unequal match was never heard of in that country.

They are very fond of hunting and military exploits ; and women, of course, participate in this character. They polish and take care of the armor, are very proud of their husband's courage, and reproach them severely when defeated. The young men show great activity and skill in military exercises, and the most alert has the privilege of choosing the most beautiful girl as his partner at the next ball. Their dances are in the elaborate Asiatic style, less gay, graceful, and expressive than those of Europe.

When a Circassian prince wishes to marry, he pays the father of the princess the value of two thousand rubles, in arms, horses, and cattle ; and his

father-in-law gives him a number of slaves in return. The prince of Circassia demanded from the neighboring prince of Mingrelia an hundred slaves loaded with tapestry, an hundred cows, an hundred oxen, and an hundred horses, as the price of his sister. The birth of a child, especially a boy, is celebrated with great festivities. A female infant has a wide leathern belt sewed around the waist, which continues till it bursts, and is then replaced by another. The bridegroom cuts this belt with his dagger, and on account of its extreme tightness fatal accidents sometimes occur.

The children of princes are not brought up at home, but sent soon after their birth to the house of some nobleman, who is charged with their guardianship. The expenses of their education and marriage are paid by the noblemen, who receive no remuneration from the parents.

A Circassian dwelling is divided into two parts, separated from each other by an inclosed court; one allotted to the husband and such guests as he chooses to invite, the other to the wife and family. If a European were to ask a Circassian concerning the health of his wife, he would angrily turn his back without condescending to reply. The lower classes, as usual, have more freedom than the higher; they often go abroad without veils.

Girls marry between their twelfth and sixteenth year, and are considered quite old at eighteen. Their mothers teach them to embroider, and make dresses for themselves and their male relations. On

the wedding day the father of the bride makes her a present, but he reserves the greater portion of what he intends to give her, until the birth of her first child. On this occasion she visits him, receives the remainder of her portion, and is clothed for the first time in the matron's dress and veil.

If there be rival lovers, they often decide the question by single combat, or engage friends in the quarrel, and the victorious party seizes the prize. If the bridegroom can prove any thing against the former character of his bride, he sends her back to her parents, who generally sell her as a slave. An unfaithful wife has her hair shaved, her ears clipped, and the sleeves of her robe cut off, and in this situation is sent home to her father on horseback, to be sold as a slave.

The Circassians have two kinds of divorce; one total, and the other provisional. In the first case both parties are immediately at liberty to marry again; in the other, the couple agree to separate for a year, and if at the end of that time the husband does not send for his wife, her relatives compel him to a solemn divorce, that she may be able to marry again. After the death of the husband, the wife governs the family, without dividing the property among the children. When she dies, the wife of the eldest son usually takes her place; the children can then demand a division of the fortune, the oldest receiving the largest share. At funerals, women utter loud cries of grief, and disfigure themselves with scars. They wear black for mourning.

The Circassians, like the Arabs, are remarkable for hospitality. They will incur any dangers to protect a person that has eaten of their food. Should the enemies of a stranger attempt to seize him in the house of a Circassian, the wife of his host would give him milk from her own breast, in token of adoption; and from that moment all the tribe would feel bound to avenge his wrongs, as if he were a brother.

The Circassian women have been celebrated throughout the world for their beauty. Some modern travellers have denied their claims to such great celebrity. Dr. Kimmel says, "I have met with none of extraordinary beauty; and officers who have long commanded in the Caucasus have informed me that Circassian beauties are extremely rare."

But it must be remembered that women of the higher classes are rigorously excluded from the sight of a traveller; and in a country where the feudal system prevails to its utmost extent, the handsome daughter of a serf would be immediately claimed by her noble master, who could sell her for the royal harems, or reserve her for himself, as he saw fit.

Women of rank embroider, weave elegant baskets, and other ornamental things. The lower class tend the flocks, weave garments for the men, and do a variety of household and out-door work. The serfs are the only class who continue to live with a wife after she grows old. It is an uncommon thing for any man or woman, even among the princes, to know how to read or write.



The condition of the Georgians is very similar to that of their neighbors the Circassians.

The Georgian women are very remarkable for beauty ; but are said to be wanton, treacherous, and uncleanly. A great trade in female slaves has been carried on in Georgia. Fathers sell their children, brothers their sisters, and nobles their vassals. Jewish agents are continually traversing the provinces about Caucasus, seeking the fairest flowers for the harems of Turkey and Persia. A handsome, red-haired girl will sell in Constantinople for six or seven thousand piastres.

The Georgian women are tasteful and elegant in their dress, and great pains are taken to perfect them in those voluptuous arts of pleasing, which the Orientals call female accomplishments.

The men being almost always engaged in war, or hunting, there is very little companionship between the sexes.

The Armenians are Christians ; but their customs with regard to women are very similar to the Turks, excepting that their laws do not permit a plurality of wives. They keep their wives and daughters as rigorously excluded as the Turks do theirs. A man never sees the face of the woman he is to marry, and courtship is a thing unknown.

The mother of a young man generally selects a bride for him, and makes all necessary arrangements concerning the dowry, bridal presents, &c. The nature of these presents are regulated by old laws and usages, and each article is blessed by a priest.

When the bridegroom goes to bring his bride from her father's house to his own, his father-in-law gives him a new watch, and the nearest female relations hang pieces of gold tinsel on his hat. He is introduced to the bride, who sits on a low sofa, so completely buried in dresses, that not so much as the tip of her shoe is visible. A thick white linen veil, called the *perkem*, used only for bridals, is thrown over her head; over this is another veil composed of tinsel, or sheets of gilt paper. Her hair flows down, and, joined to a mass of false hair, rests upon the sofa. The priest leads her blindfolded to the centre of the room, places her hand in that of the bridegroom, and pronounces a blessing. All the company then form in procession; a priest goes first with a lighted torch, and is followed by the bridegroom; the march is closed by the bride, who, being unable to see for herself, is led by female relations. When they arrive at the bridegroom's house, the bride is smoked with incense, and sprinkled with rose-water. She is then led to her apartments, and left with the women. The bridegroom proceeds to his apartment, where he is shaved and dressed in his wedding suit, every article of which is blessed by the priest, as he presents it. The couple are then led forth to the centre of another apartment, where the priest again joins their hands, and knocks their foreheads gently together. One of the family waves a crucifix over them, they again touch foreheads, and continue to lean against each other, while the priest chants some passages from the gospel. When he

has done singing, the priest produces two strings exactly alike, made of white and rose-colored silk interwoven together. He ties one round the brow of the bridegroom, over whom the crucifix is held, and asks, with a solemn pause between each question, "If she is blind, thou acceptest her?" "If she is lame, thou acceptest her?" "If she is hump-backed, thou acceptest her?"

To each question the bridegroom answers, "I accept." The other silken string is then tied round the brow of the bride, over whom the crucifix is held. The priest says, "Thou acceptest." She answers, "I accept."

The company then shower small pieces of money on the couple, the cross is waved, and the priests chant. All the men quit the room for a short time, while the matrons remove a quantity of the robes and veils, under which the bride is well nigh stifled. At a given signal, the husband is admitted, and allowed to see, for an instant, the countenance of his wife.

All the company then pass in. The bride is not again enveloped with the linen veil, but her face is covered with the tinsel and gold paper. The female guests kiss her, and put presents in her hand. After this, all the male relations, to the remotest degree, are allowed a glance at the bride's face, and the favor of kissing her hand.

Feasting and amusements then commence, and continue for three days. All this time the bride is obliged to sit motionless on the sofa; it would be

considered the height of indecorum for her even to whisper to any one, except the old matron who accompanied her from her father's house, and who is generally her nurse.

Toward the end of the third day, the priest leads the bridegroom to the bride, removes the silken strings from their brows, and carries away the tinsel veil. The bride is now, for the first time, permitted to speak. According to the old laws, she was not allowed to open her lips in the presence of her mother-in-law, or her married sister-in-law, for one year; the practice is now less rigid, but the most profound respect, and implicit obedience, is still exacted from the bride toward the relatives of her husband.

The marriages even of the poorest Armenians take place with all this ceremony and parade. Cooking utensils, robes, veils, &c., are kept stored in the churches, for the use of those who cannot afford to buy them for the occasion.

The dress of the Armenian ladies is remarkably heavy and loaded, and their ornaments large and massive. They have black eyes, ruddy complexions, and in general coarse features, with little expression. When they go out, the face is muffled up with bandages so as to show only the eyes, and sometimes a part of the nose. In the house, as well as abroad, and by night as well as by day, they wear a nose band, the pressure of which makes that feature universally broad and flat. They allow none of their hair to be seen, except a long braid that falls

down the back nearly to the ground. The custom of muffling themselves up, so that all look nearly alike, led Tournefort to say, facetiously, "An Armenian returning from a journey is not sure to find the same wife; he cannot tell whether she may not be dead, and whether some other woman may not have stepped into the place of the deceased."

The Armenian salutation, on entering a room, is to place the right hand rapidly to the breast, mouth, and forehead. The ladies throw off their slippers before they sit down. The manner of lowering themselves upon the divan, so as to assume the oriental posture, is said to be altogether inimitable by a European. For the sake of change in position, they sometimes kneel.

Xenophon, in his *Cyropædia*, relates a beautiful anecdote of an Armenian wife in very ancient times. The princes of the country having evaded the payment of their customary tribute to Persia, Cyrus made war upon them, and took the royal family prisoners. Tigranes, the king's son, had been recently married to a woman for whom he had very great love. The Persian monarch asked the prince what price he would give to regain her. Tigranes with great fervor replied, "Oh, Cyrus, I would save her from servitude at the expense of my life!" The noble conqueror replied, "Take your own to yourself; and do you, Armenian king, take your wife and children, without payment, that they may know they come free to you."

When the Armenians returned home, all were talk-

ing of the magnanimity, mildness, and beauty of Cyrus. Tigranes said to his wife, "And do you, Armenian dame, think Cyrus so very handsome?" "Truly," said she, "I did not look at him." "At whom then did you look?" inquired her husband. "At the man who said he would ransom me at the expense of his own life," she replied.

The Turks as Mohammedans may have four wives, and as many mistresses as they can maintain; but the common class of people rarely have more than one wife.

The Grand Sultan cannot marry one of his own subjects, and Christian princesses would not in general be willing to form one of his numerous harem, even if such an alliance were not regarded as an abomination by the Moslems. His household is therefore composed of beautiful female slaves, usually presented by the first grandees of the empire, as one of the surest methods of obtaining royal favor. The heir apparent is consequently always the "son of a slave;" a contemptuous epithet often applied to him in the hour of adversity.

Orkhan, the second emperor of the Turks, is the only one on whom a Christian princess was bestowed. Theodora, of the Greek empire, daughter of Cantacuzene and Irene, was given to the powerful Turk by her ambitious father, though he was well aware that he previously had many wives and favorites. No marriage ceremonies were performed; but the troops were assembled round a throne, on which

Theodora was seated concealed by silken curtains. At a signal from the emperor, the screens were withdrawn, and the bride discovered in the midst of kneeling eunuchs and blazing torches ; while the joyful sound of trumpets and other instruments of music welcomed her appearance. Her father had stipulated that she should be allowed to preserve her religion in the midst of the harem, and he wrote much in praise of her charity and devotion in this difficult situation.

Achmet I. is said to have had three thousand women in his harem, and the grandees of the empire generally have some hundreds. The rigid seclusion of Mohammedan women is said to have originated in the conduct of Ayesha, called Best Beloved Wife of the Prophet, and Mother of the Faithful. She went out into the desert to look for a pearl necklace she had lost, and on her return was accused of listening to the smooth words of an officer she met. Mohammed did not withdraw his affection, and publicly protested her innocence ; but keenly alive to the disgraceful report, he expressly forbade any Mussulman to speak to his wives, or to remain in his house after dinner, or to enter it in his absence.

Harem is an Arabic word signifying sanctuary. These retreats are so carefully guarded, that little is known of their interior arrangements. Physicians, and the wives of European ambassadors, have sometimes gained access to seraglios, which they describe as follows : Favorites of the highest rank are called *khatouns*, of which there are seven. She who first

presents the Sultan with a son becomes the *sultana hasseki*, and takes precedence of the others. Next in rank to the khatouns are the *odahlycs*, whose number is unlimited. Each of the khatouns has a seventh part of the odahlycs, and a certain number of eunuchs and slaves as her own peculiar attendants; and each has a separate court, garden, and bath, belonging to the pavilion in which she resides. These pavilions are adorned with marble, paintings in arabesque, gilding, mirrors, &c. The odahlycs, generally to the amount of some hundreds, sleep on sofas in a long high gallery, divided by a double row of chests of drawers, where they keep their clothing. The staircases to this gallery are secured by massive trap-doors, fastened with bars of iron. The inner courts of the harem are guarded by black eunuchs, with muskets always in their hands, and the outer by white eunuchs. Innumerable subordinate officers are appointed to settle disputes, and keep order within and around the harem. When any of the Sultan's women accompany him into the gardens, officers are in readiness to warn the gardeners and all other men to retire; and should any one be slow to obey, he would be killed on the spot. When the king's women are removed from one seraglio to another, they are accompanied by officers with staves to keep off the people, and to prevent the ladies from showing themselves by drawing the curtains of their litters. When ill the women are always attended by their own sex. Physicians are admitted into the harem only under the strictest guard, and on extraordinary



occasions ; even then they are not permitted to see their patients, except through gauze. Notwithstanding all these precautions, intrigues are sometimes successfully carried on. If discovered, the woman is tied up in a sack and drowned ; but the Koran ordains that he who accuses a woman without being able to prove her guilt, shall receive the bastinado.

The mother of the reigning Sultan is called *sultana valydeh* ; a title which she assumes at his accession, and loses whenever he dies, or is deposed. Her sons treat her with the most unbounded respect, and give her almost supreme control in the harem. Her political influence is likewise by no means inconsiderable. The grand seignior often communicates to her the secrets of state ; covered with a veil, she holds conferences with the grand vizier and the mufti ; and in the absence of her son, she issues orders in his name. In the time of Achmet III., the sultana valydeh warmly espoused the cause of Charles XII. of Sweden, and made great exertions to arm Turkey against Russia, in his behalf. She even wrote letters to the king of Sweden, and to count Ponia-towski, though such a step was in open defiance of the laws of the harem. The revenues of certain provinces belong to the sultana mother, and in times of emergency she often lends large sums to his Highness.

The sultana valydeh and the sultana hasseki almost always dislike each other, because each is jealous of the other's influence over the reigning monarch. The hasseki finds it prudent to dissemble

her hatred, for fear of giving offence to the Sultan; and the valydeh on her part, while she refrains from openly wounding the affections of her imperious son, generally contrives all manner of secret and indirect means to injure his favorite. It sometimes happens, however, that the hasseki is so perfectly passive and submissive as to be a favorite both with mother and son.

If the heir apparent dies, the hasseki loses her rank, and the next khatoun who has a son takes her place.

This gives rise to the strongest feelings of rivalry, envy, and hatred. No pains are spared by the khatouns to destroy the offspring, injure the health, or vex the feelings of those odahlycs in whom they are fearful of finding rivals.

The sultana Guneche (a name which signifies *the sun*) had acquired great influence over Mohammed IV. by her beauty, excellent understanding, and perpetual flow of spirits. In the height of her power, the sultana mother was malicious enough to introduce to her son a lovely Circassian slave, named Gulbeyaz, or the *white rose*. The effect produced upon the mind of the voluptuous monarch was precisely what she wished: Guneche soon received intimation that apartments and a sultana's train were in preparation for the new favorite. She stole to the chamber of her rival, and after loading her with the bitterest invectives, beat her so cruelly that the whole harem was in an uproar. The Sultan provided Gulbeyaz with another residence six leagues distant, and

threatened to treat Guneche as a slave. She, however, made her peace with him, by attributing her rash conduct to excess of love, and expressing her determination in future to sacrifice her own feelings to the gratification of her *lion*, as the sultanas fondly call his Highness.

But afterward her jealousy showed itself in a still worse form. The Sultan had received from the grand vizier a most beautiful slave, named Khadyjeh. With a view to her safety, he conveyed her to a seraglio on the canal of the Black sea. For a time, Guneche appeared to have no suspicion of the frequent visits he paid her. But one day when the grand seignior had gone a hunting some distance from Constantinople, she ordered caïques to be secretly prepared for an excursion on the canal. On her arrival at the seraglio where Khadyjeh was confined, she affected to wish to enter the pavilion to rest. The new favorite was engaged in the innocent amusement of angling, in a closet that overhung the sea. Her vindictive rival came softly behind her, and suddenly pushed her into the waves, from which she rose no more.

The heir to the throne remains under the tuition of his mother until he is eight or nine years old, and custom, as well as the rules of the Koran, require from him the most implicit and reverential obedience. The day on which this important little personage is delivered over to male instructors is celebrated with great pomp. A recent traveller thus describes the ceremonies that took place when the oldest son of

Sultan Mahmoud was nearly nine years old: "The extensive plain of Ibrahim Aga, on the Asiatic shore, was covered with tents for the accommodation of troops of children, of whom six thousand were present. The Sultan was seated on a throne in a splendid pavilion, supported by gilded columns, hung with gold and silver tissue. The young prince was introduced to all the chief officers of the empire, and after respectfully embracing his father's feet he took his seat on a cushion near him. A chapter from the Koran was read, and a prayer pronounced by the grand mufti. At every pause all the children throughout the camp cried Amen, and it was echoed by the neighboring hills. Food is distributed and criminals pardoned in honor of the occasion. The festival lasts three days; and during all this time, men, women, and children remain in the field. The troops, the long line of tents, the noisy children, and women in all manner of gay costumes, riding in their painted and carved arabahs, drawn by oxen, combine to make the scene very cheerful and exhilarating."

In many instances the Sultans, when they ascended the throne, have caused all their brothers to be put to death, to prevent any disputes about succession. Amurat III. caused his five brothers to be killed in the presence of their own mothers, one of whom, unable to endure the sight, stabbed herself in despair. He likewise put to death two of his father's slaves, who were likely to become mothers. Mohammed III., son and successor of Amurat, caused

nineteen brothers to be strangled, and ten of his father's odahlycs to be thrown into the sea, for the same reason.

The khatouns occasionally make each other a ceremonious visit, probably from motives of curiosity; but their meals, baths, and amusements, are distinct from each other. They change their dresses many times a day, smoke, chew gum mastic, and loll on sofas, while female slaves dance around them, and perform pantomimes, which almost always represent love scenes. They have likewise magic lanterns and puppet shows, the subjects of which are said to be any thing but modest. One of their favorite occupations is making beads of rose leaves. The petals of the rose are carefully picked, and pounded into a smooth paste in an iron vessel. The iron, acting upon a certain acid in the rose, turns the paste quite black. It is made into little balls, which are perforated for stringing, and hung up in the shade to dry. When hard they are rubbed between the hands with a little attar of rose, till they become perfectly smooth. They never lose their fragrance. The Turkish ladies spend hours in passing these beads backward and forward on a string, inhaling the delicate perfume. They practise dancing, music, and embroidery, in the cool kiosks or pavilions, situated in the midst of the gardens. Here Frank and Greek women are sometimes admitted to exhibit goods and jewelry for sale, and Jewesses skilled in fortune-telling, amulets, and love-potions, are always welcome.

A visit from any lady of distinction, either from a

foreign nation or some distant part of the empire, is an extraordinary occasion, and conducted with much ceremony. If the visiter be a European, they manifest the greatest curiosity concerning those Christian countries where they have been told each man has but one wife. At parting, the guests are usually presented with embroidered handkerchiefs, and sprinkled by the attendants with perfumed waters.

The Sultan sometimes indulges his women in what is called the Feast of Lamps, which consists in a general illumination of the gardens of the seraglio with colored lamps and reflecting mirrors. Booths are erected for the festival, furnished with a variety of goods, and with vases full of beautiful flowers. The sisters, nieces, and female cousins of the grand seignior are invited. The women of the harem, in appropriate dresses, tend the bazar, while the Sultan and his guests walk about purchasing jewelry and rich stuffs, which they present to each other. Dancing, music, and sports of various kinds continue till late at night.

The women of the harem try to obtain as many jewels as they can, because in case of their master's death these are not taken away from them. In the midst of slaughter, the most ruffianly soldier considers the walls of the harem as sacred; and when executioners are sent to strangle a state criminal and seize his effects, they do not enter his seraglio, or touch any property that belongs to his women.

The Sultan's daughters and sisters enjoy more liberty than any of his favorites. Not being heirs,

to the throne, they are not exposed to the perils that await his brothers and sons. While these girls are yet in their cradles, a husband is provided for them, generally among wealthy pachas ; and as soon as he dies, they are provided with another ; who (with a view to securing his wealth for the royal coffers) is very likely to be accused of some crime and soon strangled. Thus a sister of Amurat IV. had four husbands in less than one year.

If the sultana be ever so old or ugly, a man dare not refuse the honor of her alliance, if he values his head. During the reign of Abdul Hamyd, an old sultana fell in love with a handsome and wealthy young man, whom she saw pass her windows during a public ceremony. The young man was thunder-struck when the Sultan made known the honor that awaited him ; for he had an excellent wife, whom he most tenderly loved. But there was no escape for him. Had he attempted to fly, his capture and death would have been almost certain. He was compelled to dismiss his wife, who survived their separation but a few days.

The individual thus chosen is summoned to the presence of the Sultan, where he waits till the presiding khatoun comes and makes a signal that he is to follow her into the harem. At the threshold, the eunuchs take off his slippers, and make him wait some minutes, in token of the obedience he owes his royal consort. When he enters, he makes three obeisances, kneels, bows his face to the ground, and repeats a short prayer. The khatoun then conducts

him to his bride, who sits on a sofa, entirely covered with a veil of red taffeta. She treats him with the utmost haughtiness, which he tries to soften by magnificent presents. The slaves bring a tray containing sugar-candy and a pair of pigeons. The bridegroom offers some of the pigeon to the sultana, and she offers him candy. He expresses his felicity in terms the most reverential. The sound of various instruments then gives him notice to retire from the apartments of the women, and feasting and amusement is kept up till late in the night. If the bride be past the years of infancy, she is conducted to her husband's residence with great pomp.

Some writers have affirmed that a part of these marriage ceremonies consists in the Sultan's saying to his sister, or daughter, "I give this man to be thy slave. If he offends, cut off his head;" and that the bride actually wears a sabre in token of her authority. Whether this be true or not, there cannot easily be any other bond than fear, in an alliance where one word of complaint from the wife would bring an executioner to strangle the husband.

The female relations of the Sultan are never allowed to quit Constantinople, lest their sons should escape the power of the despot, and occasion disturbances in the succession to the throne. When the Sultan dies, his women are shut up in what is called the old seraglio. If his successor be his son or brother, it is sacrilegious for him ever to look upon them; if otherwise, the love of novelty sometimes leads him among them to select new favorites.



But the seraglios of the Sultan and his grandees do not furnish a true picture of the character and condition of the Turkish women; any more than the royal marriages and etiquette of European courts are indicative of the manners of the people. Women of the middling classes in Turkey appear to enjoy a very considerable degree of freedom and consideration. It is even said that hen-pecked husbands are as numerous there as elsewhere. Their houses are indeed divided into separate apartments, one portion devoted to the men and the other to the women. Sometimes these apartments communicate only by one door, of which the husband holds the key; and the food of the women is conveyed to them by means of a revolving cupboard, similar to those by which the poor are supplied with food at the gate of convents. But, generally speaking, the Turkish women go in and out at their pleasure. The streets and bazars of Constantinople are full of them. They seldom address a stranger, or reply if spoken to; but if any thing peculiarly attracts their curiosity, they ask questions with much simplicity. Their favorite recreation is an excursion on the Bosphorus, the arrangements for which are made with very little ceremony. A lady sends her servants to invite her female friends, orders the provisions to be carried with them, gives directions for her husband's dinner, steps into her caique,\* calls for her friend, proceeds up the Golden Horn, selects some pleasant scene where

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\* A light boat.

the children can frolic under the shade of lofty trees, and there they remain working, talking, singing, and playing on the thambourah,\* till the declining sun gives them warning to return. Sometimes the husbands join in these excursions, and sit in a group apart from the ladies, smoking, and sipping sherbet and coffee, while female slaves amuse them with dancing and singing. Trustworthy attendants always accompany the ladies on these occasions, to protect them from intrusion. It would be considered extremely indecorous for a stranger to approach the group.

These excursions on the canals are said to be sometimes the scenes of love-intrigues, carried on by means of signals from those in the neighboring houses to those in the boats. The police officers are on the watch for such misdemeanors; how often their vigilance is eluded, is best known to those who reside near the Bosphorus. The natural love of overcoming obstacles is a strong incentive to intrigue, and the custom of wearing veils favors concealment. In case of detection, the prompt punishment of despotic countries follows without much ceremony. All the public know, is that some woman is seen hanging lifeless from her own window, with her lover, or supposed lover, by her side; or that her body, inclosed in a sack, is found floating on the Bosphorus.

In former times the Turks considered it so impro-

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\* An instrument with eight strings.

per to display a female face, that they used to fire at English merchant-ships the figure-head of which represented a woman; but the custom of veiling the face, by a muslin tied over the mouth and chin, is gradually going out of fashion, especially with the young.

The Turkish ladies spend some of their most agreeable hours in the public baths appropriated to their use. These baths are lighted by bell glasses at the top, and consist of apartments of different degrees of temperature. The last room is so hot that high wooden clogs must be worn to protect the feet from the pavement, and a sudden perspiration trickles from the pores at the moment of entrance. Yet the women go very frequently, and sometimes remain in this atmosphere five or six hours, while their attendants rub them with a kind of brush, and pull the joints till they crack. This operation, at first a little painful, is said to be followed by a sensation peculiarly agreeable. Having made plentiful use of perfumed soap and pomatum, braided their tresses, and pared their nails, the bathers pass into the next room, the temperature of which is lower. Here clean beds are prepared for delicious repose after the relaxation of the bath. Coffee and cordials are likewise furnished in this room, and sometimes a whole party of women dine there, and stay till evening, listening to stories, and discussing the important affairs of love and dress.

Turkish women generally have a sallow complexion with dark eyes. A face like a full moon, and a

person decidedly fleshy, are among their requisites for beauty. The grandees are said to place a peculiar value upon fair-haired girls, probably on account of their rarity.

The wedding ceremonies are simple. All the relations send presents of furniture, clothes, or jewels, which are the property of the wife in case of her husband's death. Sometimes, when the marriage contracts are signed, a solemn promise is exacted from the man that he will never marry again during the lifetime of his wife. The bridal ceremony is performed by an iman or priest, who joins the hands of the parties, and recites certain prayers from the Koran. It sometimes takes place at the bridegroom's house, but more generally at a mosque. The day before the wedding the bride goes to the bath, where her female relations and friends take off her dress, sing a bridal song, and offer their various gifts. The parties are escorted to the mosque in state, accompanied by friends and relations in arabahs,\* drawn by oxen decorated with ribbons and garlands. The arabah in which the bride is conveyed is closed, but the others are open. The bridal veil is bright red bordered with yellow. The eyebrows of the bride are united in one broad black streak, by means of antimony and gall nuts; and her fingers are stained with hennah. When the new part of the nail forms a contrast with the stained part, it is considered peculiarly beautiful. Sometimes a childish love of

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\* Light wagons.

ornament is carried so far, that gilt paper cut in the form of crescents, and various fantastic shapes, are stuck upon the face. Before the arabah which contains the bride are borne several trees surrounded with hoops, from which hang festoons of gold thread or tinsel, which wave in the breeze, and glitter when the sun glances on them. The procession consists of dancers, musicians, mountebanks, horses loaded with the furniture and apparel of the bride, and the relatives and friends on horseback, or in carriages.

When the bridegroom leaves the mosque, his friends strike him smartly on the shoulders for good luck. Girls are usually betrothed at the age of three or four years, and receive the nuptial benediction at twelve or fourteen. The custom of not allowing the bridegroom to see the bride until after the ceremony is contrary to the precepts of the Koran; for Mohammed says to one of his disciples, who was about to take a wife, "First see her, that you may judge how you should like to live with her."

The wedding festivities last four days; the men feasting and frolicking in one set of apartments, the women in another. They usually begin on Monday, to avoid interfering with the Mohammedan Sabbath, which comes on Friday. A single life is very disreputable, and widows almost invariably marry again, unless they are very old. A Turkish woman is respected by her family and the world in proportion to the number of her children. In general they have very numerous claims to this kind of distinction.

The Koran declares that a woman who dies unmarried is in a state of reprobation.

The common idea that Mohammedans believe women have no souls, is not founded upon any thing contained in the Koran. Mohammed expressly says: "Whoso worketh good, male or female, shall enter paradise;" and the pilgrimage to Mecca, for the salvation of their souls, is enjoined upon women as well as men, with the proviso that they must be accompanied by their husbands, or near male relations.

The Mohammedan law forbids pigs, dogs, women, and other impure animals to enter a mosque; and the hour of prayers must not be proclaimed by a female, a madman, a drunkard, or a decrepit person. The first prohibition was no doubt intended to prevent the frequent meetings between the sexes which would be likely to take place during religious services. The last regulation implies no peculiar contempt for women; the same classes would be excluded from the priesthood in Christian countries.

The Turkish proverb, that "A woman causes the ruin or prosperity of a house," implies that female influence is in some degree acknowledged and appreciated.

Jests at the expense of women prevail in Turkey, as they do all over the world. Nass-red-dyn, the Turkish Æsop, wishing to propitiate the conquering Tamerlane, proposed to carry him some fruit. "Hold," said he, "two heads are better than one; I will ask my wife whether I had better carry quinces or figs." His wife replied, "Quinces will please him

best, because they are larger and finer." "However useful the advice of others may be," rejoined Nass-red-dyn, "it is never well to follow that of a woman; I am determined to take figs."

When he arrived in the camp, Tamerlane amused himself with throwing the figs at his bald head. At every blow Nass-red-dyn exclaimed, "God be praised!" Tamerlane inquired what he meant. "I am thanking God that I did not follow my wife's advice," replied Nass-red-dyn; "for if I had brought quinces instead of figs, I should certainly have a broken head."

Women do not attend funerals in Turkey, the ceremonies of which are very simple. At the death of a husband they put on a particular kind of head-dress, and wear no ornaments for twelve months. At the grave the iman repeats a prayer, and calls the deceased three times by his name, and by that of his mother, never by his father's. If the mother's name be unknown, they call him "son of Mary," the blessed virgin; if the deceased be a woman under similar circumstances, they call her "daughter of Eve." A column with a sculptured turban on the top designates the grave of a man; a kind of vase, or marble bowl, is placed on the top of columns erected for women. After a rain, the birds come to these vases to drink. In Syria, Armenia, and Turkey, the color of mourning is celestial blue.

In 1755, Othman III. made very severe ordinances with regard to women. He forbade their going abroad on Friday; would not allow them to do their

own shopping ; (that task being transferred to their husbands and male relations ;) ordered them to wear coarse dull-colored cloth instead of fine Cashmeres ; and made an express edict against their high head-dresses. The women, to avoid this last ordinance, contrived a species of machinery by which they could suddenly diminish their caps, and raise them again, when the police officers were out of sight.

These regulations were but temporary. The wives and daughters of the wealthy Turks dress with extreme magnificence. Rich colored damask brocades embroidered with silver and gold, and looped up with buttons of diamond or pearl, are much worn. Though the national costume remains the same, fashion plays a thousand freaks with the details of dress.

The Turks do not consider it polite to make inquiries concerning each other's wives. Among the class of vicious women in cities the number of Mohammedans is said to be very small, because the laws restraining them are peculiarly severe. If it be discovered that a Mohammedan woman has a Christian lover, he is compelled to marry her, and renounce his religion.

Perhaps there is no country where slavery exists in so mild a form as in Turkey. The children of slaves are brought up in the same way as the legitimate children, and enjoy the same privileges and rights. Female slaves are free by law at the end of six years, and allowed to form the most advantageous marriages they can.



Instances are numerous of slaves rising to the highest dignities of the empire. The black eunuchs of the seraglio often acquire immense wealth and influence.

It is a singular fact, that the Mohammedan nations treat slaves better than the Christian; and that, among Christians, the Catholic nations treat them better than the Protestant.

Both European and Asiatic Turkey have been described under the head of Asia, because their manners and customs are so decidedly and entirely oriental.

Of the Asiatic Greeks nothing is here said, because their character and condition is essentially the same as that of the Greeks in Europe.

Numerous Frank and Armenian merchants reside in Smyrna, the manners and costumes of which are a curious combination of various nations. It seems very odd to travellers to meet ladies with English or French names, wearing the Turkish or Greek costume, and speaking the Greek language. The Carnival is celebrated at Smyrna with extraordinary splendor. On this occasion the ladies appear in their richest attire, and there is a continual succession of waltzing parties, concerts, and theatricals.

The wealthy Frank merchants residing in Turkey are extremely cautious in arranging the marriage contracts of their daughters. The bridegroom engages to secure his wife a certain portion of his fortune, in case she survives him, and receives, on his part, a written promise from her father of the money.

jewels, clothes, &c. constituting the dowry, and of the portion he intends to leave her at his death.

The Persians seem to have been remarkable among the ancient nations for a savage jealousy of women, which led them to keep the objects of their love perpetually imprisoned and guarded. Their severity is spoken of as extraordinary, by Plutarch, and other authors, who wrote at a period when even the most enlightened nations allowed very little freedom to their women. Yet the Persians are said to have been the first who carried their wives and children into the field of battle: "We do it," said they, "that the sight of all that is most dear to us, may animate us to fight more valiantly in their defence."

The Medes and Persians are likewise supposed to have been the first who introduced dancing and singing women to entertain their guests at a banquet; but the fact that Cyrus gave two captive female musicians to his uncle Cyaxares, proves that music was cultivated at a very early period, by nations which yielded to the dominion of Persia.

The character of Cyrus is the brightest page in Persian history. At a time when female captives taken in war were treated with the utmost indignity, and sometimes with savage barbarity, he was distinguished for a degree of respectful gallantry, which would have done credit to the most refined prince of modern times.

When told that the exquisitely beautiful wife of Abradatas had been assigned to him among other

spoils of the Assyrian camp, and that the woman wept incessantly for her husband, to whom she was fondly attached, Cyrus at once resolved not to see her, lest her unrivalled loveliness should make it difficult for him to do his duty. In fact, he protected her against himself, and against one of his favorite officers, who, being appointed to attend upon the beautiful Panthea, had become a captive to her charms. Nothing could exceed the gratitude of the princess, when she found herself and her attendant maidens living in the midst of the Persian camp with as much safety and seclusion, as if she had been in the palace of her husband. Abradatas having received information of the magnanimous conduct of Cyrus, immediately hastened to engage himself, his troops and treasures, in the service of the virtuous monarch. When he was about to go forth to battle with Cyrus, Panthea brought him a golden helmet and arm-pieces, with broad bracelets for his wrists, which without his knowledge she had caused to be made from her own jewels. When he asked, with affectionate surprise, if she had sacrificed her ornaments for him, she replied that her husband was her greatest ornament. She then reminded him of their obligations to Cyrus, and told him that much as she loved him, she had rather be buried with him than live to know he had been deficient in courage. Abradatas laid his hand gently on her head, and looking upward, exclaimed, "O, great Jove, make me worthy of such a wife as Panthea, and such

a friend as Cyrus!" As the princess put on his armor, she turned aside to conceal her tears; and when the door of his chariot was closed, she kissed the steps by which he had entered, and followed after him. When he perceived this, he again bade her farewell, and entreated her to return. Her attendants placed her on a litter, and threw a tent-covering over her, to conceal her from the admiring troops. When the dead body of Abradatas was brought from the battle, Panthea reproached herself that she had urged him to such desperate courage. With the stern enthusiasm of ancient times, she stabbed herself to the heart, and died on her husband's breast; having first given directions that their corpses should be wrapped in the same mantle. The Persian monarch, with sincere lamentations, ordered magnificent funeral rites, and a monument to be erected to their memory.

There is reason to suppose that Cyrus was blessed in his own domestic relations; for we are told that he mourned for his wife Cassandana with the sincerest grief, and commanded public demonstrations of sorrow throughout the empire.

The virtuous decorum of Cyrus was an exception to the general character of Persian princes. Men of rank, who could indulge their whims without control, sometimes married their own sisters and daughters. Artaxerxes Memnon, being in love with his beautiful daughter Atossa, had some fears that the affair would not redound to his credit; but his mother quieted these scruples by saying, "Are you

not set over the Persians by the gods, as the only rule of right and wrong?"

Another of the Persian kings called the magi together to give their opinion on a similar occasion. The accommodating priests answered, "We can find no law that authorizes a man to marry his own daughter; but our laws authorize a king to do whatever he pleases."

Some idea of the excessive voluptuousness of the Persian court in ancient times may be derived from the account given of Ahasuerus.

By an old custom the queen had a right to ask any favor she thought proper on the king's birthday, and he was bound to grant it. Amestris, the wife of Xemes, on one of these occasions, being filled with vindictive jealousy, demanded that her sister-in-law should be mangled in a most shocking manner and thrown to the dogs. The innocent victim, who had in fact discouraged and resisted the king's passion, was destroyed in the most cruel manner.

The splendor which now characterizes Persian princes prevailed in ancient times. The revenues of provinces were devoted to particular articles of the queen's wardrobe. This was implied by their names; one being called the Queen's Sandals, another the Queen's Girdle, &c. The use of false hair was not uncommon in Media and Persia.

The account given of Alexander's marriage with the daughter of Darius seems to imply that the ancient marriage ceremonies were very simple. A great feast was prepared, the bride was seated be-

side her lover, he took her hand and kissed her in presence of the assembled guests, and she became his wife.

The ancient Persians considered matrimony so essential, that they believed those who died single would infallibly be unhappy in another world; for this reason, when a relation of either sex died unmarried, they hired some person to be formally married to the deceased as soon as possible.

It was considered a great misfortune to be childless. "Children," said the prophet Zerdhust, "are a bridge that reaches to paradise; and how shall ye pass if he have provided no bridge? The angel shall ask every soul, if he have provided children; if he answer, no, the soul that has contributed so little to society shall himself be left desolate on the banks of a river, where he shall see the fresh springs and blooming fruits of paradise, but shall never be able to reach them."

A boy was kept in the female apartments, and not permitted to see his father, till his fifth year, in order that his parent might not experience so much uneasiness in case he died before that period.

The slightest rudeness to a Persian woman was punished with instant death by her husband or guardian. He who spoke to one of the numerous inmates of the king's harem, or touched their persons even in the most accidental manner, or passed their chariots on the road, was killed immediately. The modern laws are but little less severe.

A Persian woman, under the dominion of the kind-

est master, is treated in much the same manner as a favorite animal. To vary her personal graces for his pleasure is the sole end and aim of existence. As moral or intellectual beings, it would be better for them to be among the dead than the living. They are allowed to learn a little reading, writing, and embroidery; but their reading is confined to the Koran, and even that they generally read very imperfectly. Dancing and music are little practised, except by a public class of women, usually hired at festivals and entertainments, and of a character notoriously profligate. These girls are more remarkable for agility than grace in their motions.

The Persian women are kept continually shut up in the *harem*, which they rarely leave from the cradle to the grave. They are visited only by female relations, or female teachers, hired to furnish them their scanty apparatus of knowledge. The mother instructs her daughter in all the voluptuous coquetry by which she herself acquired precarious ascendancy over her absolute master; but all that is truly estimable in female character is neglected, as it ever must be where nothing like free and kind companionship exists between the sexes. A resident in Persia declares that the women are ignorant, and inconceivably gross in their ideas and conversation. Under such a system it could not be otherwise.

The contempt in which women are held is singularly exemplified by a Persian law, which requires the testimony of four of them in cases where the declaration of two men would be deemed sufficient.

While talking with a person of rank, it would be considered grossly impolite to make the most remote allusion to the female part of his family; even if his beloved wife were on her death-bed, it would be deemed an almost unpardonable insult to make any inquiries concerning her.

A large black eye, full of amorous softness, is considered the chief requisite in Persian beauty. To increase this voluptuous languor of expression, they make lines around the eyes with powder of antimony. They take great pains to make their eyebrows meet; and if this charm be denied, they paint them, so as to produce the effect. They not only dye their hair and eyebrows, but also stain the face and neck with a variety of figures of birds, beasts, and flowers, the sun, moon, and stars. A large proportion of the noble families are descended from Georgian and Circassian mothers, and consequently have fair complexions.

When a Persian father has selected a family with which he wishes to have his son connected, he sends an elderly female to ascertain the girl's personal endowments, and the probable consent of her parents or guardians. If the report prove favorable, the bridegroom sends messengers to explain his merits, and make a formal offer of marriage. The heads of the family meet to make all arrangements concerning presents, ornaments, dowry, &c.; and the papers are sealed and witnessed before magistrates.

On the morning of the wedding, the bridegroom sends a train of mules laden with presents to the



bride, preceded by music, and followed by numerous servants, bearing costly viands on silver trays, to be spread before the inmates of her father's house. The day is spent in mirth and feasting. Toward evening, the bride veiled, in scarlet or crimson silk, is mounted on a superbly caparisoned mule, preceded by music, and followed by a long train of relatives and friends to the house of her destined husband, who rides forth with a similar procession to meet her. The female attendants conduct her to the apartments prepared for her, and she is from that moment a lawful wife. The bridegroom prepares a sumptuous feast for his friends and relatives, who generally keep up the festivities for three days.

The jointure settled upon a wife varies according to the wealth of the husband. If he is in middling circumstances, he merely bestows two dresses, a ring, and a mirror; but he is likewise expected to supply all the requisite furniture.

It is deemed an irretrievable disgrace for a bride to be sent back after she has left her father's house. Sometimes the bridegroom promises a jointure beyond his means; and in these cases, curious scenes sometimes take place. He shuts the door against the cavalcade, and declares the girl shall not enter his dwelling, unless the jointure be reduced. Under these circumstances he is generally able to make his own terms.

The harems of grandees are the most magnificent portion of their palaces. In the king's seraglio the same offices and places exist as at court; but the

chief equerry, the captain of the gate, the captain of the guards, &c., are all of them women. Women likewise read public prayers, and perform the rites of the Mohammedan religion within the inclosures of the harem. Women practise medicine, and bury the dead. A Persian harem is in fact a miniature city, with its mosques, cemeteries, bazaars, &c. The inhabitants are divided into four classes. The princesses of the blood are called *begum*; such of the king's women as have brought him children are called *kanoom*; inferior women are called *katoon*; and those kept for the purpose of waiting upon them are termed slaves. Each female has an apartment to herself, or lodges with some aged women, and cannot go into the other rooms, without express permission. The harem is watched by three sorts of guards, over all of whom is placed a governor, or superintendent. White eunuchs guard the outside, and are never permitted to enter the interior; black eunuchs dwell round the second inner inclosure; and within are stationed elderly women to watch day and night by turns. It is indispensably requisite that the governor of the seraglio should be very old, and exceedingly ugly. The inmates are sometimes allowed to walk in the garden, after it has been well searched, and all persons ordered to retire.

When it is necessary to remove the king's women from one dwelling to another, public notice is given five or six hours beforehand of the road they are to pursue. All the inhabitants of the villages through which they are to pass must forthwith quit their

habitation. A horseman rides before the cavalcade, calling with a loud voice, Prohibition! Prohibition! The ladies sometimes ride astride on horseback, closely veiled; but the wealthy generally travel in palanquins, or cages of wicker-work, covered with cloth, and supported by mules or camels. No excuse avails if any male, over seven years of age, is caught in any place where he could so much as see the camels that carry these women; even if a traveller were to stumble in his hurry to get out of the way, the guards would beat him almost to death.

The first wife generally has a rank above her numerous rivals, particularly if she be the mother of children; but this depends entirely on the caprice of the master. Misdemeanors are punished according to the discretion of the husband. When divorces take place, the dowry originally given to the wife is set aside for her support. The Persians have a superstition that the spilling of a woman's blood brings ill luck; for this reason, when the inmates of the harem are discovered in any love-intrigue they are generally muffled up in their long veils, and thrown from the top of a high tower.

Interest compels these women to practise all manner of coquettish arts. The more capricious and presuming they are, the more likely are they to receive attention; if gentle and reserved, they would be overlooked in the crowd. The favorite always makes despotic use of her transient power. On all occasions, she causes the pleasure of her presence to be purchased with long delay and impatience; and

when she visits her female relatives, she makes it a point not to return till her husband has sent many times for her. The Persians are generally scrupulously neat in their persons and apparel.

The baths are a great place of amusement for ladies. Here they pass hours and hours, listening to stories of fairies and genii, eating sweetmeats, sharing each other's pipes, and painting their persons. The Jewesses are the oracles of the seraglio. From them the young beauties purchase all manner of cosmetics, charms, amulets, love-potions, &c.

The endearing duties of a mother become a source of fear and sorrow within the walls of the royal harem; for, in order to prevent quarrels about the succession to the throne, it is customary to put large numbers of children to death, or to deprive them of their eyes. The queen-mother herself superintends these executions, to which she becomes hardened by custom. The Persian mothers possess the only shadow of power which women are allowed to have. They regulate the education and settlement of their children, and it is said a marriage is not concluded, even with the father's consent, if they oppose it.

Sometimes when one of the king's women offends him, or his mother, she is married to some menial of the palace, which is considered a very disgraceful punishment. But fortunate is her lot, who is transferred from the royal harem to some favorite grandee. She receives the title of a lawful wife, and is treated like a princess. Notwithstanding the painful sacrifices and perpetual fear belonging to those who form

the king's household, parents are extremely anxious to obtain the splendid bondage for a daughter; for if she happens to be a favorite, the greatest honors and emoluments are heaped on her relations.

Women of the middling class are more occupied than the wives of grandees, and therefore unavoidably have more freedom. They spin, sew, embroider, superintend the house, keep account of expenses, pay the servant's wages, and see that proper care is taken of the horses. Sir Robert Porter, speaking of this class of Persian females, says, "They do all the laborious part of the household establishment; each having her own especial department, such as baking the bread, cooking the meat, drawing the water, &c. Though the latest espoused is usually spared in these labors, and the best dressed, still the whole party seem to remain in good humor. When their lord shows himself among them, it is like a master coming into a herd of favorite animals. They all rush forward, frisking about him, pleased with a caress, or frisking still if they meet with a pat instead. The four wives of my worthy host retire at sunset, and each taking her infant and cradle to the roof of her division of the house, not forgetting the skin of water she has brought from the well, deposits her babe in safety, and suspends the water-case near her, on a tripod of sticks, in order that the evaporation may cool it for next day's use. Our communicative host told me that to preserve amity among these women, he was accustomed, like all husbands who valued peace, to divide his time and attention equal-

ly and alternately among them. Indeed the law of Mohammed, though it allows four wives, expressly stipulates that the first married shall experience no diminution of wardrobe, or accustomed privileges, in consequence of the introduction of a new bride into the family.

When women of the common classes leave their houses they scrupulously conceal their faces with a veil woven like a fine net, or a cloak with two holes just big enough for their eyes; but the neck is often less carefully covered than the face. Like all oriental women, they are very fond of perfumes and ornaments. Their clothing is usually chosen and purchased for them, as we do for little children.

On the death of a husband, they lay aside all rich and showy apparel, and assume the garb of mourning, which among the Persians is pale brown. For months and months they pay daily visits to the grave, watering it with tears, rending their garments, and tearing their hair. The law allows widows to marry again, but they seldom take a second husband. In many cases, the anniversary of the birthday of the deceased is for years kept as a solemn festival by his family and friends.

Several years ago, a beautiful Circassian accompanied the Persian ambassador to London, where she excited great attention, and was treated with distinguished kindness. Sir Robert Porter met her when she was returning to Persia, mounted on a miserable post-horse. He says, "The poor creature, perceiving that I was a European, rode forward to address

me; but in a moment the rough fellow who was her conductor laid his whip over her shoulders, with so terrible an admonition into the bargain, that, closing both her lips and her veil, she travelled on, doubtless with heavy recollections. To interfere in behalf of a woman so situated would cast a sort of contamination on her, and only redouble her stripes."

Women whose husbands are not rich enough to furnish palanquins, ride astride a horse, muffled in a great sheet, which makes them look like a bag of flour placed upright. Sometimes they are stuffed into panniers slung across a mule or a camel, like poultry on the way to market. If there be but one traveller, some heavy article is put into the opposite basket as a balance.

When the ambassador Meerza Abul Hassan was in England, nothing excited his surprise so much as the fact that women sometimes undertook voyages. "Is it possible!" he exclaimed: "if I were to tell our Persian women that there were English women in ships, they would never believe me. They consider it a great undertaking to go from one town to another; but your women go from one end of the world to the other, and think nothing of it. If it were even known to my family that I was now in a ship, on the high seas, there would be nothing but wailing and lamentation from morning till night."

The architectural remains and ancient literature of Hindostan give a high idea of their knowledge and refinement in remote ages. According to their

old poets, women were then regarded with a kind of chivalrous gallantry, and enjoyed a degree of personal freedom, to which modern Asiatic women are entire strangers: Sacontalu, the adopted daughter of a holy Bramin, is the heroine of an interesting old drama, in which she is mentioned as receiving strangers with the most graceful hospitality; and when Dusmantha was absent from his capital, his mother governed in his stead. Women were then admitted as witnesses in courts of justice, and where the accused was a female, their evidence was even preferred.

Malabar boasts of her seven sages, and four of them were women. The celebrated Avydar, one of the most ancient of these sages, probably lived more than a thousand years ago. Her origin and birth are involved in poetic fable; but her works are still extant, and held in much estimation. They principally consist of short moral sentences, like the following: "Speak not of God but with reverence." "The sweetest bread is that earned by labor." "The genuine object of science is to distinguish good from evil." "Let thy books be thy best friends." "Modesty is the fairest ornament of a woman." "There is no virtue without religion."

The Mohammedan creed, which everywhere produces a miserable effect on the destiny of women, has considerably changed their condition in Hindostan. The higher classes among the Hindoos, without adopting the religion of the Mussulmans, copied their jealous precautions with regard to females



Wives are numerous, according to the wealth and character of their owners. A petty Hindoo chief has been known to have several hundred female slaves shut up in his zananah.\* Under these unnatural circumstances, we cannot wonder at the character of women given by one of their pundits, as the Braminical expositors of law are called: he says, "Women are characterized, first, by an inordinate love of jewels, fine clothes, handsome furniture, and dainty food; second, by unbounded profligacy; third, by violent anger and deep resentment, no one knowing the sentiments that lie concealed in their hearts; fourth, another person's good appears evil in their eyes." This is but one among many instances wherein men have reproached the objects of their tyranny with the very degradation and vices which their own contempt and oppression have produced. How can it be wondered at that women, with all the feelings and faculties of human nature, and unnaturally deprived of objects for their passions, affections, or thoughts, should seek excitement in petty stragem and restless intrigue?

No Hindoo woman is allowed to give evidence in courts of justice. The Bramins have power to put their wives to death for unfaithfulness; but it is said that milder punishments are more usually inflicted. Sometimes reconciliation takes place, and the event is celebrated by a feast, to which the neighboring Bramins are invited, and the culprit waits upon them at table.

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\* The Hindoo word for harem.

This crime in Hindoo women is generally punished by expulsion from their caste, a heavy fine, and the bastinado. It is considered a still more disgraceful penalty to have the hair cut off. This is rarely inflicted, except upon very abandoned females, who are afterward plastered with filth, and led about on a donkey, accompanied with the sound of tamtams.

Instances of extreme injustice sometimes occur, as must always be the case where human beings are invested with arbitrary power.

One of the rajahs of Hindostan had a beautiful wife, whom he loved better than all the rest of his women. A young man, who was originally his barber, gained his confidence to such a degree, that nothing could be done but through his interest. The rajah, having accepted an invitation to an annual festival held at a great distance, trusted every thing to the integrity of this prime minister. Before his master had been gone a week, the villain dared to make love to his favorite wife. She treated him with indignation and scorn, and threatened, if he continued to repeat professions of his love, that she would expose his baseness. He knew the rajah had a most fiery and impetuous temper, and he at once resolved how to escape danger, and to be revenged upon his virtuous victim. He sought an interview with his master the very first moment he returned, and by a tissue of plausible falsehoods, made him believe that his favorite wife was a faithless creature, entirely unworthy of his confidence. The rajah, in a fit of blind fury, flew into the zananah, and without speaking a

word, murdered the beautiful object of his recent attachment.

The circumstance was soon forgotten; for such murders were common, and punishable by no laws. Even the nearest relatives of the deceased did not ask the reason of such violence.

Thus precarious must all attachments be where moral and intellectual sympathy have no share in the union.

After a considerable time had elapsed, one of the rajah's wives, on her death-bed, said she had something important to disclose to her husband; the guilty favorite immediately imagined that his murdered victim had made her a confidant of his infamous designs, and he fled with all possible precipitation. His fears proved true; the dying wife disclosed the whole history of his treachery. The rajah tore his hair, and ran round the palace like a madman. Horsemen were despatched in every direction, but the wicked minister escaped. The agonized prince did all he could—he raised a splendid temple to the memory of his murdered wife. Within the temple is her image, the eyes of which are costly diamonds. The unfortunate rajah at last went mad. He would look at his hands, and wash them a hundred times a day; but he could not cleanse the blood from his memory.

The Hindoo women frequently follow their husbands to battle, and perish by their side. Rather than fall into the power of conquering enemies,

they often commit suicide, or entreat their husbands to kill them.

Females are engaged in almost every variety of occupation, according to the caste of their husbands. They cultivate the land, make baskets and mats, bring water in jars, carry manure and various other articles to market in baskets on their heads, cook food, tend children, weave cloth, reel skeins of thread, and wind cocoons. A single cocoon is divided into twenty degrees of fineness; and these silk-winders have such an exquisite sense of touch, that when the thread is running swiftly through their fingers, they break it off exactly as the assortments change. Cashmere shawls are sometimes woven in a manner so delicate, that they can be drawn through a wedding ring; and they manufacture muslin so transparent, that when laid on the grass it does not at all intercept the color.

It has been said that there is no country in the world where so many people live in idleness. This is no doubt in a great measure to be ascribed to the enervating influence of their brilliant climate, the abundance produced by a luxuriant soil, and the slight shelter or clothing required, where the air is so uniformly mild, and the sky serene. All travellers agree that the scenery of Hindostan is beautiful, almost beyond imagination. Magnificent temples and tombs indicate the grandeur of former times, while the gorgeous edifices of more recent periods denote the wealth, if not the classic taste of her princes; innumerable rivers fertilize and adorn the

land, while the air is perfumed with the lavish abundance of blossoms and fruit. The inhabitants love to repose in the cool shadow of their broad-leaved foliage; and the women are said to be so languidly indolent, that they will hardly stretch forth their arms to save their children from being trodden to death. One of their favorite authors says: "It is better to sit still than to walk; better to sleep than to be awake; and death is the best of all."

In pictures of Hindoo women of the higher classes, I have always observed a dangling and listless position of the arms and fingers, which indicates all the writer has expressed. If any thing affects them disagreeably, they are apt to signify it by lolling out their tongues.

When a father dies, the eldest son supplies his place, in protecting and providing for his mother and younger members of the family. The widow can only claim an allowance necessary for her support; but filial piety is so highly revered by the Hindoos, that children often stint themselves that their parents need not suffer. The greatest insult that can be offered a Hindoo is to speak contemptuously of his mother.

The features of the Hindoos differ little from those of Europeans; but their complexion is of a deep mahogany hue. A very perceptible difference of physiognomy characterizes the various castes. Those who do not labor are less vigorous than Europeans, but more elegantly shaped. The women are said to be extremely beautiful, with delicate, regular fea-

tures, and remarkably fine dark eyes; but they lose their beauty at an early age. They are generally distinguished by a childish simplicity and modest gracefulness, which is very attractive. If the husband is dissatisfied with his wife, he parts from her and seeks another; and the wife can do the same with regard to her husband. Some reasons are required to be given, but where both parties agree in wishing for divorce it is very easily obtained. Sometimes when a man desires a separation he calls his wife mother, and after that it is considered indelicate to live with her. Sometimes an occasional visiter addresses the females of the house in this way, as a pledge of his purity. The poor seldom have more than one wife; and if she has children they rarely part from her as long as they live. The women are generally faithful and submissive to their husbands, and very fond of their families. Even the poorest of them esteem it a great misfortune to be childless. They regard it, as the Jews did of old, as a peculiar visitation of God, and spare neither prayers, alms, offerings, nor penances, to avert this calamity. They are often seen performing long journeys, with two or three little children, whom they lead by the hand or carry on their backs.

Women, even of the higher classes, are forbidden to read or write; because the Hindoos think these acquirements would inevitably spoil them for domestic life, and assuredly bring some great misfortune upon them. Many stories are circulated concerning the dreadful accidents that have happened to women,

who could read and write. Poetry, music, and dancing, are cultivated only by a class of women, openly and avowedly licentious. The wives of rajahs, and the numerous favorites of the Moham-  
medan grandees, do indeed divert their lords with dancing in the interior of the zananah, but it would be deemed highly disgraceful to indulge in this amusement before strangers. Nothing shocks an East Indian more than the European custom of ladies and gentlemen dancing with each other ; they cannot believe that it does not indicate great corruption of manners.

From the remotest antiquity, dancing has been associated with religion in India. The *devedassee*s are young girls devoted to the service of the temple almost from their infancy ; and this is considered so great an honor, that even the rajahs are anxious to obtain it for their daughters. They must be well shaped, of pleasing features, of good constitutions, and of very tender age ; the parents are likewise required to renounce all further claim to the child. The *devedassee*s, after bathing the novitiate in the tank belonging to the temple, dress her in new clothes and adorn her with jewels ; the high priest puts into her hand an image of the deity, to whose service she devotes herself with a solemn vow ; the lobes of her ears are then bored, and the seal of the temple imprinted on her with red-hot iron. The great pagoda of Juggernaut contains five or six hundred of these girls. The Bramins teach them to read, write, sing, and dance. They must likewise

be versed in the history of their gods ; but they are forbidden to read the *vedas*.\* They take care of the temples, light the lamps, and sing and dance before the statue of the god, on solemn festivals. Some say the devedasses are entirely subservient to the pleasures of the Bramins, who are exceedingly jealous of them ; others say they are at liberty to choose any lovers, in or out of the temple, provided they be of the higher castes. The tips of their nails are stained red. The long braided hair, the neck, the naked arms, and the feet are covered with jewels ; rings on the hand, rings on the feet, rings in the ears, and sometimes rings in the side of the nose ; literally, according to the old nursery story, “ with rings on her fingers and bells on her toes.” The silver chains and bells with which they decorate the ankles and feet, make a monotonous but agreeable sound, as they dance, that mingles pleasantly with the small drums, tambourines, and silver cymbals, to which they keep time. In their hands they hold wooden castanets, which they strike in cadence. At the end of each dance they turn toward the idol, with their hands clasped before their faces. All make precisely the same movements and gestures at the same moment. When they become old, or the Bramins, for any other reason, wish to have them leave, they are dismissed from the pagoda. The temple where they serve furnishes them with food, clothing, and pay ; but when they leave, they are obliged to relinquish all articles of ornament. They are ever after re-

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\* Certain sacred books.



ceived in society with peculiar respect, a degree of sanctity is attached to their character, and it is considered an honor to marry them. If turned out of the temple in their old age, they are liable to be in destitute circumstances, unless they have a handsome daughter to succeed them; if so, they may safely rely upon filial kindness.

There is another class of Hindoo dancers, called *cancen*i, or *bayaderes*. They are avowedly courtesans; but not disgraced by assuming that character, as women are in Christian countries. They receive the same education as the *devedassees*, or sacred dancers; but they are not like them confined to the service of the temples. Wealthy men hire them at entertainments, and some grandees keep a whole company constantly in their service. They too are load with jewels, bracelets, armlets, carcanets, coronals, rings, ear-rings, nose-rings, bells, and chains. The dress of a distinguished dancer often costs from fifteen to twenty thousand rupees. They surround their eyes with a black circle, made with the head of a pin dipped in powder of antimony. Those who are accustomed to it think it increases beauty of expression.

To preserve the comeliness of their forms, they cover the bosom with hollow cases of wood, linked together, and buckled at the back. These cases are made so very thin and pliable, that they move freely with the slightest motion of the body; they are plated with gold or silver, and sometimes set with gems. There is nothing loud or bold in the manners

of these degraded women. They are all softness, gentleness, and coquetry; but their dances, and the songs that accompany them, in which the Orientals take unbounded delight, are voluptuous beyond description.

There is another genuine Hindoo dance, called *nautch*, that differs in all respects from the dances performed by the *devedassees*, or the *cancenî*. "It is executed by three women, who display in their steps and attitude a degree of seductive gracefulness astonishing to Europeans." These dancers are called *ramdjenies*. Their dress is embroidered with gold and silver. They wear trowsers of very rich stuff, with a circle of bells around the ankles. Their lower garment is very ample, and becomes inflated like a balloon, when they turn swiftly.

One of the most remarkable features of Hindostan, is the division of society into distinct *castes*. Nearly a hundred different castes exist, the distinctions of which the Bramins themselves are puzzled to define.

The parias, who are considered the scum of all the castes, have a most deplorable lot. These absurd regulations subject the masters of houses to great expense, as the meanest domestic absolutely refuses to perform any office but the one allotted to his or her caste.

A religious and civil law forbids any mixture of blood between the different castes. It is singular that a man is not degraded from his caste for being vicious, or for believing or disbelieving certain articles of religion; but he is degraded for intermarrying

with an inferior caste, forming a friendship with any such, or partaking food with them. Customs that have some degree of similarity are hereditary among the descendants of the Jewish nation, and in some parts of the Chinese empire; but the nearest parallel to the Hindoo distinction of castes exists between the white and colored population of the United States of America. There is indeed some difference. The wealthy American, if starving, would gladly partake food with the mulatto, whose companionship would disgrace him under other circumstances; but the high caste Bramin would die rather than receive sustenance from a paria.

“A Bramin, being oppressed with thirst as he journeyed along, met a woman of low condition carrying a vessel of water on her head. He asked her for some to drink; but, that he might not receive water from an impure hand, he formed a little channel on the ground; the woman poured the water in at one end, while the Bramin drank at the other. One of his own caste, who happened to be passing at the time, accused him before the council of the Bramins; the affair was investigated, and he narrowly escaped the sentence of exclusion from his caste.”

It is said that all distinctions cease in the temple of Juggernaut, on the occasion of a yearly festival; in commemoration of the primitive equality of mankind, the Bramin and the paria then eat together, without any disastrous consequences.

It is rare to find an unmarried female in India, except those who have been betrothed in infancy,

and lost their partners before the period of what they call "the second marriage." These girls can never marry without losing caste; but as the affections cannot be controlled by custom, these unfortunate beings often forfeit their characters by imprudence. Suicides on this account were so common, that an officer of the British government, in order to prevent them in his district, commanded that all such corpses should be exposed to the public gaze. The law proved so effectual, that there was never any necessity for enforcing it.

Marriages between little girls and very old men are common in India. The Hindoo girls usually marry between the ages of seven and nine years, and the boys between twelve and fourteen. The wife must not only be of the same caste with her husband, but also of the same family. The Hindoo has a right to marry the daughter of his father, or of his mother's brother. Parents cannot give a denial when their daughter is demanded, because brothers and sisters only, of the same caste, are forbidden to marry; but under that name the law includes the children of the father's brothers, and of the mother's sisters.

The ceremonies vary among different castes, and in different districts. The wealthy give very expensive entertainments, the cost of which is defrayed by the husband's father. The practice likewise varies in regard to dowry. In the superior castes, the wife generally brings her husband a portion; but among the sooders, the bridegroom gives a sum of money

to the bride's father. One kind of the ancient Hindoo marriages required no ceremony but the mutual consent of the parties. Without witnesses, they exchanged necklaces or wreaths of flowers, the girl saying, "I am thy wife;" and the bridegroom replying, "It is true." In the inferior castes the marriage ceremony is still very simple, but it is not considered legal unless performed in the presence of the chief of the tribe.

A singular custom has been said to prevail in a town of the Carnatic. When a young couple are conducted to the temple, the bride offers her hand to the priest, who cuts off the third and little finger at the second joint. In ancient times both parties sacrificed a joint of the finger; but as this sometimes made it difficult for the husband to follow his profession, the Bramins decided that the woman should make a double sacrifice, and lose two fingers instead of one. A woman of that caste considers it a disgrace to have all her fingers.

Before any match is concluded, great pains is taken to ascertain whether the aspect of the stars predicts a fortunate or unfortunate union. Marriages are solemnized only in February, May, June, October, and the beginning of November.

When a Hindoo has fixed his mind upon what he considers a suitable match for his son, he sends a stranger to sound the girl's father, in order to save himself the shame of an open rejection. If the suggestion be favorably received, he goes and makes a formal proposition. He must be accompanied by

some married woman, by several relations, and a Bramin skilled to explain omens. To meet a dealer in oil, a dog that shakes his ears, a crow flying over their heads, and a hundred other such things, are considered signs so unlucky, as to make it necessary to defer the visit. He generally carries the *pariam*, a sum of money from four to six guineas, as the price of the girl. Such marriages are said to be by *pariam*. The bride's father returns the visit with great ceremony and pomp, carrying presents to the bridegroom. After these formalities, the girl is considered as sold; but the match may be broken off, and the *pariam* returned, if it be determined by a general meeting of the relatives, and sometimes of the whole caste, that the bride's father has any justifiable reason for so doing. To avoid the expense of an entertainment which it is customary to give, the *pariam* is frequently paid on the wedding day; but some pay it a year beforehand. The bridegroom presents the bride with a piece of silk, which she wears on the wedding day. This garment is always silk, if the parties be ever so poor. If the *pariam* be in money, it is tied up in one corner of this robe; if it be a jewel, it is laid upon it.

There is another kind of marriage where the *pariam* is dispensed with. This is called *cannigadanam*, which signifies *the gift of a maiden*.

When the day is fixed for the wedding, the bride's father builds a bower of lattice-work in the courtyard of his house. The erection of this *pendal*, or marriage bower, is considered a publication of the

bans, and friends and relations immediately pay a ceremonious visit. The female friends, walking under a canopy, bring presents of betel to the young couple. In the midst of the court is set up a stone image of Polear, god of marriage. The Bramins make offerings of cocoas, bananas, and betel, praying that the god would be propitious to the marriage. As soon as the *pendal* is finished, the image is removed. The bridegroom, richly dressed, and accompanied by his friends in festal attire, is conducted to the house of the bride. Here a particular ceremony is performed, called *taking away the looks*; for the Hindoos believe the most deplorable consequences would ensue, if any person looked on the young man with envious, or malicious eyes. To avert this disaster, they prepare a basin of water colored red, which they turn round three times before the face of the bridegroom, and then throw it into the street; sometimes they tear a strip of cloth before him, and throw the pieces different ways; and sometimes they fasten certain mystic rings on the heads of the couple. The bridegroom and bride, splendidly dressed, are carried about for several days in palanquins, accompanied by a long train of relations and friends, some riding on horses, and some on elephants, preceded by musicians and dancing girls. These processions are generally in the evening, attended by illuminations and fireworks. While these ceremonies continue, the dancing girls meet in the *pendal* morning and evening, and rub the young couple with *naleng*, the small green seed of a plant sacred to marriage.

While the assembled guests are dining, the bride and bridegroom eat together from the same plate. This is the only time during her whole life that a Hindoo wife is allowed to eat with her husband. On the wedding day, the bride and bridegroom sit beside each other, at one end of the *pendal*, which is lighted with a great number of lamps. The Bramins, on a raised platform, surrounded with jars of water, offer prayers to their gods. They then kindle the sacrificial fire, with various kinds of sacred wood, and repeat prayers and invocations, while they throw into the flames incense, sandal-wood, oil, butter, rice, and other things. When the prayers are ended, the father of the bride puts her hand within that of the bridegroom, calls the god of fire to witness his words, and then repeats after the Bramin: "I, —, the son of — and grandson of —, give my daughter to thee, son of — and grandson of —." The Bramin breaks a cocoa-nut in two, blesses the *tali*, which all present are required to touch, and gives it to the bridegroom, who hangs it round the neck of the bride. The *tali* is a golden ornament for the neck, made in various forms, and is worn by all married women, in the same manner as the wedding-ring with us. The young couple walk three times round the fire, and the bridegroom swears in presence of the Bramin that he will take care of his wife. He then casts into the fire boiled rice and butter, and she casts in parched rice. The priest repeats prayers while he mixes a little saffron with raw rice. This he first sprinkles over the shoulders of the husband,



and then of the wife ; all who are present rise and perform the same ceremony, by way of benediction. In the marriages of princes, pearls are sometimes used instead of rice. The rest of the day is spent in diversions, and the last public procession takes place in the evening.

Next day, they hasten to pull down the *pendal* ; because it would be considered a very bad omen if it should happen to take fire. The bride is often so very young that she remains at her father's house for a considerable time after the wedding. When this is the case, she is afterward given to her husband with similar ceremonies and festivities, called "the second, or little, marriage." The Hindoo brides wear a hymeneal crown, and the color of the nuptial robe is golden yellow.

Until a wife becomes a mother, she is obliged to obey the commands of her mother-in-law, and sees her husband by stealth. The birth of a child is attended with many religious ceremonies. The husband, assisted by Bramins, sprinkles the house with holy water, and all the inmates anoint themselves with oil, and wash themselves. The mother is bathed, and drinks a certain beverage prescribed for such occasions. On the tenth day, friends and relations assemble to give a name to the infant ; but the Bramin first consults the planets, endeavors by prayer to avert any evil influence, and ties a *zinar*, or amulet, about the neck of the child. Presents are then made to the priests, and the ceremony is concluded with a feast and rejoicings.

The Hindoo women make no use of a cradle. The babe, unshackled by any clothing or bandages, is laid on a large piece of cloth stretched on pieces of wood, something like a small quilting frame. This is suspended by strong cords from the ceiling, and two women swing it, by pushing it from one to the other.

When the child has attained the age of six months, it is fed for the first time with rice prepared with milk and sugar. On this occasion a feast is made and all the relations invited.

If a child dies, the mother sits at the door, or by the river's side, and utters loud lamentations, like the following: "Ah, my Huree-das, where has he gone? Who has taken my golden image? I never saw a face like unto his! He played round me like a golden top! Take me with thee!"

If any female neighbor tries to console her, she answers: "Ah, mother, the heart takes no advice. Was this a child to be forgotten? He had a forehead like a king! Since it was born the master never staid in the house; he was always walking about with the child in his arms! I nourished and reared him—where is he gone?"

While mourning in this way, they sometimes beat their foreheads, tear their hair, and roll about, as if in agony. Hindoo wives never call their husbands by name, but always say, "the master."

Very singular customs prevail among the people called Garos. If a man's wife prove unfaithful, he cannot obtain divorce, unless he chooses to give her all the property and children. A woman, on the

contrary, may part from her husband when she pleases, and by marrying another person, convey to him the whole property of her former husband. The children go with her, but their rank is decided by that of the father. If the wife has a lover, the husband may indeed kill him, but he incurs the resentment of all the man's relations, and the woman would be very likely to revenge herself by transferring the property to a new husband. Divorces are, however, said to be rare. When a chief dies, his heir is any one of his sister's sons, whom his widow may choose as a successor. If the youth is married, he immediately separates from his wife, who takes all his private fortune and his children; he marries the widow, and receives the wealth and rank of his predecessor. When the old lady dies, he is at liberty to choose a young wife, who, if she survive him, will, in her turn, select one of his sister's sons. The wife of a chief, when she divorces her husband, is obliged to choose one from the same noble family. The red turban and bell-metal bracelets, which are bestowed with great ceremony on the new chieftain, do not always make him contented with a partner so much older than himself. One, who was almost a boy, complained to an Englishman, with great simplicity, that he had married a toothless old woman, while his poor cousin had a pretty young wife, with whom he could play all the day long.

The Bramins, by a peculiar custom, often take wives against their own will. If a father has a marriageable daughter, on whom he wishes to see con-

ferred the privileges belonging to a Bramin's wife, he invites the Bramin to his house, and introduces the girl to him ; she respectfully offers her hand to the unsuspecting visiter, and the moment he takes it, her father begins to repeat the genealogy of his family. This constitutes a legal marriage, and there is no way of escape from it.

Some writers have mentioned a tribe in the Carnatic, whose women are not allowed to be seen by any man, not even their husbands, who visit them only in the dark. Shut up in secluded apartments with their female companions, they employ themselves in weaving mats and baskets, and similar occupations. Even their sons are taken from them at three or four years old, and never suffered to look on them again. Women of their own tribe nurse them when they are ill, and when dead, their husbands sew them up in a sack, before they are carried to the funeral pile. This singular tribe was never large, and is now said to be nearly extinct.

The clothing of the Hindoos is seldom washed ; for neatness is not their characteristic. The fashion of their garments is modest ; the arms and upper part of the neck only being uncovered. Women of all castes, throughout India, load themselves with jewels. Common bracelets are made of vitrified earth, green, yellow, and black. Another kind are made of glass, and esteemed beautiful in proportion to the closeness with which they fit to the arm. Blood is often drawn, and the skin rubbed off, in getting them over the hand ; and as they are conti-

nually breaking, the poor girls suffer not a little for their vanity. Gems, gold, and rare shells, exquisitely manufactured, are worn in the utmost profusion by those who can afford them. The loss of the precious metals in India, by friction alone, is said to be immense. The fashion is of ancient date, for the oldest statues of their gods and goddesses are almost buried in jewels.

Females of the higher castes, married or unmarried, never go abroad alone, and without being completely veiled. If by any accident their faces happen to be uncovered, and they meet a European, they run, as fast as they can, into the first Hindoo house that has an appearance of respectability. In the interior of the country, a whole village of women are put in consternation by the sight of a European; this is probably in some measure owing to the insults of intoxicated soldiers.

The rajpoots, one of the military tribes of Hindostan, treat their women with an unusual degree of respect. A rajpoot never forgives an insult offered to his wife or daughter, and nothing but the death of the culprit can atone for his offence. None but the grandees avail themselves of the privilege to take several wives; and even they seldom do it, except from political considerations. Their married women never visit any but their nearest relatives; and any female would be very much ashamed of being seen in public. The rajpoots, though exceedingly kind husbands and sons, have one strangely unnatural custom; they put to death new-born female in-

fants when they have no prospect of an advantageous settlement for them. The daughters which they bring up are kept most rigidly secluded from society. Merely to have been seen by any other man than their very nearest relation is considered pollution. The rajpoots carry this feeling so far, that when they cannot escape from a besieging enemy, they murder all their women, to prevent their being seen by strangers.

The Mahrattas of Hindostan form a kind of military republic, and live in a miserably uncleanly, half-barbarous manner. The women have very little beauty, and have generally a bold look, different from any other Hindoo females. The poor sling their children over their shoulders in a bag, and march thus a whole day, without any apparent fatigue. They accompany the army on horseback, with faces uncovered, and seated in the same manner as the men. A circumstance related by Broughton, in his Letters, gives us reason to think highly of the morals of this rude tribe. A young girl served in Sindia's army two or three years, without being discovered. She gained the confidence of her superiors, and the regard of her associates, by conduct remarkably regular and exemplary. She always dressed her own dinner, and ate it by herself; and she was never seen to wash in the presence of any person. The secret which she took so much pains to conceal, was discovered by a young comrade, who followed her when she went to bathe. As soon as it was known that a woman had served so long and so

faithfully in the army, Sindia made her flattering offers of promotion in the corps to which she belonged, and his wife proposed to receive her into her own household; but Jooruor Singh, as the young soldier was named, refused all patronage, and continued to serve for some months. She was about twenty-two years of age, with a fair and interesting countenance, though not handsome. She frankly answered questions concerning her situation, alike without bashfulness or boldness. It was finally discovered that the affectionate creature had encountered the fatigues and perils of military life with the hope of raising money enough to liberate a beloved brother imprisoned at Bopal. As soon as this circumstance became known to Sindia, he discharged her from the army, made her a liberal donation, and gave her a letter to the nabob of Bopal, earnestly recommending her and her brother to his protection.

It is very much to the honor of all parties, that Jooruor Singh, from the moment she was known to be a woman, received increased deference and attention; not even the meanest soldier presumed to utter an offensive word in her presence.

This furnishes a good commentary on the severe but often-evaded laws of the harem. Perfect external freedom is always the greatest safeguard of virtue.

The Nairs, on the coast of Malabar, have very extraordinary customs, for the origin of which it is difficult to account. Their women are beautiful and remarkably neat. They are usually married before they are ten years of age; but it would be deemed

exceedingly indecorous for the husband to live with his wife, or even to visit her, except as an acquaintance. She lives with her mother, and prides herself on the number of her lovers, especially if they be Bramins or rajahs; but if any of them were her inferiors, she would be immediately expelled from her caste, which is the greatest misfortune that can befall a Hindoo. Owing to these strange customs, a Nair has much more affection for his sister's children than for those of his wife, and no one is offended at being asked who is his father. The husband is, of course, the lover of some other married dame. If he offers the lady cloth for a dress, and she accepts it, the matter is settled, until they see fit to change. Sons inherit the fortune of the maternal grandfather. The heir apparent to the throne of Travancore is not the son of the rajah's wife, but of his oldest sister, who is treated as queen.

The Nairs treat their mothers with the utmost respect, and have a filial regard for maternal uncles and aunts; but they scarcely notice their fathers, and have little affection for brothers and sisters. Yet notwithstanding this allowed profligacy, these singular people are very jealous of the honor of their women. An intrigue with a European, or one of a different tribe, would be punished with death. The Bramins indeed are allowed to be the lovers of wives and daughters of the other superior castes; their proposals are deemed too great an honor to be refused. The disgusting class called fakirs likewise obtain great influence over the minds of women by



their ostentatious sanctity. They often carry beautiful girls to their temples, under the pretence that the god has chosen them for wives; and this is considered an enviable distinction. The women among the Nairs go with the upper part of the person entirely uncovered; as is generally the case throughout Malabar, and even in the southern parts of the peninsula. They have their ears bored in childhood, and in order to enlarge the aperture, they put in a rolled leaf of the cocoa tree, or suspend a piece of lead; afterward they insert small round ivory cases. They wear the hair flowing loosely behind, or hanging in several tresses curiously braided. It is never cut off, except in seasons of mourning, or as a punishment.

The women in this part of Hindostan have a singular custom. When a young girl is betrothed, when she is married, and when a son is born, all the female relatives meet at her house, and make the event known to the neighbors by a long, loud, monotonous howl, which one would suppose was intended to express any thing but joy.

There is a caste in Hindostan, comprising all painters and gilders, in which brothers marry their sisters, and uncles their nieces.

At funerals, hired female mourners tear their hair, beat themselves, and utter dismal cries. The custom of widows burning themselves upon the funeral pile of their husbands is not commanded as a religious duty in any of their sacred writings; but enthusiastic devotees have been led to sanction the cruel ceremo-

ny by the following text: "The woman who dies with her husband shall enjoy life eternal with him in heaven."

A woman who resolves upon this sacrifice, abstains from food as soon as her husband is dead, and continually repeats the name of the god he had worshipped. When the hour arrives, she adorns herself with rich clothes and jewels, and goes to the funeral pile, attended by her relations and friends, with the sound of musical instruments. The Bramins give her drink in which opium is mixed, and sing songs in praise of heroism. It is said that before the ceremony they try to dissuade her from her project; but the resolution once taken is sacred. One of them being warned of the pain she would endure, held her finger in the fire for some time, and then burned incense on the palm of her hand, to prove her contempt of suffering. Mr. Forbes mentions a female whose husband had amply provided for her by will, and, contrary to the usual custom of the Hindoos, had made her perfectly independent of his family. "She persisted in her determination to accompany him to a better world, and suffered not the tears and supplications of an aged mother and three helpless infants to change her purpose. An immense concourse of people of all ranks assembled, and a band of music accompanied the Bramins, who superintended the ceremony. The bower of death, entwined with sacred flowers, was erected over a pile of sandalwood and spices, on which lay the body of the deceased. After various ceremonies, the music ceased,

and the crowd in solemn silence waited the arrival of the heroine. She was attended by her mother and three lovely children, arrayed in rich attire, and wearing the hymeneal crown. After a few religious ceremonies, the attendants took off her jewels, and anointed her dishevelled hair with consecrated ghee, as also the skirts of her yellow muslin robe. She then distributed her ornaments among weeping friends, while two lisping infants clung around her knees to dissuade her from the fatal purpose; the last pledge of conjugal love was taken from her bosom by an aged parent in speechless agony. Freed from these heart-piercing mourners, the lovely widow, with an air of solemn majesty, received a lighted torch from the Bramins, with which she walked seven times round the pyre. Stopping near the entrance of the bower, for the last time she addressed the fire, and worshipped the other deities prescribed; then setting fire to her hair and the skirts of her robe, to render herself the only brand worthy of illuminating the sacred pile, she threw away the torch, rushed into the bower, and embracing her husband, thus communicated the flames to the surrounding branches. The musicians immediately struck up the loudest strains, to drown the cries of the victim, should her courage have forsaken her; but several of the spectators declared that the serenity of her countenance and the dignity of her behavior surpassed all the sacrifices of a similar nature they had ever witnessed."

Such an event is deemed very glorious to the fami-

ly of the victim, and that of her husband. They are proud of her in proportion to the calmness and heroism with which she meets her fate. If the resolution of the poor creatures fail them at the last moment, they bring irretrievable disgrace on their connections. If they try to go back, they are often put to death by relatives, or expelled from their caste, and forever cut off from all intercourse with relations or friends. But notwithstanding religious enthusiasm, and the prejudices of education, they are not always resigned to their cruel fate.

In 1796, the widow of a Bramin determined to be burned with the body of her husband. It was dark and rainy when the pile was lighted, and when she began to be scorched by the flames, she crept away unperceived, and hid herself in the brushwood. It was soon discovered, and they dragged her forth. Her own son insisted that she should be thrown on the pile again, or else hang herself. She pleaded hard for life, but pleaded in vain. The son said he should be expelled from his caste, unless the sacrifice were completed, and that either he or she must die. Finding her still unwilling to destroy herself, the son and his companions bound her limbs and threw her on the funeral pile, where she quickly perished. The bones are carefully collected in vases, and thrown into some sacred river. The next day the Bramins sprinkle milk and consecrated water over the place, and sometimes erect a chapel.

It not unfrequently happens that a number of wives are burned at once with the dead body of their hus-

band; and a willingness to make this sacrifice is said to be still more a point of honor with mistresses than with wives. When the chief Rao Lacka died, fifteen mistresses perished with him, but not one of his wives offered to sacrifice herself. A Koolin Bramin of Bagnuparu had more than a hundred wives, twenty-two of whom were consumed with his corpse. The fire was kept kindled for three days, waiting the arrival of the numerous victims. Some of them were forty years old, and others no more than sixteen. Nineteen of them had seldom even seen the husband with whom they consented to perish.

It is said the widows of Bramins less frequently immolate themselves than women of the other superior castes, because the Bramins often take wives without any inclination for the union on either side.

In 1819, a girl of fifteen determined to become a suttee.\* The person to whom she had been betrothed died when she was six years old, and, according to custom, she had ever after remained unmarried. No entreaties could prevail on her to consent to live. She asked for a fiddle which had belonged to her betrothed, and jumped into the flames.

Among the Mahrattas, and some other tribes, whose custom it is to bury their dead, the sacrifice is made in a different manner. The widow is escorted to the grave by a solemn procession; having listened to the exhortations of the Bramins, and parted her jewels among friends, she places upon her head a pot filled with rice, plantain, betel, and water; then

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\* A widow who voluntarily immolates herself.

with clasped hands she bids farewell to the spectators, and descends into the grave by means of a bamboo ladder; she seats herself by the body of her husband, the ladder is drawn up, and the music resounds, while the relatives throw in a quantity of earth to suffocate the poor creature.

The Shaster, or Hindoo Bible, forbids a woman to see dancing, hear music, wear jewels, blacken her eyebrows, eat dainty food, sit at a window, or view herself in a mirror, during the absence of her husband; and it allows him to divorce her if she has no sons, injures his property, scolds him, quarrels with another, or presumes to eat before he has finished his meal.

Truly, in no part of the world does the condition of women appear more dreary than in Hindostan. The arbitrary power of a father disposes of them in childhood; if the boy to whom they are betrothed dies before the completion of the marriage, they are condemned forever after to perpetual celibacy; under these restraints, if their affections become interested and lead them into any imprudence, they are punished with irretrievable disgrace, and in many districts with death; if married, their husbands have despotic control over them; if unable to support them, they can lend or sell them to a neighbor; and in the Hindoo rage for gambling, wives and children are frequently staked and lost; if they survive their husbands, they must pay implicit obedience to the oldest son; if they have no sons, the nearest male relative holds them in subjection; and if there happen to be no kinsmen, they must be dependent on the

chief of the tribe. Having spent life with scanty opportunities to partake of its enjoyments, they become objects of contempt if they refuse to depart from it, in compliance with a most cruel custom.

The self-immolation of widows is of great antiquity. The natives have a tradition that women many centuries ago frequently murdered their husbands; and the Bramins, finding the severest punishments of no avail, put an effectual check to it, by saying it was the will of the gods, that widows should be burned on the funeral pile of their husbands.

The English government have made great exertions to abolish this abominable practice, and it is now prohibited by law in every part of British India.

The Hindoo character is proverbial for patient mildness; yet their religious superstitions continually lead them to the most ferocious deeds. Fond as the women are of their children, they make a great merit of throwing them to the sacred crocodiles, and not unfrequently cast them from steep rocks, in fulfilment of some superstitious vow.

They themselves undergo the most frightful penances, and willingly lie down to be devoured by crocodiles, or crushed beneath the car of Juggernaut. Among the lighter penances, is that of conveying a great quantity of water from the sacred Ganges to a temple at some distance. Women of the higher castes, being unwilling to appear in the streets, hire others to perform this expiatory duty for them.

The Rev. Dr. Buchanan, in his description of the sacrifices at the temple of Juggernaut, says: "At

the place of skulls, I beheld a poor woman lying dead, or nearly dead, with her two children by her, looking at the dogs and vultures which were near. The people passed by without noticing the children. I asked them where was their home. They said they had no home but where their mother was."

This bigoted attachment to customs so horrid and unnatural, is remarkable in a people who are so tolerant of the opinions of others. It is a singular fact that the Hindoos reverence the objects held sacred by other nations; hence their women and children are frequently seen bringing offerings of fruit and flowers to the mosque of the Mohammedan, and the chapel of the Catholic. They say, "Heaven is like a palace with many doors, and every one may enter in his own way."

The custom of murdering female infants, which formerly prevailed throughout several districts in India, is so unnatural that it could not be believed, if it were not proved beyond all possibility of doubt. The horrid act was generally done by the mothers themselves, either by administering opium as soon as a child was born, smothering it, or neglecting the precautions necessary to preserve life. Now and then a wealthy man saved one daughter, especially if he had no sons; but the practice of infanticide was so general, that when the young men wanted wives, they were obliged to seek them in such neighboring tribes as their laws permitted them to marry. The marquis of Wellesley, during his government in India, made great exertions to have



this abominable custom abolished ; but the natives were very stubborn in their prejudices. They urged the natural inferiority of females, the great responsibility which attended their bringing up, and the expense incident upon their marriages. The arguments of the English, aided by the influence of certain solemn sentences from some of their sacred books, did, however, at last persuade them to abolish the barbarous practice. Colonel Walker was the British officer who, after much difficulty, prevailed on the Jarejah tribe to relinquish the custom. A year or two after, many of the Jarejah fathers and mothers brought their infant daughters to his tent, and exhibited them with the utmost pride and fondness. Grateful for the change produced in their habits, the mothers placed their children in colonel Walker's hands, called them *his* children, and begged him to protect those whom he had preserved.

The gentle and inoffensive character of the Hindoos is not without exceptions. Bands of robbers infest the more northern parts ; and some of them make use of a singular stratagem to decoy travellers. They send out a beautiful woman, who with many tears complains of some misfortune that has befallen her, and implores their protection. No sooner has the unwary traveller taken her behind him on horseback, than she strangles him with a noose, or stuns him with a blow on the head, until the robbers come from their hiding-place, and complete his destruction. It is generally supposed that these murderers came into India with the Mohammeden conquerors.

The Hindoos are very fond of shows and amusements; but in these the women, especially of the higher classes, have little share. The female pastimes consist principally of bathing, dressing, chewing betel, listening to story-tellers, and playing a species of draughts.

In March the Hindoos keep a great festival called *hohlee*; and it is a singular coincidence that during one of these holydays it is common to send people on absurd errands, in order to create a laugh at their expense, just as we do on the first of April. They likewise divert themselves with throwing about great quantities of earth used in painting, and known by the name of India red. The sport is to cast it into the eyes, mouth, and nose. Sometimes it is powdered with talc to make it glitter, and then if it gets into the eyes it is very painful. They likewise splash each other all over, with squirts filled with orange-colored water, made of the flowers of the *dak* tree. These frolics usually take place under the front awning of wealthy houses, or the terraces of the gardens, but sometimes within the buildings. A rajah, surrounded by his numerous wives, has a fair chance to get his full share of powdering and drenching.

The *hohlee* is observed by all classes throughout Hindostan, with the most boisterous merriment. The utmost freedom is allowed to all ranks. Young men and old parade about the streets, singing indecent songs. Sometimes an individual dresses himself up in the most fantastic style, to personify the

*hohlee*, and is followed by crowds throwing red dust and orange-colored water. This custom, which is said to be connected with some religious tradition, is very similar to the observance of the carnival in Catholic countries. The Hindoo ladies have their share of the festivities; but no one is allowed to join their parties except their husbands, or very young brothers.

The wives of jugglers follow the same profession as their husbands. It is a common sight to see young women walking on their heads, with their feet in the air, turning round like a wheel, or walking on their hands and feet, with the body bent backward.

A recent traveller thus describes one of the tricks which he saw performed: "A young and beautifully formed woman fixed on her head a stiff strong fillet, to which were fastened, at equal distances, twenty pieces of string, with a noose at the end of each. Under her arm she carried a basket containing twenty eggs. She advanced near us, and began to move rapidly round upon a spot not more than eighteen inches in diameter, from which she never deviated for an instant, though her rotation became so exceedingly rapid as to render it painful to look at her. She absolutely spun round like a top. When her body had reached its extreme point of acceleration, she quickly drew down one of the strings, which had formed a horizontal circle round her, and put an egg into the noose. She then jerked it back to its original position, and continuing her gyrations with

undiminished velocity, she secured all the eggs in the nooses prepared for them, until they were all flying around her head in one unbroken circular line. After this she continued her motions with undiminished velocity for at least five minutes, then seized the eggs one by one, and replaced them in the basket. This being done, she stopped in an instant, without the movement of a limb, or the vibration of a muscle, as if she had been suddenly transformed to marble. She received our applauses with a calm countenance, and an apparent modesty of demeanor, which was doubtless the result of constitutional apathy, rather than refinement of feeling; for these jugglers are generally among the most depraved of their caste."

The reputed wealth and fertile soil of Hindostan have attracted foreigners from all parts of the world. Some entered as conquerors, some sought refuge from persecution, and others went there for commercial purposes. The peculiar manners of these different nations have become too variously modified to be particularly described. The Mohammedans, who obtained certain districts by conquest, are extravagantly fond of pomp and splendor. The nabob Asuf gave a proof of this in the wedding of his adopted son Vizier Aly. The bridegroom was about thirteen years of age, the bride ten. The prince could hardly move under the weight of his jewels. The procession consisted of about twelve hundred elephants richly caparisoned, of which one hundred in the centre had *houdas*, or castles, on their backs,

covered with silver. In the midst was the nabob himself, within a *houda* covered with gold and set with precious stones. On both sides of the road was raised artificial scenery of bamboo-work, representing arches, minarets, and towers, covered with lighted glass lamps. On each side were carried platforms, covered with gold and silver cloth, on which were musicians and dancing girls superbly dressed. The ground was inlaid with fireworks, and at every step of the elephants, rockets and fiery serpents shot forth, kindling the night into day. Three thousand flambeaux were likewise carried by men hired for the occasion.

The palanquins in which the wealthy are carried are sometimes very magnificent. They are painted and gilded, ornamented with gold, silver, and jewels, with cushions and coverings of crimson velvet.

The religion of Brama, as well as that of Mohamed, forbids women to appear in public; but the lower classes of Hindoos do not attempt to comply with the inconvenient requisition. The Mohammedan women, on the contrary, are extremely punctilious on this point; even the poorest never venture out of doors without being enveloped in a cotton veil made like a bag, with a slight net-work over the eyes and mouth. Those who cannot afford to travel in palanquins, ride astride on a bullock, which has a bell suspended to the neck, and a bridle passed through the nostrils. A more uncouth or unpleasant sight cannot well be imagined, unless it might be a shrouded corpse thus mounted.

Mrs. Graham, in her very entertaining account of India, gives the following description of a visit to the harem of a Mohammedan chief: "My sister and I were allowed to enter, but we could by no means persuade the cazy to admit any of the gentlemen of our family. We ascended to the women's apartment by a ladder, which is removed when not in immediate use, to prevent the ladies from escaping. We were received by the cazy's wife's mother, a fine old woman dressed in white, and without ornaments, as becomes a widow. The cazy's mother, and the rest of his father's widows, were first presented; then Fatima, his wife, to whom our visit was paid; and afterward his sisters, some of them fine, lively young women. They all crowded round us to examine our dress, and the materials of which it was composed. They were surprised at our wearing so few ornaments; but we told them it was the custom of our country, and they replied that it was good. I was not sorry they so openly expressed their curiosity, as it gave us a better opportunity of gratifying our own. The apartment in which we were received was about twenty feet square, and rather low. Round it were smaller rooms, most of them crowded with small beds, with white muslin curtains; these were not particularly clean, and the whole suit seemed close and disagreeable. Most of the women were becomingly dressed. Fatima's arms, feet, and neck were covered with rings and chains; her fingers and toes were loaded with rings; her head was surrounded with a fillet of pearls, some strings of

which crossed it several ways, and confined her hair, which was knotted up behind. On her forehead hung a cluster of colored stones, from which depended a large pearl, and round her face small strings of pearl hung at equal distances. Her ear-rings were very beautiful; but I do not like the custom of boring the hem of the ear, and studding it all round with *joys*, or jewels; and not even Fatima's beautiful face could reconcile me to the nose jewel. Her large black eyes (the *chesme ahoos*, or stag eyes, of the eastern poets) were rendered more striking by the black streaks with which they were adorned, and lengthened out at the corners. The palms of her hands, the soles of her feet, and her nails, were stained with henna, a plant, the juice of whose seeds is of a deep-red color."

"Fatima's manner is modest, gentle, and indolent. Before her husband, she neither lifts her eyes nor speaks, and hardly moves without permission from the elder ladies of the harem. She presented us with perfumed sherbet, (a drink little different from lemonade,) fruit, and sweetmeats, chiefly made of *ghee*, poppy seeds, and sugar. Some of them were tolerably good, but it required all my politeness to swallow others. Prepared as I was to expect very little from Mussulman ladies, I could not help being shocked to find them so totally devoid of cultivation as I found them. They mutter their prayers, and some of them read the Koran, but not one in a thousand understands it. Still fewer can read their own language, or write at all; and the only work

they do is a little embroidery. They string beads, plait colored threads, sleep, quarrel, make pastry, and chew betel, in the same daily round. It is only at a death, a birth, or a marriage, that the monotony of their lives is interrupted. When we took leave, we were sprinkled with rose-water, and presented with flowers, and betel nut wrapped in the leaves of an aromatic plant."

Yet where talent exists it has sometimes found means to manifest itself, even within the circumscribed limits of the harem.

Many beautiful designs for Cashmere shawls, embroidery, and printed cottons, have been designed by these secluded women. Mherul-Nisa, afterward favorite sultana of Jehangire, emperor of Hindostan, being shut up with other slaves in a mean apartment of the seraglio, exerted her ingenuity to increase her scanty support. She embroidered splendid tapestry, painted silks with exquisite skill, and invented a variety of fanciful ornaments. These being extensively bought, and much admired in the city of Delhi, excited the emperor's curiosity. He paid her a visit; and from that moment she never lost the extraordinary influence which she suddenly acquired over him. She became his favorite wife, under the title of Noor Jehan, signifying *the light of the world*; her relations were placed in the principal employments of the empire, ranked with princes of the blood, and admitted to the private apartments of the seraglio; her name was stamped on the coin with that of the emperor; and the most expensive pageants, consisting



of music, fireworks, and illuminations, were continually kept up to please her.

The discovery of that exquisite perfume called attar of roses is attributed to Noor Jehan. She had not only baths, but whole canals, filled with rose-water, that she might enjoy its fragrance. One fine morning, walking with the emperor along one of these canals, in his magnificent gardens at Cashmere, she observed a fine scum floating on the surface. She took up some of it, and perceived that it yielded a powerful odour. She caused the chemists to examine it, and from it they produced the essence which has ever since commanded so high a price. Noor Jehan gave it the name of Atyr Jehangire, in honor of her husband, and introduced the use of it throughout Hindostan.

Among the foreign nations settled in India are the Parsees, descendants from the ancient Persians, who, like them, worship fire and sun, not as God, but as his most perfect symbol. There are among them holy women, who keep a perpetual fire burning before their habitations, and are very strict in the observance of religious rites ; these women are held in the highest veneration.

The Parsees, like most other oriental women, are in the habit of bringing water on their heads from the rivers and wells. They are well shaped, and almost as fair as Europeans. They have large black eyes, and aquiline noses. They are married very young, but generally remain with their parents some time after the wedding. The Parsees are allowed to

marry but one wife, and she must be of their own nation.

The Hindoos in general believe in witchcraft. If the crops are blighted, sickness prevails, or any unusual misfortunes occur, they write the names of all the women in the village on branches of the saul-tree, and let them remain in water four hours and a half; if any branch withers, the person whose name is on it is decided to be a witch. Other superstitious ordeals are likewise resorted to, and certain forms of investigation are gone through with, which not unfrequently end in the death of the accused.

They believe in the existence of demons, and use various exorcisms to expel them from those who are possessed. Women are almost always the persons in whom these evil spirits are supposed to have fixed their residence.

The Hindoos people the stars, the air, the woods, and the ocean with deities; among which the goddesses are about as numerous as the gods. The two most conspicuous are Saraswadi, goddess of literature and the arts, and Parvati, goddess of time and of enchantments; the latter, like Venus, was born of the foam of the sea, and is the mother of Love. The Hindoo Cupid is called Camdeo, or Manmadin. His bow is of sugar-cane, his arrows made of flowers, and pointed with honey-comb. He is usually represented riding on a parrot, and is particularly worshipped by women desirous to obtain faithful lovers and good husbands.

English residents are numerous in Hindostan,

where they preserve their national customs, slightly varied by climate and surrounding circumstances. India has been a great marriage-market, on account of the emigration of young enterprising Englishmen, without a corresponding number of women. Faded belles, and destitute female orphans, were sure of finding husbands in India. Some persons actually undertook to import women to the British settlements, in order to sell them to rich Europeans, or nabobs, who would give a good price for them. How the importers acquired a right thus to dispose of them is not mentioned; it is probable that the women themselves, from extreme poverty, or some other cause, consented to become articles of speculation, upon consideration of receiving a certain remuneration. In September, 1818, the following advertisement appeared in the Calcutta Advertiser: "*Females raffled for.* Be it known that six fair pretty young ladies, with two sweet engaging children, lately imported from Europe, having the roses of health blooming on their cheeks, and joy sparkling in their eyes, possessing amiable tempers, and highly accomplished, whom the most indifferent cannot behold without rapture, are to be raffled for next door to the British Gallery. Twelve tickets at twelve rupees each; the highest of the three doubtless takes the most fascinating."

The wives of respectable Hindoos are very rarely seen in the street with their husbands, unless they are going a journey. When they see an Englishwoman walk arm-in-arm with her husband, they are

exceedingly shocked, and exclaim, "Oh! ah! do you see this? They take their wives by the hand and lead them about, showing them to other English. These people have no shame."

The inhabitants of Thibet are marked by a Chinese cast of countenance; small black eyes, with long pointed corners, with eyelashes and eyebrows extremely thin. Ladies of rank extend the corner of the eyelids towards the temples as far as possible, by artificial means. They are fond of ornaments, and wear a profusion of coral and amber necklaces, to which are suspended images of their gods, forms of prayer, or sentences from their sacred writings. The most wealthy wear chaplets of large gems, such as rubies, lapis-lazuli, &c.; and their black hair is, on state occasions, almost entirely concealed by heaps of pearl, emeralds, and coral.

Matrimony is rather dishonorable in Thibet. A marriage contract forms an almost insuperable obstacle to the attainment of political rank or influence. Hence ambitious parents are desirous of placing their sons in the monasteries, where no woman is allowed to enter, and where a vow of perpetual celibacy is taken. Every family consisting of more than four boys is obliged to devote one of them to this recluse life.

There are likewise in Thibet female devotees, who, like nuns, devote themselves entirely to celibacy and the duties of religion. They do not use a rosary to facilitate their prayers; but, instead of this, they

have a painted barrel, with gilt letters on it, placed upright in a case, which has an opening to admit the hand. It revolves upon an axis, and as they twirl it round, they repeat certain appointed words.

The Thibetian customs with regard to marriage are very extraordinary. One woman is the wife of a whole family of brothers, be they ever so numerous. This custom is not confined to the lower ranks, but prevails in the most opulent families. The oldest brother has the right of choice. The courtship is very brief, and the marriage quite unceremonious. If the parents of the damsel approve his request, they carry their daughter to his house, where the relations meet and carouse for three days, with music and dancing. The priests, who are bound to shun the sight of women, have no share in the scene. Mutual consent is the only bond of union. The engagement thus formed cannot be dissolved, unless both the parties consent to a separation; and even where this is the case, they are never after at liberty to form a new connection. These women, who are said to be very jealous of their husbands, enjoy a degree of freedom and consideration unknown to the Hindoos. They are the acknowledged mistresses of their family, have liberty to go where they please, and are generally well supported by the joint earnings of their numerous partners. When captain Turner was at Teshoo Loomboo, he was acquainted with five brothers, who all lived together in the utmost harmony and affection, with one wife among them all. The first-born child belongs to the oldest brother, the second to the next of age, and so on

Instances of infidelity are said to be rare. In such cases, a man is condemned to pay a pecuniary fine; a woman receives corporeal punishment. Public opinion is said not to be very fastidious concerning the character of unmarried females.

In Thibet, the exchange of scarfs accompanies almost all the courtesies of life. When a visit is paid, scarfs are exchanged; and every letter is accompanied with a scarf, however distant may be its place of destination. White and red are in use; but the former is considered more genteel, and is respectful in proportion to its fineness. These scarfs are soft, thin, glossy, and of dazzling whiteness. They are woven with damask figures, and usually have some sacred motto near the fringe at the ends.

Women of the laboring classes are inured to a great deal of toil. They plant, weed, reap, and thresh grain, and are exposed to the roughest weather, while their indolent husbands are perhaps living at their ease.

The Birmans in their features resemble the Chinese. The women, especially those belonging to the northern districts, are fairer than the Hindoos, but less delicately formed, being generally inclined to corpulence. Their hair is black, coarse, and long. Both sexes color the teeth, the eyelashes, and the edges of their eyelids, with black. When women are in full dress, they stain their nails and the palms of their hands red, and strew their faces and bosoms with powder of sandal-wood, or of a bark called *sunneka*.

The hair is usually tied at the top of the head, and the fillet worn by people of rank is embroidered, and adorned with jewels. A long piece of silk or cloth is fastened round the waist, and falls to the feet, sometimes trailing on the ground. The upper part of the person is covered by a loose jacket, with long tight sleeves; but the lower garment being open, it is impossible to walk without exposing the limbs, in a manner that would be regarded as very indelicate by Europeans. Wealthy women wear shoes, that turn up with a pointed toe; the peasantry go barefoot. Girls are taught at an early age to invert their arms, so that the protruding joint of the elbow comes inside, and gives the arm the appearance of being broken.

The Birmans have less personal cleanliness than the Hindoos, who, though they seldom wash their garments, consider frequent bathing a religious duty. Though separated from the Hindoos only by a narrow range of mountains, they are strikingly unlike them in character. The Birmans are lively, active, and impatient. Their wives and daughters are allowed the same degree of freedom in social intercourse with men, as prevails in European society. Marriage is a purely civil contract, over which the priesthood have no jurisdiction. The law allows but one wife; but the wealthy usually keep a number of mistresses, who reside under the same roof with the wife, and are subject to her control. When she goes abroad, they attend her, bearing her betel-box, fan, &c.; and when the husband dies, they become

the widow's property, unless he has specifically emancipated them.

The formalities of courtship and marriage are similar to those of India. If the first private proposal be well received by the damsel and her parents, the relatives meet to agree concerning her dowry; the bridegroom sends a present of dresses and jewels, according to his wealth; the parents of the bride give a feast, and written contracts are signed; the new-married couple eat out of the same dish; the bridegroom presents the bride with some pickled tea, she returns the compliment, and thus ends the ceremony.

Divorces may be obtained under peculiar circumstances, but they are attended with a good deal of expense. The women are generally virtuous; for their constant occupation leaves little leisure for the mind to become corrupted. Ladies of the highest rank are busy at the labors of the loom. When the British envoy made a formal visit to the queen's mother, he found her maidens in the gallery of the palace, weaving with the utmost activity. Nearly all the cotton and silk used in the Birman empire is woven at home by the women. Indeed, they take an active share in the general superintendence both of out-door and in-door transactions. When the governor of Maindu had a large ship on the stocks, his wife was seen to cross the river every morning in her husband's barge, attended by female servants; she took her seat on the timbers, and superintended the workmen for hours; and she seldom failed to



come again in the evening, to see that the day's task had been completed. The Englishmen, who observed her, said her husband never accompanied her, and she appeared to have no need of his assistance.

But notwithstanding the Birmese ladies enjoy so much more of freedom and confidence than their neighbors, they share something of the degradation imposed upon all Asiatic women. Their evidence is not deemed equal to that of a man, and they are not allowed to ascend the steps of a court of justice, but are obliged to give their testimony outside of the building. A man who cannot pay his debts is liable to be sold, with his wife and children; hence innocent, industrious women not unfrequently suffer most cruelly for the vices or indolence of their husbands. Sometimes when criminals are condemned to death, the helpless wife and children share his punishment. When driven by poverty, the lower class of Birmans do not hesitate to sell their wives and daughters to foreign residents. Women are not considered as dishonored by these circumstances, and seem easily to resign themselves to their lot. They are generally very faithful to their new owners, and render themselves useful by keeping accounts, and aiding in the transaction of business. But foreigners are never allowed to carry these women or their children out of the country. If a vessel were discovered with a Birmese female on board, it would never again be allowed to enter any of their ports.

Orders of monks are established in the Birman

empire, and formerly there were establishments of nuns; but, for political reasons, a law was passed forbidding any woman to seclude herself from society by a religious vow.

Female mourners are hired to chant dirges at funerals. Dancing and singing girls are introduced at entertainments, and some of them are said to be extremely graceful. In the month of April they celebrate a merry festival, by throwing as much water as they please upon whomsoever they meet; but in this, as in all their amusements, the Birmanians are scrupulously decorous toward women. They may throw water upon any girl who is the first aggressor, but they must not lay hands upon her; neither are they allowed to molest any female, who does not choose to join in the merriment of the season.

The women of the Arracan mountains tattoo their faces all over in segments of circles, which give them a hideous appearance. These half savage tribes consider a flat forehead the perfection of beauty, and in order to produce it, they lay a heavy plate of lead upon the brow of infants. The inhabitants of Pegu are passionately addicted to tattooing.

The inhabitants of Tonquin and Cochin China, though similar to the Chinese in features, written language, and religious ceremonies, are very unlike them in character, and in some of their customs. The Cochin Chinese are lively, talkative, and familiar; and they suffer their women to be quite as gay and unrestrained as themselves. The middling and

lower classes of women are indeed condemned to laborious occupations. They stand in the water from morning till night, transplanting rice; they till the ground; assist in repairing the mud cottages; manufacture coarse earthen-ware; manage boats; carry produce to market; gather the cotton, spin, weave, and color it; and then make it into garments for themselves and families. Their endurance of hardship is so remarkable, that the Cochin Chinese proverb says: "A woman has nine lives, and bears a great deal of killing."

The law makes no restriction as to the number of wives; but the first espoused takes precedence of the others. If married parties choose to separate, they break one of their copper coins, or a pair of chopsticks, in the presence of witnesses, and the union is dissolved; but the husband must restore all the property his wife possessed before marriage.

Men consider their wives as an inferior race, and sell them when they please. They are shamefully indifferent about their moral character, if they can obtain money by their vices. Women living thus without the encouragement or restraint of public opinion, and without the sweet reward of domestic esteem and confidence, are generally vicious, wherever there is the least temptation to be so. There are, however, severe laws, which are enforced when husbands think proper to appeal to them. Sometimes an unfaithful wife is trampled to death by elephants, and sometimes both of the offending parties are tied together and thrown into the river. The

women are dark and coarse featured, with blackened teeth, and small pretensions to beauty ; but there is something pleasing in their perpetual cheerfulness and lively good-nature. They take great pride in long hair, considering the reverse as a token of degeneracy, and a mark of vulgarity.

The Cochin Chinese have dramatic performances, in which female actors are introduced. Their voices, when singing, are said to be shrill and warbling, and their dancing full of graceful gestures and attitudes.

Men and women of the common class dress nearly alike. Both wear a brown or blue frock, with black nankeen trowsers, made very wide. They have neither stockings nor shoes. The women wear their long hair sometimes twisted on the top of the head, and sometimes hanging in loose flowing tresses. To shield them from the sun they have broad hats, like an inverted saucer, woven with the fibres of bamboo, and made impervious to water by means of a fine varnish. These hats are fastened under the chin by a slender wooden bow, like the handle of a pail ; the rich have it made of ivory, ebony, silver, or gold. The higher classes dress very much like the wealthy Chinese. Both ladies and gentlemen, when they go abroad, have attendants to carry their fans, and a box made of fragrant wood, often inlaid with gold and silver, to contain their areca, betel, &c. Garments are seldom changed till they begin to fall in pieces, and their habits are in general so uncleanly that a near approach to them is not pleasant.

The Siamese are a tawny people, with short black hair, which both sexes cut quite short. They have faces broad in the middle, and narrowing toward the forehead and the chin. Their ears are naturally large; and, like many other nations in the torrid zone, they weigh them down with heavy ornaments, so that one might thrust several fingers through the distended apertures.

Long nails, particularly on the right hand, are considered a mark of gentility. They often attain a growth of several inches; and when women wish to be particularly elegant, they wear artificial ones four inches long.

The Siamese bathe very frequently, and anoint themselves with perfumes. The interior of their houses is likewise very neat. They seldom wear any ornament about the head, except ear-rings; and none but the young wear bracelets. Their common clothing is very slight; consisting merely of a large piece of calico, tied above the hips, and falling to the feet.

Women enjoy a considerable degree of freedom. When a young man sends his female friends to ask a damsel in marriage, her parents consult their daughter's inclination; and if they approve the match, magicians are immediately called to cast nativities and consult the stars for omens. The lover pays two or three visits to his betrothed, bringing presents of fruit and betel. At the third visit, the relations sign contracts, and pay the dowry. A few days after, the priests sprinkle the young

couple with consecrated water, and repeat prayers. The bride's parents keep up feasting, dancing, and music for several days ; and sometimes months elapse before the young people commence house-keeping for themselves.

The Siamese laws allow of several wives, but the wealthy only avail themselves of this indulgence. Superior privileges are conferred on the first wife, and upon her children. The children of the others are not allowed to use the familiar appellation of "father," but are required to say, "Mr. father." The first wife may be divorced, but cannot be sold, like the others. In case of divorce, she may claim the first, third, fifth child, and so on, through the odd numbers. The husband has a right to all the even numbers ; of course, the mother sometimes has a larger share than the father.

All the property left by a husband belongs to the first wife. She likewise inherits his authority ; but she cannot sell the even-number children, who in case of division would have belonged to their father.

The poorer classes work on the land, and transact business for their husbands, during the half of each year, which they are obliged to spend in the service of a despotic prince. They take great care of their children, especially of their daughters, and are generally very virtuous and modest. The Siamese, unlike their neighbors of Cochin China, are very scrupulous concerning the character of their women, with which they conceive their own honor to be intimately connected. Their laws are very severe.

An unfaithful wife is exposed alive to tigers, or sold as a slave.

These people have a singular religious ceremony, which reminds one of the Jewish scape-goat. An infamous woman is carried about on a barrow, accompanied with trumpets and hautboys. Every one curses her, and pelts her with dirt. She is then carried out of the town, left among bushes and thorns, and forbidden ever to return to the city. They have a superstition that this ceremony will avert all threatened evils from them to her.

The Siamese priests are not allowed to marry, on pain of being burnt to death.

There are female convents in Siam, but no woman is allowed to take the vow before she is fifty years old. When a man is condemned for any crime, his innocent family suffer with him; and wives and children are not unfrequently gambled away at games of chance. The women marry very young. It is a common thing to see wives and mothers of twelve years old.

Like other nations in the vicinity, they smoke a good deal, and universally color their teeth black.

The Malays are a proud and revengeful people, excessively jealous of their women. The lower classes of females are, however, allowed to go about in public, and transact various kinds of business, with a hardihood that braves all manner of fatigue and exposure. The women, of course, imbibe something of the fierce character of the men. No love

can hope to find favor in their eyes, until he can produce a number of human skulls, which he has severed from the bodies. When attacked by enemies, they fight by the side of their husbands and brothers, with a fiery courage amounting to desperation.

Their manner of living is almost as simple and rude as that of savages. The women are generally well shaped, with tawny complexions, oval faces, expressive eyes, large mouths with thin lips, and teeth blackened by chewing betel. They are fond of gallantry, dress, and jewels. The higher class wear a muslin garment, descending to the feet, and fastened with a girdle at the waist; and to this they add a short jacket. They frequently have ear-rings, bracelets, and gold chains, and fasten their long shining black hair at the top of the head with a gold pin. The common people of both sexes dress almost exactly alike; their clothing consisting merely of a cloth wrapped about the waist, fastened by a belt, in which they carry their daggers.

The children in Malacca, and the neighboring nations, universally go without clothing.

The Chinese women have broad unmeaning faces; small, lively eyes, obliquely placed, with eyelids rounding into each other at the corners, not forming an angle, as in Europeans; their hair is black; lips rather thick and rosy; and their complexion is a yellowish brown; excepting some inhabitants of the northern provinces, who are fairer. They generally paint their faces so as to give a strong carnation tint



to the whole surface. A foot unnaturally small is considered a great beauty. In order to attain this, the higher classes bind tight bandages round the feet of female infants, so that none but the great toe is suffered to retain its natural position. This compression is continued until the foot ceases to grow. It is then a misshapen little stump, four or five inches long, with all the smaller toes adhering firmly to the sole. The growth thus cruelly checked in its proper place, increases the ankle to such a clumsy size, that it almost entirely conceals the foot. When the ladies attempt to walk, they seem to be moving on stumps, and hobble along in the most awkward manner imaginable. Their little shoes are as fine as tinsel and embroidery can make them. According to Chinese history, this custom originated several centuries ago, when a numerous body of women combined together to overthrow the government; and to prevent the recurrence of a similar event it was ordained that female infants should wear wooden shoes, so small as to cramp their feet and render them useless. Some writers have supposed that this singular practice originated in the jealousy of Chinese husbands, who contrived this method to keep their wives at home; but this seems very improbable. The Persians, who seclude their women with much greater rigor than the Chinese, do not think it necessary to disable their feet; nor would such a precaution be a safeguard against intrigues. The reason of this, as well as other customs equally strange, may probably be found in the caprice of fashion; and

while unnaturally small feet are considered by Chinese men as a charming indication of elegant helplessness, the Chinese women will no doubt endure any degree of suffering to attain the enviable distinction.

Chinese hands are exceedingly small. The ladies keep them concealed by long wide cuffs, and consider it immodest to let them appear, even in presence of male relations. Both sexes, among the wealthy, suffer the finger nails to grow to an immense length, to show that they perform no labor. Sometimes they are said to be from eight to twelve inches long. In order to preserve them from being broken, they are obliged to keep them in light bamboo cases. The ladies generally comb their hair back from the face, and pluck out their eyebrows, so as to leave only a very thin arch. They wear their robes so long as to conceal the person from the throat to the toes. The garments of the higher classes are made of the richest materials, but are clumsy and inelegant. The usual colors are red, blue, and green. Though the Chinese ladies have no opportunity to rival each other in the conquest of hearts, they are nevertheless very fond of ornaments, especially about the head. Bunches of silver or gilt flowers are always interspersed among their ringlets, in greater or less profusion; and sometimes they wear the *fong-hoang* or Chinese *phœnix*, made of silver gilt, and so arranged as to move with the slightest motion of the wearer. The spreading tail forms a glittering

aigrette on the middle of the head, and the wings wave over the front.

The Chinese trace the institution of marriage as far back as their first sovereign, Fo-Hi, supposed to be coeval with Noah. The law permits but one wife; but though the emperor only can legally keep several mistresses, custom sanctions the practice, and it generally prevails among all who can afford it. These women are generally purchased as slaves, and the wife has control over them and their children; but the latter have a right to a share of the paternal inheritance. These female slaves call the lawful wife "mother," and at her death are obliged to observe the same ceremonies of mourning prescribed for a real parent.

The emperor never marries a foreign princess. When he ascends the throne, people of the highest rank present their youngest and handsomest daughters to him, that he may choose a wife among them. The empress, who is called *Hoang-heou*, has peculiar prerogatives; and her family acquire great credit and influence. Next to the empress in rank are two queens with their numerous attendants; and the third rank consists of six queens and their attendants. The children of all these women are considered a part of the imperial family. The emperor has arbitrary power to name his successor, either in his family or out of it; but he generally chooses one of the sons of the empress.

The emperor's daughters never succeed to the throne. They are usually married to Tartar princes,

and mandarins of high rank, who always consider such an alliance a mark of distinction. The great men of the Celestial Empire keep their women most carefully concealed from all eyes but their own. If there is occasion to remove them from one place of residence to another, they are conveyed in close carriages, with gauze drawn over the small windows, and a eunuch to guard them on each side. On state occasions, they are sometimes admitted to the theatre, where they are concealed behind a screen of close lattice-work. The scenes represented on the Chinese stage are said to be so indecent and disgusting, that European spectators are absolutely driven away. They have no actresses. Female characters are performed by beardless young men, in the costume of women. The ladies amuse themselves with embroidery, music, dancing, puppet-shows, and painting birds, flowers, and insects, on rice-paper, or thin gauze. Some of the emperors, willing to gratify the curiosity of their wives, built within the parks of their palaces miniature towns, to represent, on a small scale, the most remarkable objects in Peking. The gardens belonging to the imperial palaces are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful. Here the princes spend many tranquil hours, while their wives play on musical instruments, and their children frolic around them.

Chinese education consists principally in learning certain ceremonials of behavior; such as what kind of salutation to make to a superior, what to an inferior, how to give a present, and how to receive one.

When an emperor dies, his widows cannot marry again. They are removed to a palace peculiarly appropriated to their use, and never again allowed to leave it. It was formerly customary to immolate a number of slaves on the grave of an emperor, or prince; but this has given place to the harmless custom of burning images of tinfoil, cut in the human form.

A bridegroom knows nothing of the character or person of his intended wife, except what he gathers from the report of some female relative, or confidant, who undertakes to arrange the marriage, and determine the sum that shall be paid for the bride. Very severe laws are made to prevent deception and fraud in these transactions. On the day appointed for the wedding, the damsel is placed in a close palanquin, the key of which is sent to the bridegroom, by the hands of some trusty domestic. Her relations and friends, accompanied by squalling music, escort her to his house; at the gate of which he stands in full dress, ready to receive her. He eagerly opens the palanquin and examines his bargain. If he is pleased, she enters his dwelling, and the marriage is celebrated with feasting and rejoicing; the men and women being all the time in separate apartments. If the bridegroom is dissatisfied, he shuts the palanquin, and sends the woman back to her relations; but when this happens, he must pay another sum of money equal to the price he first gave for her. A woman who unites beauty with accomplishments brings from four to seven hundred louis d'ors; some sell for less than one hundred.

The apartments of the women are separated from those of the men by a wall, at which a guard is stationed. The wife is never allowed to eat with her husband; she cannot quit her apartments without permission; and he does not enter hers without first asking leave. Brothers are entirely separated from their sisters at the age of nine or ten years.

Divorces are allowed in cases of criminality, mutual dislike, jealousy, incompatibility of temper, or too much loquacity on the part of the wife.

The Chinese character is grave, ceremonious, and taciturn. It is said that women are in the habit of answering concisely, and seldom speak unless spoken to; nevertheless the Chinese proverb declares, "What women have lost in their feet they have gained in their tongues." If female loquacity be a ground for divorce, it may render the marriage contract very precarious, even in China. A husband can neither put away his wife, nor sell her, until a divorce is legally obtained. If she leaves him, he may immediately commence an action at law, by the sentence of which she becomes his slave, and he is at liberty to sell her to whom he pleases. If he leaves her for three years, she may, by permission of the mandarins, marry again; but if she were to anticipate their consent, she would be liable to very severe punishment.

A husband has always a right to sell an unfaithful wife for a slave. Women do not inherit property, but it may be left to them by will.

Next to submission, industry is inculcated as the

greatest of female virtues. The following are extracts from a Chinese ballad: "Employment is the guardian of female innocence; do not allow women time to be idle; let them be the first dressed, and the last undressed, all the year round."

"No in-door household work is repugnant to a modest and sensible woman. The shuttle and the needle are only the occupation of her leisure; the neatness of her house is the work of her cares; and it is her glory either to nurse the sick, or prepare a repast."

"The pearls and precious stones, the silk and gold with which a coquette so studiously bedecks herself, are a transparent varnish which makes all her defects the more apparent."

It seems difficult to imagine such a thing as coquetry, where there are no opportunities for display. However, the Chinese must be more stupid than women in general, if they are beautiful and cannot contrive some means to let the world know it. Travelers say they have sometimes seen pretty Chinese girls sitting smoking pipes at the doors, but that they always ran away at their approach. Perhaps when they see a young man of their own nation and rank, they take time to knock the ashes from their pipes before they run.

Most of the houses in cities have terrace roofs, on which flowers and shrubs are planted; and these form a favorite promenade for the ladies. The Chinese being a sedentary people, their florists, fruit-dealers, &c. are obliged to walk about the streets

crying their goods ; mantuamakers, carrying a basket with the implements of their trade, march round in search of customers, which are not very numerous in a land where the fashions never change ; fortune-tellers, mountebanks, and jugglers, squeaking on a wretched flute, likewise go from house to house, and are beckoned to call where their services are required.

The wealthy make great rejoicings at the birth of a child, particularly if it be a son. They boil great quantities of eggs hard, prepare rice after a peculiar fashion, and send these, with dainties of various kinds, to their relatives and friends. On the third day the child is washed, and new feasts are given. Hundreds of eggs, called *third-day eggs*, are roasted and painted all manner of colors. Relations and friends in their turn present the same kind of eggs, with all sorts of pastry and sweetmeats.

The oldest Chinese writers attribute the first invention of spinning to the wife of their emperor Yao, and the discovery of silk to one of the wives of their emperor Hoang-Ti. From that time, the empresses have been in the habit of breeding, rearing, and feeding silkworms, reeling the cocoons, and working the silk. Until the last dynasty, there was a mulberry grove in the gardens of the palace. Every year, the empress, accompanied by the queens and the other principal ladies of the court, went to this grove with great solemnity and gathered leaves from the branches, which her attendants lowered within her reach. The finest pieces of silk, which were made under her own inspection, and at which she often worked,



were destined for the ceremony of the great sacrifice to Chang-Ti.

In the silk establishments the care of the insects is intrusted to an intelligent woman called *Tsam-Mou*, or *Mother of the Worms*. She is not allowed to perform the duties of her office, unless she has just bathed, and put on perfectly clean clothes. She must not have eaten recently, or touched wild endive, the smell of which is considered injurious to the young worms. She wears thin light robes, that she may be able to judge of the heat of the room; for the Chinese do not use thermometers in these establishments. The indifference with which the silk reelers plunge their hands into boiling water, in order to recover the cocoon when the thread breaks, is truly astonishing. Bowls of cold water are kept near, to soothe the pain. The skin on the hands of these women becomes very thick and tough.

When the Chinese women are engaged in embroidery, or any other sedentary employment, they are usually seated on large china jars instead of chairs. Their mirrors are of highly polished copper, which they prefer to glass.

It is said that the leaves of the best kind of tea are rolled separately by the fingers of a woman appointed to the business. Females of the lower classes endure as much labor and fatigue as the men. A wife sometimes drags the plough in rice fields with an infant tied upon her back, while her husband performs the less arduous task of holding the plough.

No Chinese female is allowed to leave the celestial

empire, nor is any foreign woman permitted to pass the frontiers. A European woman, who once endeavored to enter Peking in disguise, was discovered, and came very near losing her life. In two or three instances Chinese women have escaped secretly, and been exhibited as great curiosities in Europe and America; but their punishment would be very severe, should they again come under the laws of China. These strict regulations are doubtless made to prevent the introduction of new fashions, and democratic ideas, to disturb the dead calm that prevails in a country where the individuals of each class are entirely subservient to the one above it, and where women of all classes are allowed a very small share of personal freedom.

The custom of exposing infants, principally daughters, prevails in China, as well as in some parts of Hindostan. Every morning five carts drawn by buffaloes traverse the streets of Peking to pick up babes, whom parents are either unable or unwilling to support, as well as those whose lifeless bodies are thus exposed to avoid the great expenses attending burial. The dead infants are conveyed to a public cemetery, and the living are placed in a charitable asylum. As the streets of Chinese cities swarm with hungry dogs and swine, the fate of these poor innocents is sometimes horrible. Catholic and Mohammedan missionaries station themselves at the gate of the cemetery, to save such as appear to have any remains of life. Sailors and fishermen often put their new-born infants into gourds and toss them into the

water, where they perish, unless some kind hand is stretched forth to save them. The children thus cruelly exposed are usually girls, because they are less likely to be profitable to poor parents than boys, and it is more difficult to bring them up.

It is supposed that as many as twenty or thirty thousand infants are annually exposed in the Chinese empire. These scenes principally occur in cities, and are more frequent in seasons of scarcity.

The Chinese celebrate the commencement of the year with great festivities. The tribunals and shops are closed, the posts stopped, and all business, public and private, suspended; presents are given, children formally pay respects to their parents; mandarins do the same to their superior officers, and servants to their masters. This is called "taking leave of the old year." In the evening, all the family partake of a great feast, to which no stranger is admitted; but the next day they are more social, and spend the whole time in feasting and amusements. The celebration is concluded by brilliant illuminations in the evening.

Chinese children are not allowed to make the remotest allusion to the infirmities of old age, in the presence of their father or mother. If their father be in mourning for any relative, they must abstain from playing on instruments; and they must give up music, all kinds of entertainments, and even bright-colored dresses, if their father or mother is ill.

White is the mourning color among the Chinese. A son cannot wear it while his parents are alive, but

he can wear no other for three years after their death ; and even after this period of mourning is ended, his garments must ever be of one color.

The emperor Kien-Long having fallen in love with a beautiful young girl at Sanchou-Fou, his empress hung herself. One of her sons was very much embarrassed to know what course to pursue. To go into mourning might seem like an insult to his father ; and to omit it would be disrespectful to the memory of his mother. By the advice of his tutor, he appeared with a full dress over a suit of mourning. This enraged the emperor so much, that he gave his son a violent kick, which occasioned his death a few days after.

Every morning, at daybreak, a Chinese son is required to present his father and mother with water to wash their hands, and stand ready to perform any trifling services they may require. Filial obedience is carried to such an extreme, that a son is bound to divorce his wife if she be displeasing to his parents. Even the emperor himself is not exonerated from these obligations. When the mother of Kien-Long died, all the mandarins were ordered to go into mourning for seventeen days, and to abstain from all amusements. No person of any rank was allowed to shave for the space of one hundred days, or to partake of any entertainment. For one month, people were not permitted to marry ; and in the most crowded streets all classes refrained from speaking, except in whispers. The will of that princess is a curious document :

“Though unworthy, high Heaven has bestowed upon me its choicest favors. I received from the blessed ancestors of my husband the most valuable of all gifts, when I brought into the world a son destined to succeed him. The emperor, always full of tenderness and respect for his mother, has omitted nothing that lay in his power to render my life happy. He never failed to come every morning and evening either to salute me, or to see me eat. He was constantly contriving means to gratify my heart. He danced in my presence, recited the poems he composed, showed me paintings which no hand but his own had touched, and decorated my apartments with them himself. All these attentions penetrated to the bottom of my soul. I forgot my age, and my old frame was filled with new vigor.”

At the close of the long and magnificent procession which followed this empress to her grave, were pages bearing her mirrors, boxes, jewels, fans, &c. ; and last of all the walking stick on which she had leaned in her old age, was carried along with peculiar veneration.

The Chinese books are full of anecdotes of filial piety. “The mother of Ouang-Ouei-Yuen had ever expressed great apprehensions of thunder, and when she saw it approaching always requested her son not to leave her. After her death, whenever he heard a storm coming on, he hastened to his mother’s grave, and said softly, ‘I am here, mother.’”

Another story is told of a young woman whose mother-in-law, being without teeth, could not take

food without great exertion. Her dutiful step-daughter nursed her several years from her own breast often rising in the night to afford her nourishment.

In the month of April, the Chinese visit the tombs of their parents, however distant, to pluck up the weeds, repeat certain ceremonies, and deposit wine and provisions. When the Tartars invaded China, they availed themselves of the filial piety of the people, and marched against them with their captive mothers ranged in front of the troops. In some cases, where this experiment was tried, the women fell by their own hands, calling out to their sons to revenge the death of those who would not consent to be an obstacle in the way of their courage. At this trying period the Chinese women, disguised as men, labored with the utmost zeal, carrying wood, stones, &c. to rebuild the fortifications.

A widow of any considerable rank seldom marries again. Those of high station esteem it a sacred duty to show this mark of veneration for the memory of a husband, even if they have been but a few days married, or even if the marriage contract had been settled at the time of his death.

The poorer classes of widows are often sold for the benefit of their deceased husband's relations, who are desirous of regaining the money originally paid for them. The arrangement is often made without their knowledge, and in spite of their resistance. As soon as the bargain is concluded; the new proprietor sends a palanquin well guarded, and the widow is locked up in it, and sent to his house. If avaricious rela-

tives force a woman to this step before the customary period of mourning expires, she can obtain redress by application to the mandarins. A widow who is averse to a second marriage, and has no one on whom she can rely to repay the original price, may avoid it by becoming a *bonze* or *nun*. Of these there are two orders in China. One have their heads shaved, and covered with a black cap, wear dark robes, and live together in communities, like convents; the other class dress more elegantly, and are not confined to any particular place of abode. The female bonzes are not as numerous, or so much respected, as formerly. In 1787, one of them, who pretended to perform miracles, and predict future events, gained such unbounded influence over the minds of women of rank and wealth, that her vanity and ostentation became excessive. She received homage on a kind of throne, and ventured to wear the light yellow robes appropriated to the imperial family. Until this period, Chinese women had been allowed to visit temples served by these priestesses; but the enraged emperor, having put the ambitious bonze to death, forthwith issued the following decree: "All persons of the female sex, of whatever quality and condition, are forbidden upon any pretext whatsoever to enter a temple, or to quit their houses except in cases of absolute necessity. Fathers, husbands, brothers, sons, or relatives, are commanded to keep them at home, upon pain of being themselves severely punished. After this prohibition, any woman who shall enter a temple shall be apprehended and

imprisoned, till some one shall appear to claim her, and to undergo the punishment due to his negligence.”

By the despotic laws of China a man not only suffers for his own crimes, but it is often ordained that his wife, all his mistresses, his children, and his near relations, shall be put to death, or sold into slavery. Suicide is said to be more common with both sexes in China, than in any part of the world.

The habits of this singular people are very uncleanly. They seldom wash their garments, and do not, like most Asiatics, bathe frequently. It is said that the bandages round the women's little feet sometimes drop to pieces without ever having been changed.

Great numbers of people live continually in boats on the water. The children are tied to the raft with ropes, so that they can run about; and sometimes their mothers fasten an empty gourd about their necks, to keep them above water, in case they fall overboard. Many persons born in these floating dwellings never quit them till they die.

Some of the Chinese customs are much despised by their Tartar conquerors. The Tartar women, instead of cramping their feet, add to their natural length by shoes with a long curved toe. The Chinese, in derision, call them Tartar junks, from the resemblance they bear to those vessels. These women have a frank confident look, and appear freely in the streets, either walking, riding on horseback after the fashion of men, or carried by two bearers on a little open carriage supported by one wheel.



Like the Chinese women, they cover their faces with paint, but have naturally a more delicate complexion. They are in general well formed. A small waist is regarded by them as a peculiar characteristic of beauty. Their hair is turned up all round, tied on the top of the head, after the Chinese fashion, and almost always adorned with flowers. The constant habit of smoking and chewing betel makes their teeth yellow.

At the new and full moon Tartar women sacrifice to a household god, called the Spirit of the Door. Two lighted tapers are placed on a small altar, and leaves of gold and silver paper are burned in a pan of perfumes. This is done with the idea of warding off certain malignant influences, which might bring disasters on the dwelling.

Many of the conquerors, who did not bring wives with them, married Chinese women, and their descendants are still called Tartars. It is said that when they conquered the province of Nankin, they made prisoners of all the women, whom they did not choose to appropriate to themselves. Old and young were tied up in sacks, and sold at the same price. A Chinese artisan, who had but ten shillings, went to market, with the rest, to try his luck. His money was exactly the price required; so he seized a sack, slung it over his shoulders, and pushed through the crowd to examine his bargain. When he found he had bought an ugly old woman, he was so enraged that he was about to throw the unfortunate creature into the river. But she begged him to spare her

life, assuring him that her sons would amply reward him; and in fact it proved that he had drawn no inconsiderable prize in this odd lottery.

In the mountainous districts of China is a singular tribe called the Miao-Tse. They live together in the utmost harmony, under the government of elders. The men and women dress almost exactly alike. The men wear ear-rings, and the women carry a sword. Both go barefoot, and climb the sharpest rocks with the swiftness of mountain goats. The women roll their hair round a board about a foot long and six inches broad, to which they fasten the hair with bees-wax, so as to form a sort of hat. This is very inconvenient when they wish to lie down. They comb it but three or four times a year, and are obliged to spend hours in melting the wax before the fire. One of these women defended a fort against Chinese troops, for more than two months after every other being but herself was killed. She contrived to fire several muskets in such a manner as to deceive them with regard to the strength of the garrison; and at every moment of leisure she collected heaps of large stones, to hurl down upon them from different places with her foot.

The Coreans, though they in general observe the customs that prevail in the Chinese empire, do not cripple the feet of their women; and young people are allowed to marry according to their own inclinations, after having had free opportunities of becoming acquainted with each other. In this respect, custom imposes so little restraint, that the lady

often resides at the house of her future father-in-law some time before her marriage.

The laws of Corea do not allow a plurality of wives; but sanction as many mistresses as a man can support, provided he keeps them out of the house. The husband can divorce his wife at pleasure, and leave her the charge of maintaining his children. In case of unfaithfulness, he has a right to put her to death. The observance of the marriage vow is enforced by very severe laws, both with regard to the woman and her lover.

The class of abandoned females is said to be very large in Chinese cities.

Yang-Tcheou is famed for the beauty and accomplishments of its women, many of whom are sold at a high price to the principal nobility in various parts of the empire.

At Chinese funerals, as often as relations or friends come to look at the corpse, the women and children set up a dismal cry.

In their pagodas the image of a woman and child, with rays encircling the head, is often worshipped under the name of "the Sacred Mother." It seems difficult to reconcile this circumstance with their early and strong aversion to the Catholic religion.

In some of their temples there is another image of a woman, whose attributes seem to correspond with the Lucina of the ancient Romans.

The women of Chinese Tartary assemble, to the number of ten or fifteen, who annually elect a direct-

ress. An aged bonze or priest presides, and sings anthems in praise of their god Fo. These meetings continue seven days, during which they employ themselves in laying up treasure for the world to come. This consists of small paper houses painted and gilded, filled with minikin boxes, in which are little rolls of paper done over with gold and silver leaf. The houses and their contents are intended to procure a comfortable home, with all its conveniences, in the world to come. These miniature dwellings are locked with paper padlocks and keys; and when a lady dies, the survivors burn the whole with much ceremony, believing that from the ashes will arise to her just the same things, only made of real silver and gold.

The Tartars generally lead a wandering life, with no other wealth than their flocks and herds; though some subsist by fishing, and a few by agriculture. Their dwellings are usually tents made of felt, and their food horse-flesh, mare's milk, and millet. They drink tea, boiled with milk, butter, and salt. Mare's milk is said to be deliciously sweet; but the Tartars will not drink it till it has been fermented in leather bottles, which are never washed. Their habits are filthy, and, in common with the Chinese, they have very little delicacy about their food. Dr. Clarke says he saw a Calmuck girl grinning with delight because she had succeeded in snatching a portion of a decaying horse from thirteen hungry dogs. The Tartar women in general perform a greater share of labor than the men; for it is a pre-

vailing opinion that they were sent into the world for no other purpose but to be useful and convenient slaves to the stronger sex. Besides cooking and other household avocations, they milk the mares, cows, and goats, take care of the cattle, tan leather, and make garments, mattresses, pillows, &c., of skins.

The baron de Tott gives the following account of their method of tailoring: "I approached a group of Tartars assembled round a dead horse, which they had just skinned. A young man about eighteen, without clothing, had the hide of the animal thrown over his shoulders. A woman, who performed the office of tailor with great dexterity, began by cutting the back of this new dress, following with her scissors the round of the neck, the fall of the shoulders, the semicircle which formed the sleeve, and the side of the habit, which was intended to reach below the knee. She proceeded in the same manner with the other parts, till the cutting out was finished. The man, who had served as a mould, then crouched on his hams, while the several pieces were stitched together; so that in less than two hours he had a good bay coat, which only needed to be tanned by continual wearing."

The Mongul race of Tartars are very ugly. Their complexion, which is naturally fair, becomes tawny by exposure. They have high cheek bones, broad flat noses, exceedingly small eyes, widely separated and placed very obliquely, scanty eyebrows, thick lips, and projecting ears. The infants are said to be

so unsightly, that they resemble bear's cubs rather than human beings.

The Tartar men and women dress very nearly alike. Both wear wide trowsers; but the women's robe reaches to the feet, while that of the men does not extend further than the knees. The poorest wear garments made of the skins of animals, with the hair turned inside in winter, and outside in summer. Some wear woollen, others linen; and the khans, or princes, with their families, sometimes wear embroidered silks and brocades, trimmed with rich furs. Tartar women of all classes are very fond of ornaments. Their ear-rings are plain hoops of metal, to which strings of beads, or pieces of mother-of-pearl, are suspended. The neck and bosom is often covered with a net-work of beads, and their caps are frequently embroidered with beads, or covered with coins, laid one over another, like shingles on the roof of a house. The shape of these caps vary with the different tribes; some are conical, some round, and others exactly resemble a bishop's mitre.

Married women may generally be distinguished from unmarried, by the arrangement of the head-dress. Girls braid their hair in a much greater number of tresses than the matrons, and adorn the ends with ribbons or coins. They sometimes interweave a quantity of horse-hair with their own. Children wear no clothing whatever, until they are ten or twelve years old.

These tribes, like most people who have no care

about accumulating wealth, are of an easy, indolent disposition, and spend much of their time in amusement. During the long winter nights, the young people of both sexes enjoy themselves with music and dancing. Their most common instrument is a two-stringed lute. Their dancing consists more in the motions of the hands than the feet.

The Calmucks are not, like some of the Tartar tribes, addicted to drunkenness; but they occasionally have festivals, during which they continue to drink for half a day without interruption. On these occasions the young women place themselves by the men, and sing songs of love, or war, or fabulous adventures.

The necessity of procuring fresh pasturage for their flocks, induces frequent migrations among the Calmucks; and these occasions are celebrated with a good deal of parade and festivity. The khan, whose tents are carried before him, heads the procession, accompanied by the princes on horseback. Women of any distinction have awnings over their saddles, to protect them from the sun and rain.

The doctrines of Lamaism forbid polygamy; therefore the Calmucks, with very few exceptions, have but one wife. The husband may, however, put away his partner, and seek another, whenever it pleases him; and the wife may do the same. Such separations are not uncommon. Princes sometimes marry their half-sisters; but in general the Calmucks do not wed within the fourth or fifth de-

gree of relationship; and they very rarely marry out of their own class.

When a young man has fixed his mind upon a girl, he sends to her relations to make proposals. If these are accepted, the lover gives an entertainment at the house of the bride's parents, where the betrothal is forthwith celebrated. In case of refusal, the young man sometimes seizes the damsel and carries her off full speed. The parents cannot reclaim their daughter, if he succeeds in getting her within his hut, and preventing her escape until the next day; but this compulsory proceeding does not release him from the obligation of paying the accustomed price, in reindeer, camels, horses, or flocks.

When the terms are settled in a more amicable way, a magician is consulted to ascertain what day will be most fortunate for the nuptials; and sometimes the superstitious young couple are required to wait several months. On the appointed day, the bridegroom erects a neat new tent of white felt, very near the bride's parents. Her relations place her on horseback to be conducted to her husband; and custom requires that she should offer some resistance to the proceeding. A priest purifies the hut with incense and prayers, while the young couple go out and squat beside each other on their heels, according to the Tartar fashion. The priest comes forth, sits down cross-legged before them, and repeats the usual prayer.

A dish of minced meat is offered the young couple, of which the man eats three handfuls, but the woman



refuses to partake. The caps of the bridal pair are then thrown into the hut, and an entertainment begins, which lasts till midnight. Before they separate, the married and unmarried females have a contest together for the bride; the former, who always gain the victory, arrange the girl's head-dress after the fashion of matrons.

In a few days, the bridal tent is taken down, and the husband removes to his accustomed dwelling. During the two first years, the wife is not allowed to visit her parents, unless upon some great emergency; and then she must sit down outside of their hut, without presuming to enter it. At the end of that period, she goes to see them, and is loaded with presents.

Among one tribe of the Calmucks, called Soongas, marriages are celebrated on horseback. The bride, mounted on a fleet horse, gallops off at full speed; the lover pursues; and if he overtakes her, she is carried to his hut, and becomes his wife without further ceremony, except an entertainment to friends. If the damsel be disinclined to the match, the lover seldom succeeds in overtaking her before they arrive at the destined goal.

The Calmucks are, almost without exception, remarkably expert riders. Even matrons of eighty years old will gallop twenty miles without stopping, and children pursue the fleet-footed antelopes half a day, upon their unshod horses.

If men think they have sufficient cause for jealousy, they sometimes put their wives to death with

their own hands ; but if a woman should, in a sudden fit of desperation, kill her husband, her nose and ears would be cut off, and she would be sold for a slave. They have very definite laws concerning marriages and marriage portions ; and certain punishments are appointed for those who attempt to break off a match.

The Buraits, on the frontiers of China, live in a manner very similar to the other Tartars. They have in their huts images of wood, felt, or tin, intended to represent good and evil spirits. The women are not permitted to approach these images, or even to pass before them. Polygamy is lawful among this tribe ; and they take from one wife to five, according to their means of support. A girl costs from five head of cattle to one hundred ; and the wealthy sometimes give five hundred. The dowry given with the bride generally amounts to about one-fourth of the price paid for her. A new tent is built for a wedding. Festivities are kept up for five days, with singing, dancing, wrestling, and horse-racing, and each day a horse is killed, to feast relations and friends. Owing to the general contempt in which women are held, boys treat their fathers with much more respect than their mothers. When a woman dies, cooking utensils, a pipe, and a quantity of tobacco are buried with her, for her use in another world, as bows and arrows are always buried with the men.

The inhabitants of western Tartary differ very much in personal appearance from the Mongul race ;

being generally well shaped, with handsome features, and a Turkish cast of countenance. A large proportion of them are Mohammedans. Many of them, having gathered into large cities and villages, and acquired wealth, wear more elegant and tasteful apparel, and are more civilized in their habits, than the tribes previously described. The women are not handsome, but have a fresh, healthy, modest look, which is very pleasing. They are extremely frugal, industrious, and submissive. In some of the larger towns there are schools for girls as well as boys; and though they probably never learn any thing more than reading and writing, these are rare advantages for the women of Asia. Among the Tartars, as among other eastern nations, married women are generally better dressed than girls. All the expense bestowed upon the latter would be a loss to the father when his daughters were sold, exchanged, or bestowed in marriage; but the finery of wives is a perpetual credit to the wealth and generosity of their husbands. Almost all the Tartars are great admirers of scarlet garments, and all share the oriental taste for ornaments. The rich have their foreheads covered with a net-work of pearls, in lieu of which the poor wear glass beads. The married women fasten to the back of their jewelled-covered caps a piece of gay brocaded silk, adorned with pearls or beads, which hangs down nearly to the end of their robes. Some of the tribes stain their nails red, and their eyebrows black. They seldom appear before strangers without a veil. Dr. Clarke's

servant, perceiving that the Tartar women of the Casan always covered their faces, and ran away at his approach, thought it polite to save them the trouble, by putting his hands to his own face, and getting out of their way as quick as possible. This excited female curiosity. The next time they met him, they partially removed their veils; and he, as in duty bound, ran the faster. At last they fairly hunted him in troops, with their veils off, impatient to see the man who thus hid his face at the approach of a woman.

Even the poorest habitations are divided into two parts; and the most intimate friend would give deadly offence, if he were to enter the dwellings appropriated to the female members of the family. Where there are several wives, each one has a separate set of apartments. The houses are generally very clean, being often whitewashed, and the floors well covered with neat mats and carpets. The rich sometimes have handsome Turkish sofas with damask canopies.

Wives are purchased at various sums, from twenty to five hundred rubles, in money or flocks, according to beauty and other advantages. Among some of the pastoral tribes a good healthy girl may be obtained for two or three rubles. Their numbers are regulated by the same laws that prevail in other Mohammedan countries; and, as usual, the poorer classes seldom have more than one wife. But when the first grows old, or ceases to please, they take a second. Merchants who are obliged to travel a

good deal, generally maintain houses at various places, with a wife at each.

The wedding ceremonies bear a general resemblance to those already described. When the stipulated price has been paid, the priest, in the presence of assembled friends, asks the young people if they will wed one another, repeats a prayer, and bestows the nuptial blessing. Among the Tartars of the Casan, all the female friends of the bride meet at her father's house the day previous to the marriage, and deplore with her the approaching change in her condition, while two men sing songs that treat of the happiness of married life.

The Katschinzes, when they wish for a bride, send an agent to the girl's father, to present him with brandy and a pipe of tobacco, and retire instantly without speaking. If, when he returns sometime afterward, the presents remain untouched, it is a refusal; but if one has been drank and the other smoked, it is acceptance. At the end of six months, the lover himself comes to repeat the same ceremony; the price is stipulated, and the wedding appointed. Sometimes several months elapse, before a day deemed sufficiently lucky arrives; but however long the probation may be, the young people must not indulge in any thing like courtship. A girl would be disgraced, if she were to give her intended husband the slightest reason to suppose she preferred him to any other man.

When a young man is too poor to purchase a bride, he often agrees to serve her father four or five

years. If a richer or more fortunate rival present himself before the term of service expires, the first suitor can merely demand wages for his work. If the girl dies in the mean time, the bargain is transferred to her sister; and if she had no sister, the lover loses his labor. If the intended bridegroom should die, his future bride becomes one of his father's wives.

But if none of these misfortunes occur, and the wedding takes place, the bride must never see her father-in-law after the day of the marriage; should she chance to meet him, she must fall on the ground and conceal her face till he has passed. Her other relatives visit her when they please. In case of any dissatisfaction, the husband sends his wife back to her parents, and retains the children as his property.

A Baschkir girl, before marriage, takes formal leave of all the females of the hamlet, and afterward of the milk vessel from which she has been fed since infancy; this memorial of childhood is embraced with many tears. When the priest unites the young couple, he gives the husband an arrow, saying: "Be bold; support and protect thy wife." The bridegroom conducts her to his hut, and a woman goes before them proclaiming aloud the portion of the bride. When the bride enters her husband's dwelling, she kneels down before his nearest relations. The festivities continue three days.

Among the Yakutes, it is customary for the bridegroom to remain with his father-in-law several days

after the wedding, and entertain his friends there. When his wife is conducted to her new habitation, she is led by female relatives, her own face being closely covered with ermine. The door is barred by a slender piece of wood, which she pushes against and breaks. When she has entered, seven small sticks with bits of butter are put into her hands, and she throws them in the fire, while the priest pronounces a blessing. On this occasion, feasts are again given for two days to relations and friends.

Married women of this tribe wear an odd kind of cap, made of the skin of some animal, in such a manner that the ears stand upright and resemble horns.

The Yakutes and Baschkirs, unlike most of the neighboring nations and tribes, always consult the inclinations of their daughters, before they agree to a marriage contract. Where there is more than one wife, the first, provided she has borne children, always retains a certain degree of pre-eminence over the others. When a husband dies, such of his wives as have had no children return to their parents, with the clothes and presents they have received; if they have no paternal home, they can remain subordinate to the oldest wife, and are entitled to a tenth part of the cattle.

The occupations of the wealthy classes are similar to those of other Asiatic women of rank. The love of smoking is universal. Tartar women, besides cooking, tending their children, making garments, and milking the flocks, tan the skins of water-fowl,

with the feathers on, for caps and other articles; weave cloth from common nettles; spin cotton of extraordinary fineness; make felt coverings for the tents; dye cloth; tan leather by means of sour milk and chalk; and manufacture water-bottles, as transparent as horn, from the hides of horses and camels. While they are busy at these various avocations, the men take care of the flocks, hunt, fish, or lie stretched at their ease beside the kumiss bottle.

Few Tartars marry more than one wife. They seldom take a second while they live in peace with the first. They expend a great deal in wedding entertainments; even the peasantry sometimes lavish a thousand roubles on such occasions. The higher classes will never bestow a younger daughter in marriage before the elder is disposed of, though a much higher price should be offered for the junior sister. When a murza, or Tartar noble, enters the apartments of his women, they all rise up respectfully, and repeat the same ceremony when he leaves the room, though he may come and go very frequently. Very aged women are, by permission, excused from this inconvenient homage, on account of their infirmities.

But though the women are kept in a state of such complete subjection, personal abuse is considered very dishonorable, and the Tartars are seldom guilty of it. In case of ill usage, a wife may complain to magistrates, who, attended by some of the principal people of the village, go to the house, pronounce a



formal divorce, and give the woman permission to return to her own relations.

Tartar mothers nurse their infants till they are two or three years old, and think Christian women very cruel to wean them so early.

There is little variety in amusements. The men and women generally have separate dances. Those of the men are lively and martial; but the female dances consist principally in slow motions and changing attitudes, while the face is covered by the hands. The women in general have no share in the amusements of men; because this could not be without violating Mohammedan ideas of decorum. The day when any tribe removes to fresh pastures is always a day of festivity. The women, sure of being seen by all the men, decorate themselves in their best style, and put on all their store of ornaments.

The Mohammedan Tartars often make war on their neighbors, for the purpose of obtaining slaves to sell. They frequently steal children for this purpose; and if their own daughters are beautiful, or their wives give them the least offence, they do not hesitate to sell them to the Jewish slave merchants, who are always traversing the country.

In former times nearly the whole of Asia was tributary to the powerful Mogul empire. Traces of ancient wealth and refinement are occasionally dug up from the ruins of edifices built by Zinghis Khan and Tamerlane. In 1720, there were found, in Calmuck Tartary, urns, lamps, ear-rings, an equestrian statue, the image of a prince wearing a diadem, and

two women seated on thrones. It is said the Mogul women sometimes inherited the crown, but always issued their decrees from behind a screen. They were sometimes admitted to the apartments of men after supper, where they conversed and partook of the refreshments offered them. On such occasions they always remained veiled, and the slightest rudeness toward them would have been revenged even unto death. When present at any public entertainments, the Mogul women were screened from observation by galleries of close lattice-work.

The Amazons, so famed in history, are supposed to have lived on the borders of the Black sea. They are said to have formed a state from which men were entirely excluded, to have founded cities, and conquered nations. They are represented armed with bows, arrows, javelins, and a peculiar kind of axe, called "the axe of the Amazons." Some ancient writers dispute the existence of this female empire; but the monuments and coins on which Amazons are represented are too numerous to admit a doubt that there was some foundation for the story. That it was a nation without men is highly improbable. The women were probably warlike, and perhaps fought battles in squadrons, separate from their husbands and brothers. Among some of the Tartar tribes of the present day, females manage a horse, hurl a javelin, hunt wild animals, and fight an enemy, as well as the men.

The women of Siberia are in a state of the most abject slavery. Brides are bought with money, cattle, or clothing, and their numbers depend on the wealth of the purchaser. The tribe called Tchuwasches offer honey and bread to the sun, and to other deities, at the time the marriage contract is settled. On the wedding day, the bride hides herself behind a screen until the guests are assembled; she then walks slowly three times round the room, preceded by young girls who carry beer, honey, and bread. The bridegroom enters, snatches off her veil, kisses her, and exchanges rings with her. She then hands refreshments to the assembled guests, who hail her as *the betrothed girl*. After this, she again retires behind the screen, where the married women assist her in putting on the matron's cap, which is much more ornamented than the head-dress worn by maidens. After all have partaken of a feast, the new wife pulls off her husband's boots, in token of subservience to him. The festivities continue for two days; and at parting the guests generally deposit some coin in a loaf of bread, hollowed out for the purpose.

It is considered a wife's duty to obey the most capricious and unreasonable commands of her husband, without one word of expostulation or inquiry. If her master be dissatisfied with the most trifling particular in her conduct, he tears the cap or veil from her head, and this constitutes a divorce. The complexion of these people is generally extremely pale, owing probably to their wretched fare.

The marriage ceremonies of the Tcheremisses are

almost precisely similar to those just described. The morning after a wedding, a man, who represents the father of the bride, delivers the husband a whip, which is very freely used whenever his wife offends him. They have sacred groves, where the ceremonies of pagan worship are performed. Women are not allowed to approach these places, and men must bathe before they enter. The mead, cakes, and beer, offered to their gods must be prepared by virgins. At the return of vegetation in the spring, a great sacrifice is offered to their deities, accompanied by a feast; this is the only occasion, on which the women and children are allowed to eat with their husbands and fathers.

Among the Morduans, when the stipulated price has been paid, the father of the bridegroom leads away the bride, who, closely veiled, departs from the parental roof with many tears. On reaching the bridegroom's dwelling, her future spouse, pulling his cap over his eyes, sits down with her to table. His father takes a cake three feet long, prepared for the occasion, and putting one end of it under the bride's veil, says, "Behold the light. Mayst thou be happy in bread and children!" After this ceremony, the young man is, for the first time, permitted to see the woman whom his father has chosen for him. The day is spent in dancing, singing, feasting, and drinking; at the close of which the bride is placed on a mat and carried to the bridegroom, to whom she is consigned with these words: "There, wolf, take thy lamb."

The Wotyake fathers go to the house of their sons-in-law, soon after the wedding, with a portion of the dowry they had promised; they take the bride back to the parental home, where she remains for a few months, sometimes a year. During this time, she lays aside the matron dress she had assumed, and works partly for her parents, partly for herself. When her husband comes to claim her again, she shows the same reluctance to accompany him, that she did at first. These women are very modest, virtuous, and industrious.

The Ostiaks generally make a great many visits to a girl's father, before her price is settled; and each time a strong effort is made to abate the sum, so as to get as cheap a bargain as possible. The price varies from ten to one hundred reindeer; but the bride usually brings some dowry to her husband. As soon as the young man has paid half the price they have agreed upon, he comes to the hut and takes up his abode there. If he likes the girl, who without further ceremony is considered his wife, he is bound to give her mother a reindeer; but if he has cause for dissatisfaction, she is obliged to give him one. The husband cannot take his wife to his own hut, or beat her without her father's permission, until the whole of her price is paid. On payment of the second installment, a wedding feast is given, and the company divert themselves with singing, dancing, and stories of love or war. The men and women dance together, in couples, with a variety of amorous gestures.

The Tungusians are the prettiest women in Siberia, and the men are the best archers. Some of them tattoo lines, curves, and figures on various parts of the face. It is done by drawing threads, blackened with soot, under the skin. The threads are soon withdrawn, but when the violent inflammation subsides, dark blue marks appear, which are never afterward erased. This painful operation is performed on children from six to ten years old. A wife is bought for a few reindeer, but not even the simple and universal ceremony of a feast takes place in commemoration of the event.

The Samoyedes have such squat figures, large heads, small eyes, flat noses, and wide mouths, that some old travellers described them as human beings with dogs' heads. The women are said to be somewhat less ugly than the men. A Samoyede has as many wives as he can furnish reindeer to pay for; but no ceremonies of any kind consecrate their marriages.

The Tchuktchi are among the wildest of the Siberians. They consider it wrong and disgraceful to rob or murder one of their own tribe; but such actions are regarded as honorable, and even glorious, when committed upon the members of any other tribe. This is a good commentary on Christian and enlightened nations, who consider it a great sin to make slaves of their own people, but regard the self-same action as perfectly justifiable toward persons of different complexion. If savage nations could write *our* history, how ridiculous they might make us appear by

stating simple facts, without the varnish of sophistry with which we are accustomed to conceal them !

But to return to the Tchuktchi ; expertness in theft is considered so honorable, that a girl who has not given some such proofs of her abilities, stands a poor chance for a husband. These people, as well as the Koraiks, have as many wives as they can buy. Those who are rich in flocks often have one to tend each of their numerous herds. The poor serve their intended father-in-law for a stipulated time, or carry off some girl by force.

The men of Kamtschatka are an uncouth looking race ; but when the women are clean, they are said not to be altogether disagreeable. They have black hair and eyes, a ruddy complexion, and small hands and feet. The Kamtschadales take as many wives as they can, and abandon them whenever they think proper.

The Siberians spend their time in hunting, fishing, smoking, drinking, and bartering away their furs to Russian traders, by the light of a brand, in a country covered with eternal snows. All the numerous and toilsome domestic occupations fall upon the women. They build the huts, tend the cattle, pack the sledges, harness the reindeer, weave mats, baskets, and cloth, dye worsted for embroidery, tan hides, make garments, cook the food, tend the children, and in some tribes catch all the fish. Their husbands are savagely jealous ; yet they would consider it beneath their masculine dignity to reward the most virtuous and industrious wife with a kind word,

or even a kind look. Women are not allowed to eat with men; and particular dainties, such as reindeer's head, they are never suffered to taste. Among many tribes they seem to be regarded as impure, unholy beings. They must not approach that portion of the hut which contains any sacred object; in loading or unloading the sledges, they are not suffered to step across the foot-marks of men or reindeer, but must go round the sledge; and it is deemed necessary to purify by fumigation the places where they have sat. When likely to become mothers their situation is peculiarly deplorable; for they are then obliged to live on stale, half putrid provisions, not being allowed to touch fresh food.

When boys commit any fault, mothers are often beaten for it in their stead. Under these cruel circumstances, the love of offspring, naturally so strong in the female heart, is entirely destroyed. Wives deprecate becoming mothers, and use all the means within their knowledge to destroy innocent beings, who, if they drew the breath of existence, would only add to their cares and sufferings. They nurse their infants for a very long time. When busy, they hang them up in a sort of basket, while the older children tumble about on hay spread on the ground. Their cabins are parted into small divisions not unlike cow stalls, and each mother has her separate establishment. It is not unusual to see Samoyede women mothers at eleven years old, although they inhabit an intensely cold climate, on the very borders of the Frozen ocean.

Throughout Siberia it is a common thing for a



man who is too poor to buy a wife, and too lazy to work for one, to seize and carry off by main force the first woman he meets; indeed this is not a rare occurrence among any tribes where wives are purchased. If the depredator be overtaken, he is likely to receive a sound drubbing; but if he secures the prize within his hut, he can make much cheaper arrangements with the parents, than he could under other circumstances.

The Siberian women are remarkably stupid and listless. In general they seem to be alive to no other emotion than fear of the cudgel. Yet, even in the rudest tribes, there are individuals who care enough about personal attractions to paint their faces red and white, or tattoo the face, neck, and arms in whimsical patterns. The Tchuktchi women, who wear merely trowsers and robes of dog-skin, or reindeer's skin, with the hair outside, leave one half of the breast uncovered, tattoo the arms, and almost always contrive to have some kind of ear-rings and necklaces.

The Kamtschadale women used to wear feather caps in winter, and wooden hats in summer; but Russian caps are now in general use; and commerce has made them so luxurious that a few of the rich paint their faces, wear garments of costly fur, with silk stockings and morocco shoes.

Most of the Siberian women wear bark shoes, and wrap up their ankles in rags, until they resemble stumps. Tribes in the vicinity of trading stations are comparatively well supplied with the neces-

saries and conveniences of life, and the women are less stupid and indifferent. Their dress is sometimes not altogether devoid of taste, and even elegance. Their garments are neatly made, all the borders and seams being embroidered with colored worsted. Their birch bark caps are adorned with coral, beads, shells, coins, or small plates of metal. Suspended behind these gay head-dresses are loose floating bands, or festoons of beads; and sometimes from each shoulder hangs a long strip of yellow leather or cloth, adorned with little brass images of horses, reindeer, and fish. Some hang from their girdles a collection of tassels, thimbles, buttons, and other trinkets, which make an incessant jingling when they walk. Indeed one of the smarter sort of Siberian women, in what she considers full dress, carries decorations that would be quite too heavy to caparison a horse.

The Siberians have various uncouth pantomimic dances. Those in which the women are allowed to join, are generally of an amorous character, and not remarkably decorous. Cleanliness either in their persons, food, or garments, is a rare virtue among these tribes; some are filthy beyond description.

The shamans of Siberia are priests, physicians, and sorcerers. Children of extremely irritable nerves are usually chosen for this profession, the duties of which are fatiguing and often frightful. The poor creatures are made to drink intoxicating liquors, and early have their imaginations filled with an idea of the awful supernatural power they are destined to receive from evil spirits. These preparations induce paroxysms of frenzy, during which their words and

actions are supposed to be inspired. Women, from their liability to nervous disorders, are often chosen for this purpose. The parents of such debilitated girls make money by the superstitions of people who come to consult them, and to purchase little images as a protection against malignant spirits. These unfortunate beings often lead an existence full of terror, laboring under great bodily weakness, and fully believing themselves under the influence of the evil one; some of them, however, are artful, and enjoy the power which they know to be a mere mockery. They wear the horns of animals, stuffed serpents, eagles' claws, and all manner of fantastic things, to give them an awful appearance.

When the Siberians remove to a new place of residence, the women sometimes walk on snow-shoes, and sometimes ride the reindeer. The Kamtschadale women travel in sledges, but are obliged to have some man with them, to guide the unruly dogs.



A Mohammedan woman riding.



Girl of Timor.

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## ASIATIC ISLANDS.

THE prevailing customs in Ceylon are similar to those of India. They are divided into distinct castes, from the nobleman to the weaver of mats; the children follow the same business as their fathers; and it is not allowable for one tribe to marry into another. The people in general labor hard, and subsist on a little rice and salt. One of their principal ceremonies of marriage, consists in tying the garments of the bride and bridegroom together, in token that they are bound together for life. This is solemnized in the presence of friends and relations, with such festivities as the wealth of the parties admit.

In many of the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, the condition of women is far better than it is on the continent of Asia. They are not shut up within the walls of a harem, but are allowed to eat with the men, and associate with them on terms of equality. Foreigners are freely introduced to them, and they sometimes attend the parties given by English and Dutch residents, where they uniformly behave with modesty and propriety.

Before the introduction of Mohammedanism into Java, women often held the highest offices of government; and when the chief of a district dies, it is even now not uncommon for the widow to retain the authority that belonged to her deceased husband. Polygamy is permitted by religion and law, but the common people seldom have more than one wife. The sovereign of Java does not by custom have more than four, nor the chiefs more than two; but they generally have a greater or less number of mistresses. It is extremely easy to obtain divorces and form new connections; but during the continuance of the relation, the matrimonial vow is said in general to be faithfully observed. If a woman is dissatisfied with her husband, she can obtain divorce by paying a certain sum of money established by custom. The lower class pay about twenty dollars, and the higher pay fifty. The husband can refuse to consent, but he seldom does so, because it is considered dishonorable to live with a reluctant companion. It is not uncommon to see a woman who has divorced three or four husbands before she is

thirty years old. Some individuals change their mates ten or twelve times. A man may at any time obtain separation by making suitable provision for his wife's support; and this is no difficult matter in a country where food is very abundant, and shelter almost unnecessary.

The Javanese have very little of the Asiatic jealousy of women; but when they believe themselves wronged, they pursue the offender with the most implacable revenge. The prince of Madura, during times of political commotion, sought refuge with his family on board a Dutch ship. The captain, according to the custom of his country, greeted the princess with a kiss. She screamed, and her husband immediately stabbed him to the heart.

There are three kinds of marriages in Java. The first, which is most common, is where the rank of the parties is equal, or the bridegroom superior to the bride; the second is where the wife's station is much above that of the husband; and the third is a sort of half-marriage, the offspring of which are not allowed to be upon an entire equality with the other children. In the two first kinds of marriage, the ceremonies are alike; but in the last there is no ceremony at all. The first wife is always at the head of the family; on this account, no father is willing to bestow his daughter upon a man of his own rank for a second or third wife.

Girls are generally disposed of in marriage at a very early age. An unmarried woman of twenty-two years old is almost unheard of in Java.

The wedding ceremonies are similar to those in neighboring countries. The betrothment is arranged by relatives, and consists in the offering and accepting of gifts.

A price is always paid by the bridegroom, in money, jewels, clothes, buffaloes, or rice, according to his wealth. This is generally regarded as a provision for the wife; but among some tribes, the money or goods is given outright to the girl's parents. On the wedding day, the bridegroom, dressed in his richest attire, and mounted on his best steed, proceeds to the bride's dwelling, accompanied by his friends with music. When they approach, she comes out to meet them, and receives them with a low obeisance. In some districts they have a frolicsome custom of throwing bundles of betel leaves at each other, as soon as the bride appears at the door. If she receives a blow on the forehead it is considered as a sign that she will have to obey her husband; but if the reverse happens, it is supposed that she will govern him. The bridegroom conducts his bride to a seat elevated above the rest of the company, and in token of their intention to live together, they eat siri (or betel leaves) from the same siri-box. In some places they eat rice from the same vessel. The nuptials are celebrated at the mosque, according to the Mohammedan ritual, and the young couple move through the village in gay procession; the bride in an open litter, decked with all the jewels she could buy or borrow, and the bridegroom and his friends on horseback, with as much splendor of ap-

pearance as their means will allow. They are always accompanied by music, and sometimes a buffalo goes before them making ludicrous gestures. They return to a feast at the bride's parents'; and on the fifth day after the marriage, a new procession is formed to escort them to the house of the bridegroom's father, where an entertainment is prepared, and where they again eat siri from the same siri-box.

In some districts, the spinning wheel, loom, and various cooking utensils, are carried in the bridal procession. Among some tribes in the interior, it is customary for the bride to wash the bridegroom's feet, in token of subjection; in other places, he treads upon a raw egg, which she wipes from his foot. In some parts of the island, when a man marries a second or third wife, he approaches the bride with a burning brand, on which she pours water from a vase. An English traveller speaks of a widow, who, growing weary of this ceremony before the brand was extinguished, threw the remainder of the water full in her lover's face. As first marriages are generally arranged by parents, the second wife is more apt to be the object of real affection.

In Java the labor of women is estimated about as high as that of men; and as they are generally industrious and frugal, they are quite independent of the other sex. Children are not deserted or neglected, as they are in many parts of Asia, because in Java it is very easy to support them, and to employ them profitably. Among the poor, it is common for the parents to drop their proper names on the birth of



their first child, especially if it be a son: if the babe, as often happens, is called by such a name as The Handsome One, they are called the Father and Mother of The Handsome One.

The birth of a child is celebrated by a feast of yellow rice, to which the relations are invited; but the name is not conferred with any religious ceremonies. A yearly festival is held in Java in honor of the dead. On these occasions, men, women, and children, dressed in their best clothing, repair to the burial-places and strew the tombs of their parents with flowers consecrated to that purpose.

All the women in Java, from the princess to the peasant, weave and make the garments worn by their families. Men are accustomed to pride themselves on the beauty of the cloth woven by their wives and daughters. In every part of the island women may be seen spinning and weaving, on an elevated veranda in front of their bamboo cottages, protected from the sun by a projection of the roof.

The Javanese are generally mild, respectful, and timid. They are said to have a pensive look, and their demeanor is somewhat elegant and insinuating. Women of the lower classes, being very much exposed to the influence of an intensely hot climate, become extremely ugly in their old age.

With regard to complexion, they consider a golden yellow as the standard of perfection. One of their popular poets, describing a graceful woman, says, "Her neck was yellow as gold, her gait was gentle and majestic, like that of an elephant." The Java-

nese have naturally very fine teeth, but they used to consider it a disgrace to let them remain "white, like a dog's;" and at eight or nine years old, they were filed and died indelibly black, with a preparation made of burnt cocoa-nut. This is a painful operation, but was formerly considered so necessary, that when they wished to say a girl was past her childhood, they expressed it by saying, "She has had her teeth filed." Some people of fantastic taste had them filed so as to resemble a saw. But Sir Stamford Raffles says the custom of filing the teeth in any way is now nearly out of fashion in Java.

They spoil their mouths, which are usually handsome, by the use of betel and tobacco. Both men and women take pride in a beautiful head of hair, which they perfume with fragrant oils. The women fasten it in a knot at the back of the head, and when in full dress they interweave it with an enormous mass of flowers, and wear wreaths suspended from the ears. The Indian islanders are extremely fond of flowers; it is an epithet they always apply to express beautiful things.

When the Javanese wish to appear particularly fascinating, they stain the face, neck, and arms with a yellow cosmetic obtained from perfumed flowers.

The sovereign keeps a select band of beautiful dancers for the amusement of the royal household. These females are the only persons that are allowed to perform the *s'rimpi*,—a slow, modest, and exceedingly graceful dance, resembling a minuet by four persons. At the beginning and end of the dance,

the performers raise their clasped hands to their foreheads, and bend reverentially toward the prince. None but very young girls belong to this band, and they leave it as soon as they become mothers.

Javanese women of high rank dress in a manner exceedingly tasteful and magnificent. They wear full flowing robes of delicate silk, of green or other colors, stamped with golden flowers; their girdles are composed of plates of gold, clasped with diamonds; while armlets, bracelets, and tiaras are richly chased and studded with gems.

The public class of dancers, called *rong-gengs*, are similar to their frail sisters of Hindostan in dress and deportment. But notwithstanding their profligacy, those who acquire considerable fortune frequently marry men much superior to themselves in rank. Their songs are very comic, and they are sometimes accompanied by a buffoon, who excites laughter by a ludicrous imitation of all their movements. The Javanese dances have the same characteristics, which distinguish that amusement in various parts of Asia. They consist principally in graceful attitudes, and slow movements of the limbs, even to distinct motions of the hands and fingers. Men often join in these dances, but no females, except professional dancers, ever perform before strangers.

The women of Java are very fond of a peculiar kind of amusement called *sintren*. A little boy or girl, richly dressed, is put under a basket, and music and song burst forth, while all the spectators clap their hands to keep time. The basket soon begins

to move; in a short time the child rises—dances in a wild but graceful manner—seems to sink exhausted into slumber—and awakes apparently unconscious of all that has happened. The charm consists in the idea that the whole soul is fascinated, and led unawares by the power of music.

The women of this island do not go with the upper part of the person uncovered, as they do in the southern parts of the peninsula.

The Javanese are exceedingly superstitious. Their fears are easily excited by dreams and bad omens, and they are great believers in old women endowed with supernatural powers.

Sumatra is less advanced in civilization than Java, and is inhabited by various tribes of different origin. The Battas are an irritable and warlike tribe. They take as many wives as they please, and seldom have less than five or six. The women live in the same apartment with their husband; the room has no partitions, but each wife has a separate fireplace. As the bridegroom always makes a present of buffaloes, or horses, to the parents of the bride, daughters are considered a source of wealth. The women do all the work, while their husbands lounge in idleness, playing on the flute, with wreaths of globe-amaranth around their heads; or racing with each other, without saddle or stirrups, or hunting deer, or gambling away their wives, their children, and themselves. The Battas consider their wives and children as slaves, and sell them whenever they choose. An

unfaithful wife has her hair cut off, and is sold for a slave ; the paramour is killed and eaten by her husband's tribe.

On festival occasions, the girls wear gold pendants in their ears, and fasten their hair with golden pins, having heads in the shape of birds or dragons. They likewise give a beautiful polish to large shells, of which they make bracelets. Their dress covers the person modestly.

More is known of the Redjangs than of any other tribe in Sumatra. They are a small, well-formed race, with deep olive complexion, and hair of shining blackness, owing partly to the cocoa-nut oil with which they constantly anoint it. The women are very proud of long hair, which they roll up tastefully on the crown of the head. They are fond of wearing garlands, which are generally composed of white, or light yellow, flowers. In some districts the girls wear fillets half an inch broad around their foreheads ; the poor have them made of the leaves of the *nipah*-palm, but the rich wear silver and gold.

The Redjangs have the absurd custom of stretching the ears, flattening the noses, and compressing the heads of new-born infants. They let the nails of the middle and little finger grow to an extraordinary length. The tips of the fingers are stained with the red juice of henna ; and it is singular that their hands are always cold to the touch.

Their common garments are generally made of the bark of the paper-mulberry tree, prepared in a manner similar to Otaheite cloth.

The women in general are very ugly, but some of them are remarkably handsome; especially among the higher classes, who are not necessarily exposed to the influence of the sun. A Sumatran woman is considered old at thirty, and decrepit at forty. The same custom with regard to names prevails here as in Java. If a child is named Ladin, the parents are called the Father and Mother of Ladin. It is a custom with them never to speak their own name; if a stranger inquires what it is, they ask another person to tell it.

The Redjangs manifest a degree of delicacy toward women, which one would not expect from a people half civilized. Virtue and modesty are held in high estimation, and as a natural consequence the opposite vices are rare. If an unmarried woman disgraces herself, her father and lover are both fined; if unable to pay, she is sold for a slave. A dishonored husband seldom seeks redress by a legal process; he is either silent, or revenges his own wrongs. Girls are seldom trusted from the presence of their mothers; but at public festivals, in the town hall, young people meet to dance and sing. If a young man takes a fancy to any of the assembly, he generally sends some elderly woman with presents to the damsel. Her parents then interfere, and if they consider the match a suitable one, the preliminaries are soon settled. There are three different kinds of marriage among the Redjangs. By the first mode, the husband purchases his wife for a given sum, and she becomes his slave, to all intents

and purposes. In this case, a man is allowed to have as many wives as he can buy and maintain. This marriage, which is called marriage by *jourjour*, is in most cases modified by a custom, which enables the parents of the bride to reconcile their avarice with affection. A part of the price of their daughter remains unpaid, and is called *tali koulo*, or the bond of friendship. While this sum, however small, remains due, the woman is not the slave of her husband; he cannot sell her, or abuse her with impunity, and she is at liberty to seek a divorce from him when she pleases. When families are upon good terms, a portion of the *jourjour* often remains unpaid for several generations; and some men are quite rich from the sums due to them for daughters, sisters, aunts, and grand-aunts. These are regarded as debts of honor, and are very seldom lost. Where the whole *jourjour* is paid and received during the lifetime of a woman, she is completely in the power of her husband; her only privilege is, that he is obliged to sell her to her relations, if they offer as high a price as he can obtain elsewhere. But these connections are very rarely formed without the *tali koulo*, or bond of friendship.

The second kind of marriage is called marriage by *ambelanack*. In this case the husband is adopted by the bride's father, remains with him, works under his authority, and both parents and children are considered as the property of the head of the family. A man who is married in this way cannot take another wife, without the consent of his adopted

father ; but if he acquires, either by industry or inheritance, a sum sufficient to pay the expenses attendant upon other forms of marriage, he can at any time secure to himself and wife the privileges belonging to them.

By the third mode, the husband gives and receives a sum of money, and the wife is on a perfect equality with him. This is called marriage by *simando*, and takes place less frequently than the other forms. In this case, a second wife cannot be taken without divorcing the first, and giving her half the fortune ; but if the wife herself seeks the separation, she loses her right to half the property, and can only receive her original dowry.

The various regulations connected with these different forms of marriage, and consecrated by custom only, are carefully observed.

The wedding ceremonies are very simple. The father of one of the parties, or the chief of the village, joins their hands and pronounces them husband and wife. An *iman* performs this office for those who are Mohammedans. A bamboo broken in the presence of the parties and their relations constitutes a divorce.

The Redjangs are gentle, patient, polite, and serious. They bathe frequently, but never wash their garments.

The Lampongs, who reside in the south part of Sumatra, are distinguished by a complexion lighter than the other tribes. In the shape of their faces, and the form of their eyes, they resemble the Chi-



nese. The tallest and handsomest women of the island belong to this tribe. Their manners are much more free than the Redjangs, and they are less scrupulous about the character of their wives and daughters. It is a common thing to see a young girl sitting out of doors, perfuming and arranging her lover's hair, while he lays his head in her lap, and looks up affectionately in her face. They generally marry by *jourjour*, and the bride is always protected by the *tali koulo*, or bond of friendship. Marriages by *simando* are very rare. At festivals, a young man is appointed to select the couples that shall dance together. On these occasions both men and women use perfumed ointments, and paint their faces in fantastic style.

The Sumatrans have naturally very perfect teeth, but they grind them away almost to the gums, or file them to a point, and dye them jet black. The wealthy have the teeth of the lower jaw covered with gold plate, so as to produce a rich contrast with the upper ones. Those who cannot afford this, leave one or two white, by way of contrast. A feast is given by the family whenever a child has its ears pierced and teeth filed. Women do not carry infants in their arms, but sitting astride on the hip, supported by a cloth which is tied on the opposite shoulder. Their cradles are made to swing from the ceiling, like those of the Hindoos.

Very little is known concerning the social condition of Borneo. It contains various tribes, similar

to each other in person and manners. The women of the Biadjos are said to be tall and handsome. Their only clothing is a strip of cloth about the waist, and they are accustomed to paint their bodies blue. They hang weights to their ears, about as large as a crown-piece, which stretches them to an immoderate length. They plate their teeth with gold, and wear necklaces of tigers' teeth.

No man is allowed to solicit a damsel in marriage until he has cut off the head of an enemy. When this condition is fulfilled the lover makes presents to his mistress; if they are accepted, an entertainment is given by her parents, and on the ensuing day by his parents. After the feast, the bridegroom is conducted home to the house of the bride. At the door, a friend sprinkles him with the blood of a cock, and her with the blood of a hen; the parties then give each other their bloody hands, and from that time they live together. If the blood of the fowls spirits too far, it is deemed an unlucky sign. If a man loses his wife, he cannot marry a second, till he cuts off the head of another enemy. If his wife conducts herself improperly, he gives her a sound beating.

On the sea-coast of Borneo fleets of boats may be seen laden with provisions brought to market by the women, who are screened from the sun by huge bamboo hats. These women are small and rather pretty. In complexion they are about as dark as mulattoes. They walk with a firm step, and turn their toes out, which is an unusual thing among the oriental nations. Wives are bought, and marriages

performed with great ceremony ; generally before the bride is eleven years old. Public opinion is by no means rigid concerning the character of unmarried females ; but the subject is viewed differently when they have husbands.

The natives of Celebes are of a light olive complexion, with glossy black hair, that falls in ringlets over the neck and shoulders. Men adorn their hair with jewels ; but women merely wear gold chains about the neck. They color their nails red, and their teeth black, and take great pains to flatten the noses of their infants.

The husband receives no other dowry with his wife than the presents she obtains before the ceremony. As soon as the young couple are married, they are shut up in an apartment by themselves for three days ; a servant brings them necessary food, while their friends are entertained with great merriment by the bride's father. At the end of this time they are liberated, receive congratulations, and are conducted to their future home. The women of Celebes are distinguished for virtue and modesty. They take an active part in business, and are frequently raised to the throne, though the government is elective. At public festivals they appear freely among men, and those in authority discuss affairs of state in their councils. In token of equality, the husband and wife always eat from the same dish ; he from the right side, and she from the left. The wife of the chief of Lipukaski was considered one of

the first politicians in Celebes. One day she rode out among the warriors of her tribe, and upbraiding them with tardiness in giving battle, she demanded a spear, that she might herself give them an example. Stimulated by her reproof, they went forth and gained the victory. This woman was said to have a countenance expressive of great intelligence and firmness. In many parts of the Eastern Archipelago women have been intrusted with sovereign power; and it is singular that this occurs most frequently where the government is most turbulent. The passion for gaming, so common in the other islands, prevails in Celebes. Wives, children, and personal freedom are often staked, and quarrels arise which occasion deadly hostility between families. The fine demanded by law is twenty dollars for the murder of a man, and thirty for a woman. The women of Celebes, and of the other Molucca islands, wear hats of prodigious size, six or seven feet in diameter. Infants are plentifully rubbed with oil, and boys are never nursed longer than a year, from the idea that it would injure their understandings.

In Amboyna, as in almost every part of the East, a man purchases a bride by a certain sum of money given to the parents. They have an unbounded admiration for very young girls, and a great abhorrence of old women. The girls are not often trusted away from their mothers; but courtship is carried on by means of nosegays, or plates of fruit, mutually exchanged, and arranged in such a manner as to signify the various degrees of love or disapprobation.

In some of the neighboring islands, when a young man is too bashful to speak his love, he seizes the first opportunity he can find of sitting near the object of his affection, and tying his garment to hers. If she allows him to finish the knot, and neither cuts nor loosens it, she thereby gives her consent to the marriage. If she merely loosens it, he is at liberty to try his luck again, at a more propitious moment; but if she cuts it, there is an end of hope.

The customs of the island of Bali greatly resemble those of the Hindoos. Widows sacrifice themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands in great numbers. When the king dies, all his wives and mistresses devote themselves to the flames; and when the queen dies, great numbers of her female slaves are stabbed with daggers, and thrown upon the pile. This death is considered so honorable that it is generally eagerly contended for; and if it happen that a request to be sacrificed is for any reason refused, it is mourned over as an irretrievable disgrace. Individuals who have been thus denied, as well as those who, being selected, are reluctant to become victims, are forever after imprisoned. If they find means to escape, the first person that meets them may dispatch them with a dagger, and cast their bodies into the streets. At the funeral of the king's son, one of his wives, who was very young, asked her father whether, as she had been married only three months, it was her duty to sacrifice herself. The parent, steeled by custom, urged the disgrace she would bring on

her family, and the poor girl sprung into the flames, where she was soon consumed. It seldom happens that one of the laboring class devotes herself in this way, and the sacred order never do; but it is almost universal in the mercantile and military classes.

Wives are purchased; and if a young man cannot obtain the requisite sum, he agrees to serve the father or guardian of the damsel, until his labor defrays the debt. When his conduct is very satisfactory, the parents often remit a portion of his services. Divorce is not allowed in Bali. The women of this island disfigure their ears by enormously extended apertures. They are frank and cheerful in their manners, and enjoy a degree of consideration which seems remarkable where polygamy prevails.

The women of Timor have very delicate and graceful forms, dark brown complexions, pleasing features, and black eyes full of vivacity. They consider corpulence a very great defect.

When a new king begins his reign they sacrifice a young female slave, adorned with jewels and flowers, by exposing her on the water's edge until the crocodiles come and devour her. This is done on account of a tradition that the royal family descended from crocodiles.

The natives of this island chew betel and gild their front teeth. In general, both men and women let the hair flow loosely over their shoulders; but sometimes the wealthy fasten it with golden rings, or arrange it in the Grecian style, fastened by gold

pins with diamond heads, or tortoise-shell combs inlaid with gold. They constantly wash their hair with lye, and render it glossy with cocoa-nut oil. The higher classes of females are seldom seen in public. They are distinguished by golden bracelets, expensive coral necklaces, and ornaments of copper-wire around their arms and ankles. They are sometimes tattooed with figures representing flowers, made with an instrument dipped in indigo. They spend their time in frequent bathing, smoking, chewing betel, and sleeping, while slaves fan them to keep away the insects. Sometimes they amuse themselves by making trifling articles of rice straw, or leaves of the pandanus; but all occupation, except light fanciful work, is left to the poorer classes. They pay evening visits, drink tea together, and remain till late at night, entertained with the dancing and singing of slaves, accompanied by the Malay tambourine and the Chinese tamtam.

The ladies of Timor are extravagantly fond of perfumes. Their dress is impregnated with the odor of sandal-wood and gum-benjamin, their beds are strewed with fragrant flowers, and they often chew small Chinese cakes, highly aromatic, which perfume the breath for a long time. They likewise wear garlands about their head, neck, and arms. Their love-letters are composed of flowers, and betel leaves folded in different ways, according to the meaning they are intended to convey. When a girl bestows a wreath taken from her own person, it is an open avowal of affection.

Very little disgrace is attached to any indiscretions committed before marriage. When parents are satisfied with the price offered for a daughter, they cause animals to be killed and the entrails consulted for omens, before the wedding takes place. The people of Timor take as many wives as they can maintain, and sometimes sell their children in order to purchase them. Here, as in Java, girls are considered a source of wealth, because at their marriage parents are sure to receive a sum of gold, or a certain number of cattle. So long as any part of the price remains unpaid, they can take back their daughter without making restitution, or they may claim her children as property.

The inhabitants of New Guinea are frightfully ugly. Their skin is black and rough; they color their hair a fiery red, and dress it like a huge mop. Both men and women pass rings, sticks, and pieces of bone through their noses, which render it difficult for them to breathe. While these savages are lounging about, or chasing wild hogs, their women cut wood, dig vegetables, and make pottery ware. The bachelors live in houses by themselves, built apart from the other cabins.

The natives of New Holland are nearly black, and but little more comely than their neighbors of New Guinea. They go without clothing, and rub themselves with fish oil, as a defence against musquitoes. They daub their hair with yellow gum, in order to



fasten ornaments of feathers, fish-bones, and the tails of dogs. Both sexes have the back and arms deeply scarred by an operation performed with pieces of broken shell. Scarcely any woman has the two lower joints of the little finger; it is not known whether this sacrifice is made in mourning for relatives, or for some other reason. Before a girl is given to her husband, her two front teeth are knocked out. The *lover* then throws a kangaroo skin over her shoulders, spits in her face several times, marks her with painted stripes of different colors, orders her to march to his hut with his provision bag, and if she does not go fast enough to please him, he gives her a few kicks by the way. These savages generally steal wives from some tribe with whom they are at enmity. As soon as they observe a girl without any protector near, they rush upon her, stupefy her with blows of a club, and drag her through the woods with the utmost violence. Her tribe retaliate merely by committing a similar outrage. There are no wedding ceremonies. These wretched women spend much of their time in fishing. They chew muscles and cockles, and drop them in the water for bait. Their lines are made of fibres of bark, and their hooks of mother-of-pearl oyster shells, rubbed on stones till they assume the desired shape. They commonly beguile the time by singing; but they never dance, though the men spend a great deal of their time in that amusement.

A woman will often be out with two or three children, in a miserable boat, on the very edge of a roll-

ing surf, that would frighten even an experienced mariner. If they have an infant, it lies across the mother's lap, without danger of falling; for while employed in fishing, she sits in the bottom of the shallow boat, with her knees up to her neck, and between the knees and the body her babe lies securely.

When the New Hollanders are displeased with their wives, they spear them or knock them in the head. Neither men nor women appeared to have any sense of modesty; but when they found that white people, who visited the island, thought it indecent to go without clothing, the women grew more reserved, and seemed desirous of conforming to their ideas of propriety.

The people of Van Diemen's Land are in a state similar to that of New Holland. They rub their hair with red ochre, and decorate it with fish-bones and teeth. The dull black of their complexions is deepened with powder of charcoal. They likewise tattoo themselves in lines or points, which rise up in tubercles, of the same color as the rest of the skin. The women dive into the sea for shell-fish and lobsters, while their husbands sit by a fire cooking and eating the choicest morsels they procure; they likewise hunt game, and cut all the fuel. The men keep as many wives as they please, but treat them so badly, that they seize every opportunity to run away and place themselves under the protection of the British sailors, who come there to obtain seals.

They are much handsomer, and more cleanly, than the women of New Holland, and are said to be remarkably kind and docile. Toward the sailors, who protect them, they are most faithful and affectionate. If a storm comes on while their mates are out engaged in the seal-fishery, these tender-hearted creatures constantly endeavor to propitiate the Good Spirit with songs, which they accompany with graceful and supplicating gestures. They have such a dread of returning to the power of their brutal husbands, that they are continually afraid the sailors will go away and leave them. If they are so unfortunate as to be seized by their tribe, they are treated most savagely, and their half European children are thrown into the fire. These children are said to be universally and remarkably beautiful. In their wild state these women wear little or no clothing. Infants sit on the shoulders of the mother, entwining their legs about her neck, and holding her fast by the hair of her head. Being accustomed to this position, they take care of themselves with great dexterity. The women may often be seen at the fishing stations, pursuing their occupation with babes in this apparently dangerous situation.

Little is known of the interior of the Philippine islands. Some of the native tribes who live in the mountains, wear only a small apron made of the barks of trees. They are said to be friendly, cheerful, and cleanly, with scrupulous ideas of modesty, both in married and unmarried women. They pur-

chase their wives. The simple bridal ceremony is performed by a priestess, who sacrifices an animal on the occasion. Manilla, the largest town of these islands, is principally occupied by the descendants of Spanish and Chinese settlers. They are extremely indolent; sleeping and smoking the whole day. Little children learn to smoke before they can run alone; and women are so fond of cigars, that they have them a foot long and thick in proportion. When they walk out to take the evening air, whole parties of them may be seen, elegantly dressed, with these great bales of tobacco burning in their mouths. They likewise injure their teeth by chewing betel.

The island of Loo Choo has been seldom visited by Europeans. Captain Hall gives a most delightful picture of the honesty, kindness, simplicity, and politeness of the inhabitants. All his efforts to obtain a sight of the women of this island were fruitless. The natives guarded them at every step, and always sent runners before them, to give indication of their approach. Once, at a sudden turning of the road, the English officers met two women; but they instantly threw the baskets from their heads, and ran into the woods, in the utmost terror. It appears, however, that they are not thus scrupulous about being seen by their own countrymen; for by the help of a telescope, captain Hall saw them coming from the country with baskets on their heads, beating rice in wooden mortars, playing with dogs in the midst

of a crowd of people, and washing clothes in the river, after the East India fashion, by dipping them in the stream, and then beating them on stones. Infants are carried across the hip, as in India. The natives were unwilling to speak of their women, and seemed distressed when questions were asked. One of them said they were regarded as inferior beings, and not allowed the use of fans, which are considered a great luxury in Loo Choo. But their treatment of the English boatswain's wife seemed to contradict this statement; for it was not only kind and indulgent in the extreme, but was tinged with something of respectful gallantry. On one occasion, a Loo Choo lady visited the boatswain's wife, when all the men were out of the way. She wore loose floating robes, with a girdle tied at the side, and had sandals on her feet. She was rather fair, with small dark eyes, and shining black hair, fastened in a knot on one side of the head. She seemed to be exceedingly timid. When captain Hall insisted upon knowing why the natives were afraid to let them walk into the village, one of the chiefs answered, in broken language: "Loo Choo woman see Ingeree man, Loo Choo woman cry!"—meaning, "If a Loo Choo woman should see an Englishman, she would cry."

The manners and customs in Japan, and the occupations of different classes, are similar to those of China. In economy of time and labor they rival even the Chinese; and unlike them they are scrupulously neat in their habits. There is no end to

their rules for the ceremonials of behavior. They have whole volumes written to teach people how to drink a glass of water, how to give or receive a present, how to salute a superior, or an equal, &c. &c. Children, being early accustomed to habits of thoughtful industry and punctilious civility, appear like little old men and women, while they are yet infants. In this respect they resemble their neighbors of China, among whom the boisterous mirth of childhood is a thing almost unknown; perhaps the whole Celestial Empire does not furnish a genuine specimen of a romping girl, or a madcap, roguish boy. Implicit obedience to parents and superiors prevails in Japan, to as great an extent as in China.

The houses in these islands are of simple construction, made of bamboo, with apartments divided by movable partitions. The wealthy have a good deal of painting, gilding, and rich japaning, about their walls and furniture. Their soft floor mats serve both for seats and tables, and chop-sticks of ivory or wood are used instead of knives and forks. They have metal mirrors with handles, to be used at the toilet. The fashion of their dress is the same for both sexes, and for all classes, from the monarch to the poorest subject; and they say it has remained unchanged for two thousand five hundred years. They wear long full robes, like night-gowns, with sleeves so wide that they almost reach the ground. These garments are cut round at the neck, without a collar, leaving the throat and a small portion of the neck uncovered. The women wear these robes so

long that they trail on the ground. The garments are fastened at the waist with a sash, which the married tie in front, and the unmarried behind. Ladies of rank often have them made of variegated silk, interwoven with flowers of silver or gold. They sometimes wear thirty or forty at once; but they are of such delicate texture, that the whole do not weigh more than three or four pounds. Their shoes are made of rice straw. The Japanese complexion is yellow; but women of distinction, being sheltered from the sun, are nearly as white as Europeans. They appear in public when they please, either attended by a servant with an umbrella, or rolled along in a sort of ornamented wheelbarrow, with an awning over it. Whether in doors or out, they always have fans in their hands. They have very black hair, broad snubby noses, and small oblong eyes, which appear to be constantly winking. All ranks and ages are remarkable for industry, and it is said the women are generally characterized by an exemplary observance of the domestic virtues. The emperor has but one wife, who is styled empress, but he has several mistresses, who form a part of the royal household, though subordinate to her in rank.

When a husband accuses his wife of infidelity, and she asserts that she is guiltless, her oath is taken in writing, and laid on water; if it swims she is esteemed innocent. This crime, like most others in Japan, is punished with death.

The men of the Aleutian or Fox islands are glad in times of scarcity to barter away a wife for a fish, or a leather bottle full of train-oil. Sometimes one woman lives with two husbands ; and often leaves a second or third to return to the first with all her children. These islanders frequently exchange wives with each other, and have not the slightest idea of any dishonor connected with the infamy of their women. Under these circumstances, it is not wonderful that the females are destitute of modesty.

The men of the Fox islands wear frocks neatly made of the skins of birds, which look beautifully when the variegated feathers glisten in the sunshine. The women wear the more homely covering of the ice-bear, with the hairy side outward. They decorate these unwieldy robes with strips of leather, covered with beads, shells, or sea-parrots' bills. The wing-bones of the sea-mew furnish them with needles, and seals' nerves are used for thread. Rude as these implements are, their workmanship is exceedingly curious and delicate. The women tattoo themselves in such a manner, that they look as if they had mustaches.

The Ainos, or native inhabitants of the Kurile islands, are modest even to bashfulness. The men are very shy about allowing strangers to hold any communication with their wives and daughters. Their tattooed hands, swarthy faces, jet black hair hanging over their foreheads, and lips stained blue,



are not much calculated to excite the admiration of those accustomed to civilized life. The Ainos, of both sexes, are remarkable for the gentleness and strict honesty of their characters.



Asiatic women baking bread.



Egyptian women bringing water for their conquerors.

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## AFRICA.

It has been said Egypt was the first nation that became civilized, and framed wise laws, by which they agreed to be governed. It had reached the height of its grandeur, and was beginning to decay, while nations which we call ancient were yet in their infancy. Moses, the great lawgiver of the Jews, is said to have been learned in "all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Thebes, with its hundred gates and immense population, was a subject of wonder and praise even in the days of Homer. Solon and Herodotus, Pythagoras and Plato, travelled in Egypt to witness her magnificent works of

art, and gather from the far-famed stores of her intellectual wealth.

Such was Egypt, long before Greece and Rome had existence! This early civilization might be in part owing to the annual overflowing of the Nile, which made it impossible for the inhabitants to subsist by hunting and fishing, and thus compelled them to turn their attention to agriculture. During the inundation of the river, they were obliged to take shelter in houses raised on piles above the reach of the waters. Men and women, being thus placed in each other's society, naturally endeavored to please each other, and female influence produced its usual effect of softening the character, and rendering the manners more polished and agreeable. From this union, music, poetry, and the fine arts would naturally flow, as the stream from its parent fountain.

It is generally supposed that the Egyptians were a colony from Ethiopia, and that their complexion was black. Herodotus, who travelled in Egypt, distinctly states that they had "black skins and curly hair." Speaking of the tradition that two black pigeons had flown from Thebes in Egypt, and established oracles, one at Dodona, and the other in Libya, the same writer says, the story doubtless refers to two priestesses stolen by the Phœnicians, and carried one into Libya and the other into Greece: he adds, "their being *black* explains to us their *Egyptian* origin." Pausanias likewise informs us that the image of the Nile was always black, while the other river gods were uniformly represented as white.

The ancient statues of Memnon and the Sphinx afford no evidence with regard to complexion, because they are usually painted red; that being the color applied to sacred subjects both in Egypt and various parts of India.

The features, with the exception of the lips, do not correspond to the standard of "African features," which we have somewhat arrogantly established. In point of fact, the various tribes of that vast continent differ from each other in appearance as much as the Italians and the Norwegians; and we have taken the worst-looking as our standard of "negro features." Dr. Richardson says: "The Nubians are perfectly black, but without possessing the least of the negro feature; the lips small, the nose aquiline; the expression of the countenance sweet and animated, and bearing a strong resemblance to that which is generally found portrayed in the temples and tombs of the ancient Egyptians."

A recent traveller tells us, "The Ethiopian women brought to Egypt for sale, though black, are extremely beautiful; their features being perfectly regular, and their eyes full of fire. The price offered for them is generally six or ten times higher than could be obtained for Arabian women."

Herodotus says, the Egyptian women left the management of the loom to men, while they themselves were abroad engaged in commerce; and that the laws required daughters, instead of sons, to support indigent parents. Some writers have said that the queens of Egypt were much more honored than the

kings; and that in the marriage contract husbands promised obedience to their wives.

It seems probable that there was something of exaggeration in this. Perhaps the opinion had its origin in some intentional satire, which was supposed to be sober truth. That the Egyptian women enjoyed a degree of freedom and importance very uncommon in that age of the world, is beyond a doubt. That they were not confined to their own apartments is evident from the fact that Pharaoh's daughter went down to the river with her maidens to bathe. They likewise succeeded to the throne, and to the inheritance of their fathers. When Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh, he built her a magnificent palace near his own, and allowed her to worship the gods of her own country. As this was in direct opposition to the customs and opinions of the Israelites, there is reason to suppose these peculiar privileges were stipulated by Egyptians in the marriage contract. Her father gave her the whole city of Gazer for her portion.

It is not probable that women of rank were engaged in laborious occupations, as was common in other countries. When Psammenitus, one of their kings, was taken prisoner, he and the chief of his nobility were placed on an eminence near the city of Memphis, while his own daughter and other captive women were ordered to bear water in pitchers from the river; and the monarch is said to have considered this a greater disgrace than the loss of his kingdom and his liberty.

But notwithstanding the high respect paid to Egyptian women, and the undoubted fact that they were largely engaged in commerce and agriculture, there are many things to prove that they had not such unlimited ascendancy as to reverse the usual order of things, by governing their husbands, and compelling them to do the work within doors.

The honorable office of the priesthood was entirely confined to the men, both in the temples of the goddesses and the gods. The mercantile caravans, going through rude and warlike places, could not have been composed of women. In one of the ancient Egyptian mausoleums have been found paintings in bass-relief, representing men planning furniture, hewing blocks of wood, pressing out skins of wine or oil, ploughing, hoeing, and bringing in asses laden with corn to be stored in the magazines; there is likewise a group of boatmen quarrelling, and a band of musicians playing on the harp, the flute, and a species of clarionet. The only women introduced are a group of dancing women.

Nymphodorus remarks that Sesostris obliged the men to employ themselves in feminine occupations, because his subjects were becoming very numerous, and he wished to weaken their characters, in order to prevent revolt. In opposition to those writers, who attribute such unlimited freedom and influence to the Egyptian women, some have asserted that they were kept constantly shut up, and their feet cramped, according to the present custom of the Chinese.

It is probable that these contradictory accounts refer to different parts of Egypt ; for the various districts differed so much in their customs, that what was worshipped in one was despised and abhorred in another.

The superstitions of the Egyptians formed a singular contrast with their scientific knowledge. They held many animals in religious veneration ; such as the ibis, the crocodile, the cat, and the dog. If a cat happened to die, the whole family shaved their eyebrows in token of sorrow ; and on the death of a dog, they shaved the brows and the head. Maximus Tyrius tells the story of an Egyptian woman, who brought up a young crocodile. "Her countrymen esteemed her particularly fortunate, and considered her the nurse of a deity. The woman had a son about the same age with the crocodile, and they grew up and played together. When the animal became large and strong, it devoured the child. The woman exulted in the death of her son, and considered his fate as blessed in the extreme, in thus becoming the victim of their domestic god."

The ancient Egyptians believed the Nile would not overflow and fertilize their country, unless an annual sacrifice were offered to the deity of the river. For this reason, they every year, on the twelfth of their month Baoni, (corresponding to our June,) threw into the Nile a beautiful maiden, superbly ornamented. When Amru conquered Egypt, he abolished this cruel custom.

The Egyptians were fond of religious festivals,

which they celebrated with music, dancing, feasting, and pompous processions. The women on these occasions were usually decorated with garlands, and carried in their hands symbols of the deity they worshipped. Herodotus, speaking of the famous festival of Isis, at Bubastis, says, "During the passage, the women strike their tabors, accompanied by the men playing on flutes." Yet some writers have affirmed that the Egyptians did not allow women to learn music, lest it should relax the vigor of their minds. This might be true of some districts in Egypt; but it is more probable that public exhibitions of music were considered beneath the dignity of any but hired performers, as public dancing is still considered in many parts of the world.

The Egyptians, in common with other ancient nations, sanctioned great immodesty at their religious festivals; particularly those of Isis and Bacchus. We have no means of ascertaining how far this tended to corrupt the manners of their women. Among people of rank, birthdays were kept with great gayety and splendor.

They were accustomed to seat a veiled skeleton at their tables, decorated with a garland of dark-colored flowers; this was intended to remind the guests that death was with them, even in the midst of feasting and joy.

The common tendency to invest women with supernatural powers seems to have existed in Egypt. We are told that Athyrte, daughter of Sesostris, encouraged her father to undertake the conquest of the



world, in consequence of her divinations, dreams in the temples, and prodigies she had seen in the air. Though women were not admitted to the order of hereditary priesthood, they were from time immemorial selected to perform certain sacred offices in the Egyptian temples. It was the duty of these consecrated maidens to gather flowers for the altars, to feed the sacred birds, and daily to fill the vases with pure fresh water from the Nile. The moon was worshipped in Egypt as a goddess, under the name of Isis; and it is supposed that these maidens performed certain mystic dances in her temple, as the *devdassees* of Hindostan now do in the temples of Brahma. On these solemn occasions, the Egyptian girls wore small metallic mirrors under the left breast. The origin of the custom is unknown; some have supposed it was done that they might at every movement of their companions behold the reflected image of Isis.

Notwithstanding the prevalence of strange superstitions, it is generally supposed that the knowledge of one God, and of the immortality of the soul, were taught by Egyptian priests; and that these truths, carried into Greece, were concealed and preserved in the Eleusinian mysteries. The early Christians were surprised at the frequent appearance of a *cross* among the hieroglyphics of Egypt; some converted priests explained the mystery, by saying it had always been considered a symbol of *life to come*.

The ancient Egyptians were scrupulously neat. They bathed frequently, and washed their garments

often. It was their custom to drink from brazen goblets, which were cleansed every day. In making bread, they kneaded the dough with their feet.

When a person of distinction died, it was customary for the females of the family to disfigure their heads and faces with dirt, and run about with their garments in disorder, beating themselves and making loud lamentations. This custom, so common among ancient nations, still prevails in many parts of the East.

There was a library at Thebes ; and Homer was accused of stealing the Iliad and Odyssey from a similar establishment at Memphis. Though this accusation bears internal evidence of falsehood, it indicates the very ancient date of civilization and literature in Egypt. That this taste continued down to comparatively modern times appears from the celebrated Alexandrian library, established by the Ptolemies. The number of volumes is said to have almost equalled the largest library of recent times, and most of them were written in letters of gold.

Since the ancient Egyptian women were allowed in all other respects such a remarkable degree of equality with the men, it is reasonable to conjecture that they shared with them in literary acquirements.

Modern Egypt presents quite a different picture. The population is a mixture of Egyptians, Persians, Syrians, Greeks, Arabs, and Turks. The men are ignorant, and the women servile. "Each family," says Savary, "forms a small state, of which the father is

king; the members of it, attached to him by the ties of blood, acknowledge and submit to his power. When the master of the family dines, the women stand, and frequently hold the basin for him to wash, serve him at table, and on all occasions behave to him with the extremest humility and reverence. The women of the wealthier classes spend their time principally among their slaves, in works of embroidery."

When a rich man intends to dine with one of his wives, he sends a slave to give her notice; she prepares the most delicate dishes, and receives him with the utmost attention and respect.

Notwithstanding the general degradation of the sex, a virtuous and sensible woman can make herself greatly respected, even in degenerate Egypt. "The favorite wife of Mohammed Ali possessed an astonishing degree of influence over her impetuous husband, who always regarded her as the foundation of his good fortune. She was, likewise, much esteemed and beloved by the people; for her power was uniformly exercised on the side of justice and mercy. Much of her time was occupied in receiving petitions; but she seldom had to refer them to the pacha, as her ascendancy was too well known by the ministers to require this last appeal. If, however, in consequence of any demur on their part, she was obliged to apply to him, he answered their remonstrances by saying, 'T is enough. By my two eyes! if *she* requires it, the thing must be done, be it through fire, water, or stone.' "

The Turkish conquerors have carried into Egypt the enervating despotism and luxurious voluptuousness, which characterize their own land. The favorite residence of the pacha's harem is at Shoubra, three miles below Cairo. In the garden are groves of fruit-trees, and walks shaded by evergreens, paved with pebbles in mosaic. A most splendid bath is inclosed by a quadrangular platform of white sandstone, on which rests a handsome corridor. At each corner of the bath is a dressing room, and between each of these a magnificent divan, the canopy of which is supported by white marble pillars beautifully sculptured. In the centre of the bath is a seat for the pacha himself, from which he may behold his innumerable wives floating in the water around him. A highly sculptured gallery extends all around in front of the divans, resting upon the heads of four large crocodiles of white marble, from whose mouths the bath is partly supplied with water. In the centre is a grand *jet d' eau*; marble vases filled with flowers are dispersed about; and large statues of lions guard the doors. Water for this enormous bath is brought from the Nile by Persian wheels. The interior of this palace is rich with gilding, carved work, embroidery, and velvet hangings. The dress of the pacha's favorites corresponds to the splendor of their residence. Some American ladies, who recently obtained permission to visit his harem, say that even the attendants wore head-dresses covered with diamonds.

No glass windows are seen in Egypt, except in a

few houses built by Christian residents. A very close wooden lattice-work conceals the inmates of the house, excludes the air, and gives rather a dismal appearance to the streets. The quadrangular court in the centre (always formed by the eastern manner of arranging the walls of their buildings) is, however, open to the breezes, and generally kept wet and cool by a fountain playing on marble or stone pavements. This, as in other Mohammedan countries, is the usual place where the women sit at their weaving and embroidery, and are amused by the gambols of their children, or the dances of their attendants.

The Arabs who live in cities keep their wives in very close seclusion. In the large towns of Egypt these women rarely have more than one apartment, in which they eat, drink, and sleep. At night a piece of carpet is spread on the floor, and they lie down to rest, generally without changing their clothes. No male stranger is ever allowed to set his foot within the *harem*, and the ladies are not suffered to go out of it without being guarded and screened. The Arabs always decorate these bird cages with as much gilding, painting, carving, mosaic, and silk hangings, as their wealth will possibly allow; and they indulge their captives, to the utmost of their power, in rich shawls, muslins, silks, pearls, emeralds, and diamonds. In summer the common people often sleep on the flat roofs of their dwellings.

The Egyptian women, beside a large white veil over the head, usually wear a black handkerchief tied under the eyes and falling below the chin. Two

sparkling eyes are the only part of the countenance that is visible. This, with their long loose robes tied up to the throat, gives them a strange spectral appearance. In cities many of these figures are seen gliding about, selling the embroidered handkerchiefs, so much used in the East, as parting presents to guests, and to wipe the fingers after eating sweetmeats, of which they are universally fond.

The country girls, closely veiled, are frequently employed in selling melons, pomegranates, eggs, poultry, &c. Their arms are often tattooed in fanciful patterns, and sometimes their faces are disfigured in the same way. It is a general custom to stain the eyebrows black and the fingers red.

Everywhere on the banks of the Nile, the poorer sort of women may be seen bringing up water from the river, in pitchers on their heads, or shoulders. In consequence of this habit, their motions are universally firm, well balanced, and graceful.

The Syrian women who reside in Egypt retain the customs of their country, and of course have more freedom than the Mohammedans. They seldom if ever go into the public streets without veils; but at home they eat and drink with their husbands, and are introduced to their guests. Even the wealthiest personally assist in the domestic occupations of the family, and hand refreshments and embroidered handkerchiefs to their visitors. The Syrian women are said to be generally distinguished by the peculiar beauty of their hands and arms.

A great number of slaves, of all colors and shades,

are sold in Egypt; and these scenes are characterized by all the brutal and disgusting particulars which must necessarily everywhere attend the sale of human beings. When the French army left Egypt, shameful transactions were witnessed upon the quay at Rosetta. The French were busily employed in selling to the British troops the women who had lived with them during their stay in the country. Several of the English soldiers bought very pretty girls for one dollar each. These scenes occurred between two *Christian* nations!

There are public dancers in Egypt, of a character similar to those in India, but said to have less skill and grace. One of their most common dances at weddings, and other entertainments, is very similar to the Spanish fandango, but abundantly more indelicate.

After three o'clock in the day the women have the public baths to themselves; and here, as in Turkey, they are a favorite place of resort. Those Egyptians who have not private baths, often hire one of the public ones for an entire day, and indulge themselves in the luxury of taking with them their dinners, women, dancers, and story-tellers. With regard to a change of garments, the Egyptians are very uncleanly.

The marriage ceremonies are like those of Turkey.

The Egyptian women often wear amber or glass beads on the right wrist, and the left is almost always encircled with a brass twist. Sometimes they

have bracelets above the elbow, with rings on the fingers and thumb.

As you go south, the swarthy complexion of the people becomes darker. In Upper Egypt (the site of ancient Egypt) the inhabitants are quite black. The women are tall, slim, erect, and generally well formed. They have very perfect teeth; but the mouth is distorted by the custom of making the under lip project, and coloring it blue. Their hair generally hangs in braids all round the head, those on the forehead being shorter. Their dress, ornaments, and occupations, are similar to those in other parts of Egypt, excepting that they do not wear veils. They are very modest, but have such simplicity of manners, that they nurse their babes before travellers without any consciousness of impropriety. Their dances are rapid and vigorous, mixed with undulating motions, as they from time to time bend towards their partners. Both sexes are extremely fond of this amusement, and their performances are said to be far from ungraceful.

In some remote and poor villages of Egypt the people are more barbarous; the women grease their hair, wear rings in their nostrils, and strips of black leather for bracelets.

While Tyre was in its greatest prosperity, the capital of wealthy and proud Phœnicia, Pygmalion, the king, had a sister Eliza, generally known by the name of Dido. She married one of her royal relatives, named Sichæus, whom her brother put to



death, in order to obtain possession of his immense fortune. Dido privately eloped with the most valuable of her husband's effects, and after many disasters arrived at the northern part of Africa, near the place where Tunis now stands. Here she settled a colony, and built a city, called Carthage, which in the Phœnician language signified the New City. What Virgil relates of this queen is a fiction. She is supposed to have lived at least two hundred years before Æneas. Having bound herself by a solemn oath never to marry a second husband, she refused the offers of Jarbas, king of Getulia, who threatened to make war upon her colony, if she persisted in her resolution. Regarding her vow as sacred, and being unwilling to bring trouble upon her subjects, she caused a funeral pile to be kindled, into which she leaped and died.

History gives no information concerning the treatment of females in Carthagenia: a nation which owed its existence to a woman, who during her lifetime governed them with wisdom, and died to avoid involving them in danger, certainly ought to have regarded them with respect and tenderness. This is in some degree implied by the fact that when Tyre was besieged by Alexander, the Carthagenians, unable to assist them because they themselves were at war, offered to receive all the Tyrian women and children within their walls.

The conduct of Carthagenian women, during the invasion of Scipio, proves that they could not have been in a very degraded state. They not only

freely gave all their jewels for the public service, but they labored hard in erecting fortifications, and both maidens and matrons shaved their heads, that their hair might be used for cordage. And when at last there was no alternative but to yield to the conqueror or perish, the wife of Asdrubal, the Carthagenian general, reproached him for his cowardice in supplicating mercy from the enemy, and seizing her infant children, rushed into the flames of the temple of Esculapius, which she herself had kindled.

The inhabitants of the Barbary states and the neighboring deserts are descendants of the Arabs, known by the general name of Moors. Their manner of building is nearly the same that has prevailed in Syrian and Arabian cities from the earliest ages. Their houses have flat terraced roofs, sheltered courts with fountains in the midst, large doors, and spacious chambers. One small latticed window looks into the street; the others open into the private court. The latticed window is for the convenience of women on the occasion of great festivals. At such times both the inside and outside of the houses are much adorned, and the women show themselves in their best apparel. The same custom seems to be alluded to in Scripture, where we are told that when Jehu came to Jezreel, "Jezebel heard of it; and painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window."

On the occasion of a wedding, or any other great domestic ceremony, the company are received in the

open court, which is strewed with mats and carpets for their reception. In summer these courts are screened from the sun by means of an awning drawn up with ropes, like the covering of a tent. The large chambers are generally entirely separated; each wife having her own apartment. Sometimes, when married children continue to reside with their parents, one room serves for a whole family. At the end of each chamber there is a little gallery raised a few feet above the floor, with steps leading to it. Here they place their beds; a custom which explains the Scripture phrases, "go up unto thy bed," and "come down from thy bed."

The wealthy have their walls hung with velvet and damask of various colors, the ceiling richly gilded, or painted in arabesques, and the floor paved with painted tiles.

Linen, flax, figs, and raisins, are dried on the terraced roofs, which are guarded by a balustrade, or lattice work. On these roofs they likewise enjoy the cool breezes of evening, and when the weather is very warm they sleep there.

The dwellings of the poor are constructed merely of palm branches, plastered with mud and clay, which in case of a shower sometimes dissolves and tumbles in pieces. The wandering tribes, called Arabs, live in tents, and have habits similar to the Bedouins.

The hills and valleys about Algiers are ornamented with pretty gardens and country-seats, where the wealthy inhabitants retire during the summer sea-

son. These gardens are well stocked with vegetables and fruit, and the rivulets afford an abundant supply of excellent water.

Young children go entirely without clothing. The women wear a long wide robe, generally blue, without sleeves, and modestly high in the neck. Another piece of cloth, usually of a different color, is thrown over the shoulders, like a mantle. Some wear sandals, others European slippers, either of red or yellow morocco. In passing over the hot sands of the desert, they sometimes wear high wooden clogs, which raise them several inches above the ground, similar to those used to protect the feet on entering the hottest rooms of the eastern baths. The long ample drawers worn by girls are of striped linen or silk, and sometimes embroidered with divers colors. When women appear in public they muffle themselves up in large mantles or blankets, called *hykes*, and veil themselves so that nothing can be seen but their eyes. Like other Arabs, they stain their eyebrows with powder of antimony, and sometimes paint a spot on the forehead, the chin, and one cheek; a circle round the eyes, in red or black, is likewise considered becoming. In the country they often go abroad without being veiled; but if they see a stranger approach they hastily screen their faces. Their hair is generally long and intensely black. They plait it in several tresses, and adorn it with ribbons, with glass, amber, or coral beads, and sometimes with shells. Sometimes two of these tresses are tied over the bosom, while the others fall

over the shoulders, nearly to the ground; at other times the braids are arranged in a very becoming manner on the top of the head. The latter fashion forms a species of crown, over which elderly women wrap a piece of blue or white cloth, which crosses under the chin, and is tied behind. They may be often seen carrying on their heads large leathern bags, containing clothes, provisions, &c.

The Moorish women have generally bright sparkling black eyes, and handsome features. Those who are engaged in laborious occupations become swarthy; but ladies secluded from the influence of the sun often have delicate complexions. The higher classes in Tunis are particularly spoken of as handsome in their persons and elegant in dress; they often wear robes of the richest silk, adorned with gold buttons, lace, and embroidery.

The Moorish ladies have generally a great passion for ornament. They decorate their persons with heavy gold ear-rings; necklaces of amber, coral, and gold; gold bracelets; gold chains and silver bells for the ankles; rings on the fingers; silver cords around the head, with silver rings hanging pendent to the shoulder; and around the waist, under their garments, they wear ten or twelve strings of glass or crystal beads, which jingle as they walk. The poorer class in Fezzan wear glass beads around the head, and curl the hair in large ringlets, into which they stuff a kind of paste made of lavender, cloves, pepper, mastich, and laurel leaves mixed up with oil. Men are proud of having their wives hand-

somely dressed, because it is an indication of their own wealth and importance. Dr. Shaw says the Barbary women are so partial to the small mirrors which they wear about their necks, that "they will not lay them aside even when, after the drudgery of the day, they are obliged to go two or three miles, with a pitcher or goat-skin, to fetch water."

The want of water in many places prevents them from washing their garments so often as is necessary for cleanliness. They anoint themselves with rancid butter, in order to keep off musquitoes and other insects.

When engaged in the house at work, the Barbary matrons not only lay aside their hykes and tunics, but even their drawers, wearing merely a cloth wrapped around them.

The women weave a coarse kind of cloth for the tent-coverings, made of goats' or camels' hair. It is woven in broad stripes, impervious to the rain. One of their principal occupations is the manufacture of the hykes or blankets, universally worn both by men and women. They have no looms, or shuttles. The warp is fastened to a peg in the ground, and the woof carried through with their fingers. They make butter in a goat-skin exposed to the sun. The Barbary cows give very little milk, but the sheep and goats are both useful for the purposes of the dairy. When the women make cheese, they separate the curd from the whey with the flowers of the great-headed thistle, or wild artichoke. The curds are put into small baskets made of rushes, or dwarf-

palm, bound up close, and pressed. These cheeses seldom weigh more than two or three pounds. In the morning, the children and slaves are sent out to tend the cattle, and do not return until nightfall; the women in the mean time are engaged in their numerous household occupations, and not unfrequently work in the fields, and collect wood for cooking. When the tribes find it necessary to travel, the slaves drive the cattle, and the women take care of the dromedaries, while the men, mounted and armed, form a van-guard to protect the troop. The wives and daughters of the wealthy sit cross-legged on a small round concave saddle, placed on the back of a dromedary, and generally screened from the sun by a slight awning. The Barbary ox, a strong docile animal, with a large hump above the shoulders, is likewise much used for riding.

The Moors are indolent to excess. They lie whole days upon their mats sleeping and smoking, while the women and slaves perform all the labor. Owing to their uncleanly habits, they are much infested with vermin; and as they consider it beneath their own dignity to remove this annoyance, the task is imposed upon the women. They are very impatient and tyrannical, and for the slightest offence beat their wives most cruelly. The women, far from thinking a sound drubbing any disgrace, are rather disposed to regard it as a sign that their lords and masters consider them of some importance; but they are extremely mortified if the husband makes any complaint to relations. The Moors, like other

Mohammedans, regard women as a very inferior race, created to serve them with unconditional submission. Wives are obliged to stand and wait upon their husbands while they are eating, and must be content with whatever food the men choose to leave. When a European expressed his surprise at such customs, they answered, "Why should such inferior creatures be allowed to eat and drink with us? If they commit faults, why should they not be beaten? They were made to bring us children, pound our rice, make our oil, and do our drudgery; these are the only purposes to which their degraded natures are adapted."

Precisely the same arguments for abusing the defenceless are urged by Christian slave-owners! Among the Moors, masters and their Mohammedan slaves eat together; but if the slave be a Christian, he must eat by himself, and even the women and children will not touch the food he leaves. Illiberal and barbarous as this custom appears to us, they no doubt would regard as still more absurd the customs of the United States, which render it an abomination for two people of different complexions to eat at the same table. Their own superstitious abhorrence is inculcated by the Mohammedan creed, which they regard as sacred; but our prejudice is in direct opposition to the maxims of that religion, which we profess to reverence. In this respect, we must yield to the Algerine in point of sincerity and consistency.

Moorish daughters receive no portion of their father's property, and have no dowry at the time of



their marriage. When a man dies, his wife takes her young children and goes to live with her mother. The daughters are dependent on their elder brother. If the children are quite young, the chief of the tribe takes possession of the property, until the boys are old enough to have it divided among them. If there is no male child, the brother of the deceased is his heir.

The Moorish women, like the men, are exceedingly ignorant, covetous, and gluttonous; but they are not, like them, universally licentious; for they are taught that virtuous wives will become celestial beauties in another world, while all who fail in this duty will be forever annihilated. An unfaithful wife is punished with immediate death. A man has as many wives and female slaves as he can maintain.

Although the inhabitants of Fezzan are Mohammedans, their women are seen a great deal in public, and are remarkable for wanton manners. Some of the customs of the Moors seem at variance with their habitual contempt of women. The wives of chiefs are always appointed to conduct negotiations for peace; and a feminine voice of entreaty will arrest the uplifted scimitar just ready to fall on the head of an enemy. In common with the Bedouins, they consider the female apartments as a sanctuary, which protects even the murderer. In some tribes, where the women never appear before the men, the criminal, if he gets within hearing of their dwellings, calls out, "I am under the protection of the harem!" The inmates, without showing themselves, cry aloud,

“Fly from him! Fly from him!” and even if the man were condemned to death by the prince himself, he is from that moment free to go where he pleases.

It would be considered a great breach of politeness for a Moor to enter his neighbor's tent. If he wishes to see him, he calls him out; and the wife, hearing his voice, immediately veils herself. It would likewise be improper for a husband, when he entered the female apartments, to recline upon the mat which his wife was accustomed to use.

The Mongearts are an agricultural tribe, less intelligent, and more mild, than their neighbors. Their wives perform the greater part of the labor, but are not treated with so much harshness as among the other tribes. They have a simple method of preventing disputes when they divide the spoils taken in war or hunting. They separate the booty into as many lots as there are men; then each one puts some article into a bag, which is well shaken up, and the first woman or child they see, is called upon to take an article out of the bag, and lay it upon one of the lots. Each one recognizes what he put into the bag, and is obliged to rest satisfied with the lot on which it happens to be placed.

The Monselemine are said to be even more avaricious than other Moors. Every thing with them is settled by money. Among the other tribes, if a Mohammedan woman were known to have a Christian lover, she would be killed, and the man must change his religion to avoid death; but the Monselemine throw the woman into the sea, and allow the Christian

to atone for his crime with money. The *talbes*, or Moorish priests, take as many wives as they can support. The women, as in other Mohammedan countries, do not go to the mosques, but perform their devotions at home, with their faces turned toward the east.

The Moors have extraordinary ideas concerning female beauty. They fancy an oily skin, teeth projecting beyond the lips, pointed nails an inch long, and a figure so corpulent, that two persons putting their arms around the waist could scarcely make their fingers touch. A woman of moderate pretensions to beauty needs a slave under each arm to support her as she walks; and a perfect belle carries weight enough to load a camel. Mothers are so anxious to have their daughters attain this unwieldy size, that they make them eat a great quantity of *kouskous*,\* and drink several bowls of camel's milk every day. Mungo Park says he has seen a poor girl sit crying for more than an hour with the bowl at her lips, while her mother stood over her with a stick, and beat her whenever she perceived she was not swallowing.

Still there are some girls of fourteen or fifteen, who have what Europeans would consider a very graceful shape, with a fine glow of health flushing their brown cheeks. Their teeth are regular, and always very white, owing to the constant practice of rubbing them with a little stick of tamarind wood.

The Moors marry at a very early age. Wives

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\* A kind of pudding made of millet.

are always purchased; and the father of the girl cannot refuse an offer, unless there is some stain upon the young man's character. The bridal tent is adorned with a small white flag, and the bridegroom's brow is encircled with a fillet of the same color. The bride is conducted to the tent by her parents, where her lover presents her with garments and jewels, according to his wealth. A grand entertainment is given, and the young women dance all day to the sound of instruments, while the spectators regulate their motions by clapping hands. These dances are not very decorous.

The next day the young wife is bathed by her female relations, who braid her hair, stain her nails red, and put on a new dress. She visits in the camp all day, and in the evening is conducted back to her husband's tent. If her father be destitute, his son-in-law generally assists him with a willing heart; and if the bridegroom be poor, her father does all he can to enable him to increase his flocks and herds. If a wife does not become the mother of a boy, she may be divorced with consent of the elders of the tribe, which is always granted; in this case she is at liberty to marry again. The mother of many sons is held in the highest respect, and is never suffered to perform any menial office. If a woman is very unhappy with her husband, she goes back to her parents; and though he may try to persuade her to live with him again, he cannot compel her to do it. If she persist in her dislike, she is even at liberty to marry another. But if she has a child, especially if

it be a boy, this permission is not granted; should she stay with her parents more than eight days, under such circumstances, she would be liable to be put to death. Women do not take the name of their husbands, but always retain the one they received in infancy. The birth of a son is attended with the greatest rejoicings. The mother, by way of expressing her delight, blackens her face, for the space of forty days. On the birth of a girl, she blackens only half her face, for twenty days.

When a Moor sets out on a journey, his wife follows him about twenty paces from the dwelling; she then throws after him the stone used to drive the tent-pegs into the ground, and wherever it stops, she buries it until his return.

The Moors, like their Arab brethren, are exceedingly hospitable. A traveller is always sure of some refreshment, for his host would rather go without food himself than refuse it to a guest. If the master be absent, his wife, or slave, goes out to meet the stranger, asks him to stop at twenty paces from the tent, brings milk for him to drink, sees that his camels are unloaded, and furnishes him with mats and awnings to erect a temporary shelter for himself. If the guest be a man of rank, or one who has friends in the tribe, a sheep or an ox is killed in honor of his arrival. The wife cooks the meat, separating the fat, which is served up raw. The visiter's share is placed on a small mat, carried by a slave, but always handed to him by the master himself, if he be at home.

The Moors plunder all travellers except those who are protected by the sacred rites of hospitality. Even the law authorizes theft in the night time; and on this account the women are very careful to convey into the tents every article of property before dark.

One of the greatest pleasures of Moorish women consists in visiting each other. Politeness requires that the guest should dress the provisions, make the butter, and cook the dinner, while her hostess entertains her with details of family affairs, and all the scandal and gossip of the tribe. On these occasions an unusual quantity of food is provided, and the master invites his neighbors to the repast. The more cooking the visiter has to do, the more she feels honored.

At funerals, the women howl and lament; a practice they continue at intervals, from the moment of decease till they return from the grave where their relative or friend has been deposited.

The Moors continually go out on predatory excursions to seize the negroes for slaves, to supply the insatiable market produced by *Christian* pride and avarice. Sometimes they lie in ambush round a village for days together, and when the helpless women and children come to the springs to get water, they seize them and carry them off. They place their captives behind them on horseback, holding one of their fingers between their teeth, ready to bite it off, if they give the least alarm.

Sometimes they set fire to a village at midnight, and seize the poor wretches that try to escape from

the flames. The negroes have strong local attachments, and on such occasions the most agonizing scenes frequently occur.

The wives of wealthy Moorish chiefs have black female slaves, to whom they transfer all the toil, while they loll upon mats, smoking their pipes all day long. The poor slaves, who are treated with the utmost haughtiness and rigor, try to anticipate the slightest wish of their indolent mistresses. Sometimes they carry their attention so far, as to pick up every stone or stick, that might annoy the feet of these walking flesh mountains.

If a Moor has a son by any of his black slaves, the girl is much better treated than before; her child shares equal privileges with the other children, and is acknowledged as a free fellow-citizen like themselves. In this respect Christian slave-owners might learn a useful lesson from the ignorant Moslem.

The dwellings of negroes are generally huts made of the branches of trees and thatched with palmetto. The king's residence usually consists of a number of these huts surrounded by a clay wall. Each wife has a separate building, sometimes divided from the apartments of the men by a slight bamboo fence. Some of the African huts are very prettily painted, or stained, and the walls adorned with curious straw work. The Ashantees display a considerable degree of taste and even elegance in their architecture. Their houses and door-posts are elaborately carved

with representations of warlike processions, and serpents seizing their prey.

The various African tribes differ as much in personal appearance as the inhabitants of the numerous Asiatic kingdoms. The Pulahs, or Fulahs, of Bondu, between the Senegal and Gambia, are copper-colored, and have long hair. Some of them are black, though less so than many tribes. Their women are slender and graceful, with languishing eyes, and soft voices. The Wolofs are tall and well-shaped, with prominent and rather aquiline noses, lips not very thick, black complexions, uncommonly sweet voices, and a very frank, mild expression of countenance. This tribe is considered the handsomest in Africa. A people called Laobehs, whose manners bear a great resemblance to those of the gypsies, are intermixed with the Wolofs, but have no fixed residence. They select some well-wooded spot, where they fell a few trees, form huts with the branches, and work up the trunks into mortars, and other wooden vessels. The women pretend to tell fortunes; and though short, ugly, and sluttish, they are much sought as wives, on account of a superstition that such connections bring good luck. The Laobehs possess no animals but asses, on which they travel during their frequent peregrinations. Groups of these men and women may often be seen squatting round a fire, smoking and talking.

The color of the Mandingoes is black intermixed with yellow. They have regular features, with a frank, intelligent expression. The women are al-



most universally well-shaped and handsome. The inhabitants of Bambara are not so black as the Wolofs, but have no pretensions to beauty. They have round heads, very closely curled hair, coarse features, flat noses, thick lips, high cheek-bones, and bandy legs. The inhabitants of Bornou, Mozambique, and Southern Guinea, bear a great resemblance to those of Bambarra. The Congoese have European features, bright eyes, and black complexions. The Kaffers, or Caffres, have likewise the European conformation of head and features; their complexion is glossy black, their eyes large and sparkling, their teeth are beautifully white and regular, and the expression of their countenances bright and good-humored. Travellers all agree in describing the men as uncommonly noble and majestic figures. The women are of lower stature, rather muscular than graceful; but many of them have very handsome faces.

The African women wear two long strips of cotton cloth, either blue or white. One is tied round the waist and falls below the knees; the other is worn over the shoulders like a mantle. The latter garment is generally thrown aside when they are at work. The upper part of the person is almost universally exposed. The wealthy sometimes wear a kind of robe without sleeves, under their *pagnes*, or mantles. Mungo Park speaks of seeing women in Bondou, who wore a thin kind of gauze, called *byqui*, which displayed their shape to the utmost advantage. Sandals are sometimes worn, but they more frequently go barefoot. Women of the island of St

Louis, who are generally handsome, and many of them fair, by frequent intermarriages with Europeans, wear a long garment of striped cotton fastened at the waist, with another four or five yards in length thrown over the shoulders in the antique style. Striped cloth is twisted round the head, so as to form a high turban. Their slippers are usually of red, yellow, or green morocco, and they are seldom without golden ear-rings, necklaces, and bracelets.

The Kaffer women wear a cloak made of leopard or calf skins, dressed in such a manner as to be exceedingly soft and pliant. This garment, which is worn over the shoulders, and conceals all the upper part of the person, is never laid aside except in the very hottest weather. They wear no other clothing but a small apron. It is a singular fact that the Kaffer men care much more about ornaments than the women. Almost every individual wears necklaces of beads, or polished bone, with several ivory bracelets about his arms and ankles. Those who can afford it have wreaths of copper beads around their heads, from which brass chains are suspended. The women, on the contrary, seldom wear any other ornament than a row of beads, or small shells, around the edges of their aprons. Females of the royal family sometimes have a few brass buttons on their cloaks, and beads or shells on the skin caps they wear in cold weather. The other African women are very fond of ornaments. They decorate their heads with coral beads, sea-shells, and grains of gold and silver. Sometimes a small plate of gold is worn

in the middle of the forehead. The gold dust, which they collect, is kept in quills, stopped with cotton; and these are frequently displayed in the hair. Sometimes strips of linen are stretched upon a stick, so as to form a turban in the shape of a sugar loaf, the top of which is covered with a colored handkerchief. In some places the hair is raised high by means of a pad, and decorated with an expensive species of coral brought from the Red sea. Among some tribes the women twist their woolly locks around straws greased with butter; and when the straws are drawn out, the hair remains curled in small tufts. This process requires a whole day. A more neat and simple style, is to braid the hair in several tresses, made to meet on the top of the head. Almost all the Africans grease their heads and anoint their bodies; a custom said to be necessary to prevent cutaneous diseases, and the attacks of insects, in warm climates. Tattooing is very common, and almost every tribe has a style peculiarly its own. The gold ornaments worn in Africa are generally very massive. The heavy ear-rings sometimes lacerate the ear, to avoid which they are often supported by a band of red leather, passing over the head from one ear to the other. The necklaces and bracelets are sometimes of gold fillagree work, very ingeniously wrought. Daughters of rich families wear a necklace of coral, intermixed with gold and silver beads, which crosses below the breast, and is fastened behind, under the shoulders. The skins of sharks, or strings of beads as large as a pigeon's egg, are sometimes worn around the waist, and small-

er beads decorate the ankles. In Bornou, they frequently wear a piece of coral, ivory, or polished oyster-shell thrust through the nose. African teeth are universally very white and regular. They are continually rubbed with a small stick of tamarind-wood, which they hold between their lips like a toothpick. Some tribes on the banks of the Gambia file their teeth to a sharp point. Mollien is, I believe, the only writer who speaks of veils worn by any except the Moorish ladies. He thus describes the sister and niece of a *marabout*,\* who was his guide: "They had oval faces, fine features, elegant figures, and a skin as black as jet. I was charmed with the modesty of these women; whenever I looked at them they cast down their eyes, and covered their faces with their muslin veils."

The inhabitants of Madagascar are tall, well proportioned, and of a very dark olive complexion. The women wear long robes reaching to the feet, over which is a straight tunic, that covers the upper part of the person.

The African women make butter by stirring the cream violently in a large calabash, or shaking it in skins, after the Arab fashion. In the forests of Bambarra is a tree called *shea*, from the kernel of which, when boiled in water, a species of vegetable butter is produced. The women put it down in earthen pots, and preserve it for a long time. Mun-go Park says: "Besides the advantage of keeping a

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\* A black Mohammedan priest.

whole year without salt, it is whiter, firmer, and to my palate of a richer flavor, than the best butter I ever tasted made of cow's milk."

Cheese is never made in the interior of Africa. They give as a reason for it, the heat of the climate, and the great scarcity of salt.

When the planting season arrives, women dig small holes in the ground, into each of which they drop three grains of millet, and cover it with their feet. This simple process is sufficient in a country where the soil yields almost spontaneously. When the grain is nearly ripe, they erect tall platforms on poles, where the women and children are stationed by turns to frighten away the birds, by uttering loud cries. If the birds become so much accustomed to the noise as to disregard it, they bind a handful of leaves or straw around each ear of millet, to prevent their depredations.

Grain, instead of being threshed, is pounded in a mortar, and the chaff blown away. Mortars are used to prepare it for cooking, except in Abyssinia, where a daily supply of corn is ground in small hand-mills.

The African women separate the seeds from cotton by rolling it with a thick iron spindle; and instead of carding it, beat it violently on a close mat. In spinning, they use the distaff in preference to the wheel. Throughout the country they may be seen seated on a mat in front of their huts, engaged in this old-fashioned employment. Weaving is generally done by men. The women make nets and sails for their husbands, and cut and sew their garments

with needles of native manufacture. They likewise dye cloth of a rich and permanent blue, with a fine purple gloss; these cloths are beautifully glazed. In the manufacture of common earthen vessels for domestic use, the women are as skilful as the men. A good deal of care is required to prepare the manioc, which forms a great article of food. This root is ground in a mill, and dried in small furnaces, before it can be used as flour. Mats, both for the table and for seats, are woven very firmly and neatly; hats and baskets are likewise very tastefully made of rushes stained with different colors; and the gourds from which they drink are often prettily ornamented with a sort of bamboo work, dyed in a similar manner.

The Kaffer women make baskets of a strong reedy grass, the workmanship of which is so clever that they will contain water. At Sackatoo, Mr. Clapper-ton met a troop of African girls drawing water from the gushing rocks. He says: "I asked them for drink. Bending gracefully on one knee, and displaying at the same time teeth of pearly whiteness, and eyes of the blackest lustre, they presented a gourd, and appeared highly delighted when I thanked them for their civility; remarking to one another, 'Did you hear the white man thank me?'"

Here, as in Asia, the women generally act as porters, carrying large burdens on the head. Sometimes they may be seen sitting on mats by the roadside, selling potatoes, beans, and small bits of roasted meat, to travellers.

Men and women are both employed in digging

and washing gold for the Moorish markets. Small shells, called *cowries*, constitute the general currency of Africa. All payments from the king's household are made in branches containing two thousand cowries each. The women pierce and string these, deducting one-fortieth part as their own perquisite. Four hundred and eighty of these shells are equivalent to a shilling. The Africans are said to manifest a most extraordinary facility in reckoning the large sums exchanged for articles of merchandise. Europeans have been much surprised at this, being themselves unable to calculate so rapidly without the use of figures.

The wives of the king of Dahomey, generally to the number of three thousand, are formed into a regiment, part of which act as his body-guard, equipped with bows, arrows, drums, and sometimes muskets. They are regularly trained to the use of arms, and go through their evolutions with as much expertness as any other of his majesty's soldiers.

Captain Clapperton thus describes a visit he received from the king of Kiama: "Six young girls, without any apparel, except a fillet on the forehead, and a string of beads round the waist, carrying each three light spears, ran by the side of his horse, keeping pace with it at full gallop. Their light forms, the vivacity of their eyes, and the ease with which they seemed to fly over the ground, made them appear something more than mortal. On the king's entrance they laid down their spears, wrapped themselves in blue mantles, and attended on his majesty. On his

taking leave, they discarded their attire ; he mounted his horse, and away went the most extraordinary cavalcade I ever saw in my life."

In time of battle the African women encourage the troops, supply them with fresh arrows, and hurl stones at their enemies. In some tribes it is common for them to unite with the men in hunting the lion and the leopard.

Mr. Campbell attended a palaver, or council, in Southern Africa. He says, "The speeches were replete with frankness, courage, often with good sense, and even with a rude species of eloquence. The women stood behind and took an eager interest in the debate—cheering those whose sentiments they approved, or bursting into loud laughter at any thing they considered ridiculous."

If the king of Congo dies without sons, his daughter, if she be marriageable, becomes absolute mistress of the kingdom. She visits various towns and villages, where she causes the men to appear before her, that she may select a husband from among them. When her choice is made, she resigns all authority into his hands, and he becomes the king.

Every great man has bands of minstrels, of both sexes, who sing his praises in extempore poetry, while they play upon drums, or guitars with three strings.

Some of these *guiriots*, or minstrels, travel about the country with their families, dancing and singing at every village where their services are required. The Africans are so partial to these wandering musi-



cians, that they often make them quite rich by their liberality. The female singers are covered with various colored beads, and not unfrequently with ornaments of the precious metals. But though the *gui-riots* are always welcome at weddings and festivals, though their songs kindle the soldier's courage as he goes to battle, and enliven the dreariness of journeys through the desert, yet they are regarded with even more contempt than falls upon similar classes in other parts of the world. Not even a slave would consent to marry into a family that had followed this profession; and when they die, their bodies are placed in hollow trees, from the idea that crops of millet would certainly fail if they were buried in the earth. The *gui-riots* dance in the same immodest style that characterizes the Asiatic performers. Their dances are always accompanied by drums and other musical instruments. Among the Wolofs none but public singers play on any instrument, it being considered disrespectful for others to practise this amusement.

The African women are so passionately fond of dancing, that wherever the itinerant minstrels appear, they flock around them, and encourage them by songs, while they beat time by clapping their hands. Indeed with this mirth-loving race every thing furnishes occasion for festivity and frolic. Their marriages and funerals conclude with dances; all their festivals are commemorated with songs and dances; every moonlight night the men and women meet in great numbers to enjoy this favorite exercise; and if

the moon be wanting, they dance by the light of large fires. The young girls often unite together to buy palm wine, and after an entertainment at the hut of one of their companions, they go together through the village, singing in chorus a variety of charming airs, marking time by clapping their hands; these strains, though simple, and often repeated, are by no means monotonous. The Fulah songs are said to have a melancholy sweetness which is exceedingly captivating; and some of the Wolof airs are gracefully pathetic, while the measures in which they are composed indicates skill in music somewhat remarkable in a people so little civilized. On the banks of rivers and on the sea-coast, the inhabitants of villages one or two miles distant may be heard singing the same song, and alternately answering each other. Drums are their most common musical instruments; beside which they have a guitar of three strings, made of half a calabash covered with leather; a species of castanets, made of small gourd shells, filled with pebbles, or Guinea peas, which the dancers shake in a lively manner; and an instrument resembling a spinnet, called the *balafó*, in which the notes are struck by small sticks, terminated by knobs covered with leather. These instruments are generally of rude construction, and produce dull, heavy tones; but the voices of the people are peculiarly soft and melodious, and they are said to keep time with great exactness. Music is never mute in Africa. Whether the inhabitants are weaving at their doors, laboring in the fields, rowing their boats, or wandering

in the desert, songs may be heard resounding through the air. Even the poor slaves dragged to distant markets, suffering with hunger, and thirst, and cruel laceration, will begin to sing as soon as they have a few moments rest; particularly if the assurance is given them that after they pass a certain boundary, they shall be free and dressed in red. Thus does the God of love console his guileless children even under circumstances of the greatest external misery! and man, in the wantonness of his pride, makes this blessed influence of Divine Providence an excuse for continued cruelty!

The Africans at their convivial meetings are extremely fond of listening to stories of wild and ludicrous adventures, and the wonderful effects of magic and enchantments. They have likewise a species of pantomime or puppet-shows. The women are extravagantly fond of a game called *ourî*, which they learned from the Arabs. A box with twelve square holes contains a quantity of round seeds, generally from the baobab tree. Each player has twenty-one seeds to dispose of; they play alternately, and draw lots who shall begin. The combinations are said to be more numerous and complicated than those of chess; yet girls of ten or twelve years old may often be seen sitting under the shade of a tree intently studying this difficult game.

Some of the African tribes have become Mohamedans in consequence of their connection with the Moors; but in general they are pagans. The belief in one Supreme Being and a future state of rewards

and punishments is, however, universal, and without exception; they likewise believe that the Almighty has intrusted the government of the world to subordinate spirits, with whom they suppose certain magical ceremonies have great influence. When questioned upon these subjects, they always endeavor to wave the conversation, by answering reverently that such matters are far above the understanding of man. At the return of the new moon, (which they suppose to be each time newly created,) every individual offers a short whispered prayer of thanksgiving; but they pray at no other time; saying it is presumptuous for mortals to ask the Deity to change decrees of unerring wisdom. When asked why they observe a festival at the new moon, they simply answer that their fathers did so before them.

Phillis Wheatly, a black female child brought from the interior of Africa, and sold as a slave in Boston, New England, afterward gained great celebrity by her poetical writings, which, considering the period in which she lived, and the limited advantages of her own education, are certainly very remarkable. This intelligent woman could remember very little about the customs of her native land, excepting that her mother always poured out water before the rising sun.

Hornemann says it was the custom in Bornou annually to throw a richly decorated maiden into the Niger, according to the ancient custom in Egypt.

The Africans, like all uneducated people, are extremely superstitious. They never go to battle, or

commence a journey, without being loaded with certain protecting charms, of which the most valuable are written sentences sewed up in little bags. The *marabouts* or priests sell an immense number of verses from the Koran, for this purpose. When major Denham was in Houssa, the women, having seen him write, came to him in crowds to obtain amulets to restore their beauty, preserve the affections of their lovers, and sometimes to destroy a rival. When the Portuguese first attempted to establish their empire in Congo, they found women of rank, who went about with dishevelled hair, beating drums, and pretending to perform magical cures; and the women of Loggum, who are said to be very intelligent, are still quite celebrated for their skill in witchcraft.

The Africans are generally prejudiced against undertaking any thing on Friday; if they are pursuing a journey, they will halt under a tree and wait till that day is over. There are likewise certain animals and objects, which if met unexpectedly are considered bad omens. An annual festival, called the *tampcara*, is distinguished by a strange superstitious custom. At this period a personage appears on the banks of the Gambia, to whom they give the name of *Tampcara*. The natives believe him to be a demon, and bestow without resistance whatever he pleases to demand. He appears only in the night, but his door is at all hours open to the women. Husbands dare not betray the slightest symptoms of jealousy, for fear of incurring the awful displeasure of *Tampcara*.

There is another pretended demon, called Mumbo Jumbo, whose mysteries are celebrated in the nighttime. Several nights previous to his arrival, a great noise is heard in the adjoining woods. The men go out to meet him, and find him with a stick in his hand, decorated in a hideous and fantastic manner with the bark of trees. Preceded by a band of music, he approaches the village, where the women ranged in a circle fearfully await his arrival. Songs accompany the instruments, and Mumbo Jumbo himself sings an air peculiar to the occasion. The most profound silence follows. After a pause, Mumbo Jumbo points out those women who have behaved improperly during the year. They are immediately seized, tied to a post, and whipped by the mysterious visiter, with more or less severity, according to the nature of their offence. All the assembly join in shouts of derision, and the women are quite as ready to take part against their sisters in disgrace as they are accused of being in more civilized countries. When African wives are refractory, it is a common threat to remind them of the annual visit of Mumbo Jumbo, who will assuredly find out their faults and punish them accordingly. The dress in which he usually appears is often kept hung upon the trees, by way of admonition. This dreaded personage no doubt receives his information from the husband or father of the culprit; but the secret of the institution is so carefully preserved, that a king, whose young wife had coaxed him to tell it, was afterward persuaded to put all his wives to death to prevent discovery.

The following is the air sung by Mumbo Jumbo, as he enters a village :

*Alle'tto.* (a)

**MANDINGO**  
Air of  
Mumbo Jumbo

(b)

(c)

*Fan na boo la o fa na ma o*

*ton sa boo la le fe no bi na ni a o*

The Africans have a most terrific idea of the sea, which they always call the big salt water. Some of the priests describe it as a malignant deity, and forbid people to approach it. Beyond this big water they suppose there is a land full of *white sea-monsters*, cannibals, and sorcerers, who send to Africa and carry off great numbers of men, women, and children, on purpose to devour them.

Poor Gustavus Vasa, who, with his little sister, was stolen while they were at play, was exceedingly terrified at the sight of Europeans in a vessel. "Where do these white monsters come from?" said

he: "Do they always live in these immense dens upon the water? How can they move that great house, except by magic?"

The Africans consider our color quite as great a deformity as we regard theirs. When Andanson entered a village at a little distance from the coast, the children ran away screaming with terror; and it required a great effort to persuade them to approach the white man, and touch his long straight hair. Many of them suppose that the pale color of Europeans is owing to a leprous disease. When Mungo Park was detained at Benown, the king's wives made him unbutton his waistcoat to show his white skin; and even after they had counted his fingers and toes, to ascertain that he was a human being, they could not refrain from a shudder whenever they approached him. The king's sons seriously proposed to put out his eyes because they so much resembled a cat. The wives of the Foulah king were more civil to the traveller, but they found his features and color equally disagreeable. Mr. Park says: "As soon as I entered, the whole seraglio surrounded me, some begging for physic, others for amber, and all of them desirous of trying that great African specific, blood-letting. They were ten or twelve in number, most of them young and handsome. They rallied me with a good deal of gayety on different subjects, particularly on the whiteness of my skin and the prominence of my nose. They insisted that both were artificial. The first they said was produced when I was an infant, by dipping me in milk; and they insisted that



my nose had been pinched every day till it had acquired its present unsightly and unnatural conformation. Without disputing my own deformity, I paid them many compliments on African beauty. I praised the glossy jet of their skins, and the lovely depression of their noses; but they told me that *honey-mouth* was not esteemed in Bondu. In return, however, for my company, or my compliments, to which they seemed not to be so insensible as they affected to be, they presented me with a jar of honey and some fish, which were sent to my lodging."

The prejudice with regard to a white skin is not to be wondered at, when we consider that nearly all the intercourse between Europe and Africa has been for the purpose of obtaining slaves; and to this circumstance must be added the natural tendency we all have to admire what we are most accustomed to in our own friends.

Mungo Park feelingly describes the sufferings of some poor slaves that belonged to a caravan with which he travelled. He says: "One of the female slaves, named Nealee, began to lag behind, and complain dreadfully of pains in her limbs. Her load was taken from her, and she was ordered to keep in front of the caravan. About eleven o'clock, as the party was resting by a small rivulet, a hive of bees, which had been disturbed in a hollow tree, attacked the people and made them fly in all directions. When the enemy had desisted from pursuit, and all were employed in picking out the stings, it was discovered that Nealee had not come up. She was found, very

much exhausted, lying by the rivulet, to which she had crept in hopes of defending herself from the bees, by throwing water over her body; but she was stung in the most dreadful manner. When the *slatees*\* had picked out the stings as well as they could, she was washed with water and then rubbed with bruised leaves; but the wretched woman obstinately refused to proceed any farther, declaring that she would rather die than walk another step. As entreaties and threats were used in vain, the whip was at length applied. After bearing patiently a few strokes, she started up, and walked with tolerable expedition for four or five hours longer, when she made an attempt to run away from the *coffle*, but was so very weak that she soon fell down in the grass. Though she was unable to rise, the whip was a second time employed, but without effect. They tried to place her upon the ass which carried the provisions; but she could not sit erect; and the animal being very refractory, it was found impossible to carry her forward in that manner. The day's journey was nearly ended, and being unwilling to abandon her, they made a litter of bamboo canes, and tied her on it with slips of bark. This litter was carried on the heads of two slaves, followed by two more, who relieved them occasionally. In this manner she was carried till the caravan reached a stream of water, where they stopped for the night. At daybreak poor Nealee was awakened; but her limbs were now so stiff and

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\* Black traders who go from the coast to the interior for articles of merchandise, of which slaves constitute a large portion.

painful that she could neither walk nor stand. She was therefore lifted like a corpse upon the back of an ass; her hands fastened together under the animal's neck, and her feet under his belly, with long strips of bark. But the ass was so very unruly, that no sort of treatment could make him proceed with his load; and as Nealee made no exertion to prevent herself from falling, she was quickly thrown off, and had her limbs much bruised. The general cry of the coffle now was, 'Cut her throat—Cut her throat.' "

Mr. Park, not wishing to see this put in execution, hurried onward. When he had walked about a mile, one of Karfa's domestic slaves came up with poor Nealee's garment on the end of his bow, and exclaimed, "Nealee is lost." Mr. Park asked if the garment had been given him for cutting her throat. He replied that Karfa would not consent to that measure, and they had left her on the road. The helpless creature was no doubt soon devoured by wild beasts.

Mr. Clapperton tells another painful story of a wretched slave mother, who saw her child dashed on the ground, while she herself was compelled by the lash to drag along her exhausted frame.

African mothers have an unbounded affection for their children. When Mr. Park was at Wawra, and known to be on his way to Sego, several women came and begged him to ask the king about their sons, who had been taken away to the army. One declared that she had neither seen nor heard of hers for several years; that he was no heathen, but said

his prayers daily ; and that he was often the subject of her dreams.

At Jumbo the same traveller witnessed an affecting interview between an African who had been long absent from home, and his relations. His aged and blind mother, leaning on a staff, was led forth to meet him. She stretched out her hands to welcome him, fondly stroked his hands, arms, and face, and seemed delighted to hear once more the music of his voice. Instances are likewise on record of mothers that have fallen down dead on the sands, when they saw their children forced away in slave ships.

When suffering the extremity of famine, mothers in the interior sometimes sell their children to a wealthier neighbor, for the sake of procuring food. But the domestic slavery of the Africans is altogether of a milder character, and more resembles Hebrew servitude, than the slavery existing among white men. Even the richest African lives in a manner so simple and pastoral, that little toil is requisite to supply his wants, and being a stranger to the love of accumulating wealth, he has no temptation to work his laborers beyond their strength. The slave and his master eat, drink, and work together in all the freedom of uncivilized life ; and the master can neither put a slave to death for crime, or sell him to a stranger, without calling a public palaver, or discussion, of the elders of the tribe.

The affection of parents is warmly reciprocated by their children. An African will forgive any personal injury much more readily than a disrespectful epithet

applied to his parents. "Strike me, but do not curse my mother!" is a common expression among them. Filial attachment is less strong toward fathers than toward mothers; because paternal love is weakened by being divided among the offspring of several different wives.

In general, the fondness of African mothers is confined to the bodily comfort of their children; but the Mandingoes extend their care to the formation of moral character. A Mandingo woman whose son had been mortally wounded by a Moor, wrung her hands in frantic grief, continually repeating, "He never told a lie; no, never."

The women of Madagascar probably love their children as tenderly as other mothers, but with them superstition conquers nature, as it does among the Hindoos. If a magician decides that the day of a child's birth is an unlucky one, parents endeavor to avert the supposed evil destiny that awaits the infant, by putting a violent end to its existence. Sometimes the innocent little creatures are left in a narrow path, through which large herds of cattle are driven; and if it escape without being trampled to death, it is supposed that the malignant influence is removed. Sometimes a wooden vessel is filled with water, and the babe's face forcibly held in it, till it ceases to breathe; sometimes it is laid face downward in a pit dug for its reception; and sometimes a cloth is stuffed into its mouth until suffocation ensues. Parents themselves generally perform the horrid office, strengthened by the mistaken idea that there is no

other way of saving the child from the misery predicted for its future years.

The hospitality which generally characterizes a pastoral people prevails in Africa. The blind are the only beggars ever seen. They assemble in greater or less numbers and take their rounds in the villages, singing verses from the Koran; and every one is ready to put grain and other provisions into the bags which they carry slung at their backs. The Seracolots are very remarkable for their hospitality. When a vessel anchors near one of their villages, the whole crew are abundantly and gratuitously furnished with every necessary; and when a stranger enters one of their dwellings, the owner goes out of it, saying, "White man, my house, my wife, my children, belong to thee." This is no unmeaning compliment; from that moment the guest does in fact enjoy all the prerogatives of the master.

In cases where suspicion or fear led the men to treat Mungo Park with neglect or rudeness, he always found women compassionate and kind. When the chief of a Foulah village shut the door in his face, a poor woman, who was spinning cotton in front of her hut, invited him in, and gave him a plentiful dish of kouskous; and at another time when he sat pensive and hungry by the road-side, unable to procure any food, an old female slave stopped to ask whether he had any dinner; and being informed that he had been robbed of every thing, she took the basket of ground-nuts from her head, and with a benevolent look gave him a few handfuls. The weary

traveller was about to thank her for this seasonable relief, but she walked away before he had time.

One tempestuous night the same daring adventurer, hungry, destitute, and disheartened, took shelter for the night under a tree. A Bambarra woman, returning from the labors of the field, inquired why he looked so sad; and when she learned his situation she took up his saddle and bridle, and bade him follow her. She conducted him to her hut, lighted a lamp, spread a mat for him to sit upon, broiled a fish for his supper, and gave him to understand that he might lie down and sleep without interruption. While he rested, the women in the hut resumed their spinning, an employment which had been for a while interrupted by their surprise at seeing a white man. As they worked, they sung an extempore song, of which the traveller was the subject.

The winds roared, and the rains fell;  
 The poor white man, faint and weary,  
 Came and sat under our tree.  
 He has no mother to bring him milk,  
 No wife to grind his corn.

CHORUS.

Let us pity the white man;  
 No mother has he to bring him milk,  
 No wife to grind his corn.

The air was sweet and plaintive, and the kind sentiments it conveyed affected Mr. Park so deeply that he could not sleep. In the morning, he gave his landlady two of the four brass buttons that remained on his waistcoat; these were all he had to offer to signify his gratitude.

“In all my wanderings and wretchedness,” says this enlightened traveller, “I found women uniformly kind and compassionate ; and I can truly say, as my predecessor, Mr. Ledyard, has said before me : ‘ To a woman I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship without receiving a decent and friendly answer. If I was hungry or thirsty, wet, or sick, they did not hesitate, like the men, to perform a generous action. In so free and so kind a manner did they contribute to my relief, that if I was dry, I drank the sweetest draught, and if hungry, I ate the coarsest morsel, with a double relish.’ ”

An Arab widow at Houssa became very much enamored with captain Clapperton, and he found some difficulty in ridding himself of her suit. According to Moorish custom, her eyebrows were dyed black, her hair blue, her hands and feet red, and her huge person was loaded with necklaces, girdles, and bracelets. In order still farther to tempt the European, she displayed to him an additional store of finery, and carried him through several rooms, one of which was ornamented with pewter dishes and bright brass pans. After these preliminaries, she proposed to send forthwith for a priest to unite their destinies. The captain stammered out the best apology he could, and hurried away. She followed him to a neighboring village, sitting astride on a very fine horse, with scarlet housings trimmed with lace. She wore a red silk mantle and morocco boots, and a multitude of spells sewed in various colored leather were hung around her. Her drummer was decorated in



ostrich feathers, and a train of armed attendants followed her. It was rumored that she intended to make herself queen, and invite captain Clapperton to share the throne of Wawa. Her wealth and the influence she might enable him to obtain, for a moment tempted him; and as the widow had induced his servant Pascoe to take a wife from among her slaves, she had, according to African ideas, acquired some right to himself; but he soon directed Pascoe to return his wife, and thus destroy her remaining hopes. "It would indeed have been a fine end of my journey," says he, "if I had deposed old Mohammed, and set up for myself, with this walking tun butt for a queen."

One of Bonaparte's officers, named Duranton, expatriated himself at the time France was conquered by foreign arms, and entered into commercial relations in Africa. He finally went as far into the interior as Kasso, where he adopted the language and habits of the natives. By his bravery and knowledge he soon gained unbounded influence. The king had an only daughter, about sixteen, whom her countrymen esteemed beautiful. Duranton, notwithstanding the prejudice against his complexion, was pleasing to the young damsel. He married her, and was soon after elected king of Kasso. He has extended the commerce of the tribe, but attempted no innovation upon their ancient customs. He eats, dresses, and sits after the manner of the natives, and observes precisely the same sort of etiquette that was maintained by his father-in-law.

On the coasts of Africa, where the natives have frequent intercourse with European sailors, they are exceedingly licentious and depraved.

According to Bruce's description, the Abyssinian women are grossly familiar in their manners; at a village on the banks of the Gambia, the women were likewise guilty of very rude freedoms. They troubled Mr. Park exceedingly, begging for amber, beads, &c., and boldly proceeding to tear his clothes, in order to secure the buttons. He mounted his horse and rode off; but they followed him for more than a mile, trying to renew their outrages.

The women of Loggun are described by major Denham as intelligent, handsome, and lively; but their freedoms were not of the most delicate character, and they tried to pilfer every thing they could lay hands on. When detected they laughed, and called out to each other how sharp the traveller was in finding out their tricks.

Captain Clapperton makes great complaints of the loquacity of the women. He says they convinced him that no power, not even African despotism, can silence a woman's tongue. According to his own testimony, however, their love of talk originated in mere childish curiosity, and was indulged with the kindest intentions.

In Walo, the crown is hereditary, but always descends to the eldest son of the king's sister; and among several other tribes a man's property is always inherited by the offspring of his sister, according to the custom of the Nairs of Hindostan. This

circumstance does not indicate any great confidence in the character of women.

It has been said that the Africans are generally indolent; and when compared with the busy, restless sons of ambition and avarice, this is no doubt true. The soil is prolific and easy of cultivation; their wants are very few and simple; and they have not the slightest desire for the accumulation of wealth. During the few months which it is necessary to devote to agricultural pursuits, they are so busy that they scarcely allow themselves time for sleep; and the rest of the year they give up to child-like merriment.

The African race, as distinguished from the Arabs or Moors, are faithful, affectionate, sensitive in their feelings, and liable to almost instantaneous changes from gloom to gayety, according to the circumstances in which they are placed. When in the greatest misery, a kind look or word will animate them, as it does the heart of a little child; but when their cup of suffering is full, the "drop too much" which tyranny seeks to add to the bitter measure, often arouses them to fierce and desperate fury. In a state of freedom they are almost universally gentle, inquisitive, credulous, and fond of flattery.

Barrow speaks thus of the Kaffers: "A party of women were the first who advanced to salute us, laughing and dancing round the wagons, and putting on all the coaxing manners they could invent, in order to procure from us tobacco and brass buttons. Good temper, animation, and a cheerful turn of mind,

beamed in all their countenances. We found them to be modest without reserve; extremely curious without being troublesome; lively but not impudent; and sportive without the least shadow of being lascivious. The most striking feature in their character was a degree of sprightliness, activity, and vivacity, that distinguished them from the women of most uncivilized nations, who are generally reserved toward strangers."

The African laws are simple and rude, like their habits; but it appears from the accounts of travelers that widows retain peaceable possession of their property, and are able to transact business with perfect security. This implies a degree of good order in society, which one would not expect to find in uncivilized states.

In most of the tribes on the southern and western coast of Africa, women do not inherit the property of their fathers, either real or personal.

Among the Wolofs when a young man wishes to marry, he signifies it to the parents of the girl, who meet him at some public place in the village. When the young couple are surrounded by a circle of relatives, the man offers as much gold or merchandise, oxen or slaves, as he can afford to pay. The girl's consent is not necessary for the completion of the bargain; but if she refuses to fulfil the promise of her parents, she can never marry another; should she attempt to do so, the first lover can claim her as his slave. As soon as the parties have agreed upon the price, the young man pays the required sum;

and the same evening the bride is conveyed to the bridegroom's hut, by a troop of relations and friends. On these occasions she always wears a white veil of her own weaving. The rejoicings continue for eight days, during which the guests are abundantly supplied with palm wine and other liquors.

Among the Sereres, when a lover has formally obtained the consent of relations, he summons his friends to assist him in carrying off the object of his choice. The bride shuts herself up in a hut with her companions, where they maintain an obstinate siege before they surrender to the assailants.

In Bambuk, the bride is escorted to the hut of her future husband. When she arrives at the door, she takes off her sandals, and a calabash of water is placed in her hand. She knocks, and the door is opened by the relations of the bridegroom, who remains seated in the midst of the hut. The bride kneels before him, pours the water over his feet, and wipes them with her mantle, in token of submission.

Mr. Park speaks of seeing a betrothed girl at Banniseribe, who knelt before her lover, and presenting a calabash of water, desired him to wash his hands; when he had done so, she drank the water, apparently with delight; this being considered a great proof of fidelity and love. In Madagascar, wives salute their husbands just returned from war, by passing the tongue over his feet, in the most respectful manner.

Among the Mandingoes, when the lover has settled the bargain with the girl's parents, she is covered

with the bridal veil of white cotton, and seated on a mat, with all the elderly women of the neighborhood ranged in a circle round her. They give her sage instructions concerning the performance of her duties and the propriety of her deportment as a matron. A band of female *guiriots* come in and disturb their serious lessons with music, singing, and dancing. The bridegroom in the mean time entertains his friends without doors. A plentiful supper is provided, and the evening is devoted to mirth. Before midnight the bride is privately conducted by her female relatives to the hut which is to be her future residence. The bridal party generally continue dancing and singing until broad daylight.

At the island of St. Louis, the native women often contract a sort of limited marriage with Europeans, and their vows are said to be generally observed with exemplary fidelity. They take the Portuguese title of Signora, and the children receive the name of their father. The bridal ceremonies are similar to the Wolofs. When the European husband leaves the country, he provides for his family according to his wealth, and the generosity of his character; and his wife is at liberty to marry again when she pleases.

In Congo, marriage is sometimes consecrated with Catholic ceremonies, by the converts to Christianity; but the pagan natives preserve the simplicity of their ancient forms. When a young man has selected a damsel that pleases him, he sends presents to her relatives, accompanied by a cup of palm wine. If the presents are accepted, and the wine drunk, it is

considered a sign of approbation. He visits the parents, and having received his bride from their hands, conducts her to his own house. Here she remains, till he is satisfied with regard to her temper, industry, and general propriety of deportment. Sometimes this season of probation lasts one year, and sometimes two or three. If either party becomes dissatisfied with the other, they separate, without any loss of reputation; but if mutually pleased, they signify it publicly to friends and relations, and the event is celebrated by a feast. The Portuguese missionaries made a strong effort to abolish this custom; but the people were much attached to it; and mothers universally declared they would not subject themselves to the reproaches of their daughters, by urging them to an indissoluble union with individuals, whose tempers and dispositions they had never seen tried.

In Abyssinia there is no form of marriage, except what consists in a mutual consent to live together as long as they please each other. This connection is dissolved and renewed as often as the parties think proper. From the highest to the lowest rank, no distinction is made between legitimate and illegitimate children. The women, though Mohammedans, appear freely in public; and the master of a family considers it a point of civility to offer his wife or sister to a guest. The celebrated queen of Sheba is supposed to have been an Abyssinian; and the monarchs now claim descent from Menilek, who they say was her son by Solomon, king of the Jews.

In Caffraria, the bridal ceremonies are so simple

as scarcely to deserve the name. When young people wish to live together, opposition from parents is almost an unheard-of circumstance. A feast is prepared to give publicity to the event, and they eat, drink, and dance, for days or weeks in succession, according to the wealth of the parties. If a Caffer girl marries during the lifetime of her father, she receives for dowry as many cattle as he can afford to give; but after his death, she is dependent on the generosity of her brothers. As a wife costs an ox, or two cows, it is rare for any but wealthy Caffers to have more than one. Twins are said to be more common than in any other country, and three children at a birth is a frequent occurrence.

An African dowry is sometimes furnished in a manner painful to think upon. When the sultan of Mandara married his daughter to an Arab sheik, "the nuptials were celebrated by a great slave hunt among the mountains, when, after a dreadful struggle, three thousand captives, by their tears and bondage, furnished out the materials of a magnificent marriage festival."

In Dahomey, all the unmarried females, throughout the kingdom, are considered the property of the despotic sovereign. Once a year they are all brought before him; he selects the most engaging for himself, and sells the others at high prices to his subjects. No choice is allowed the purchaser. He pays twenty thousand cowries, and receives such a wife as the king pleases to appoint; being obliged to appear satisfied with the selection, whatever may be her as-



pect or condition. It is said that some have, in mockery, been presented with their own mothers. This brutal and bloody sovereign usually keeps as many as three thousand wives, who serve him in various capacities. No person is allowed to sit even on the floor in the royal presence, except his women; and they must kiss the ground whenever they receive or deliver a message from the king. These women are watched with the most savage jealousy.

Mr. M'Leod, who visited Dahomey in 1803, had his compassion much excited by the sudden disappearance of Sally Abson, daughter of the late English governor by a native female. This girl, who had been educated in the European manner, was accomplished, and had a most winning simplicity of manner. Mr. M'Leod could obtain no tidings of her for a long time. But at last an old domestic ventured to tell him that she had been carried off by an armed band, in the night-time, to be enrolled among the king's women.

The king of Ashantee has three thousand three hundred and thirty-three wives; a mystical number, on which the prosperity of the nation is supposed to depend.

The king of Yarriba boasted to captain Clapper-ton, that his wives linked hand in hand would reach entirely across his kingdom. The first question asked by the chiefs was, how many wives the king of England had; and when told that he had but one, they would burst into loud peals of laughter, accompanied by expressions of surprise and pity.

These numerous queens are, however, in fact, nothing but servants, and valued only as an indication of power and wealth. Beside forming a military guard for the king, they labor in the fields, bring water, and carry heavy burdens on their heads, just like the wives of the poorest subject.

The pagan Africans are formally married but to one wife; but they take as many mistresses as they can maintain, and send them away when they please. The lawful wife, provided she has children, has authority over all the female members of the household, and her children enjoy privileges superior to the rest; but if she is so unfortunate as not to be a mother, she is not considered as the head of the establishment.

The women belonging to one household generally live very peaceably. Each one takes her turn in cooking and other domestic avocations; and the husband is expected to be equally kind, generous, and attentive to all.

A *slatee*, with whom Mr. Park entered Kamalia, brought with him a young girl as his fourth wife, for whom he had given her parents three slaves. His other wives received her at the door very kindly, and conducted her into one of the best huts, which they had caused to be swept and whitewashed on purpose for her reception.

Dissensions, it is said, do sometimes occur, and the husband finds it necessary to administer a little chastisement before tranquillity is restored.

Unfaithfulness to the marriage vow is said to be very rare among the Mandingoes and the Kaffers.

Throughout Africa this crime in a woman is punished by being sold into slavery; but the punishment cannot be arbitrarily and immediately inflicted by the husband, as is the case in many Asiatic countries; it is necessary to call a public palaver, or discussion, upon the subject. The price of a woman condemned for this vice is divided between the king and his grandees; it is therefore probable that they keep rather a strict watch upon the morality of their female subjects. Sometimes the paramour is likewise sentenced to be sold into slavery; sometimes he receives a severe flogging, amid the shouts and laughter of the multitude; and not unfrequently he is murdered by the abused husband. In this latter case, unless the murderer can buy a pardon from his prince, he is obliged to seek refuge in some other kingdom, where he falls at the feet of some rich person, and voluntarily acknowledges himself a slave; but he can never be sold, and is in fact regarded as one of the family. It frequently happens that the whole family of the culprit are obliged to flee their country, to avoid being sold into slavery for the crime of their relative.

The *marabouts* always marry among each other; and as the children follow the profession of their fathers, there are whole villages of these priests. They obtain great influence by being able to write verses of the Koran, and administer very simple medicinal remedies. They consider it a sacred obligation to ransom all persons of their own profession from slavery.

The ties of domestic affection are said to be peculiarly strong among the Shouaa Arabs, who reside in tents near the central part of Africa. When their chief learned that major Denham had been three years absent from home, he said, "Are not your eyes dimmed with straining to the north, where all your thoughts must be? If my eyes do not see the wife and children of my heart for ten days, they are flowing with tears when they should be closed in sleep." His parting salutation to the traveller was, "May you die at your own tents, and in the arms of your wife and family."

In some cases wealthy Africans do not avail themselves of the universal custom of polygamy. Barrow thus describes the Kaffer prince, Gaika: "At the time I saw him, he was under twenty years of age, of an elegant form, and a graceful and manly deportment; his face of a deep bronze color, nearly approaching to black; his skin soft and smooth; his eyes dark brown, and full of animation; his teeth regular, well set, and pure as the whitest ivory. He had the appearance of possessing in an eminent degree a solid understanding, a clear head, and an amiable disposition. He seemed to be adored by his subjects; the name of Gaika was in every mouth, and it was seldom pronounced without symptoms of joy. He had only one wife, who was very young, and, setting aside the prejudice against color, very pretty."

The French traveller Brue says the women on the banks of the Senegal appeared to consider the condi-

tion of European wives very enviable, and expressed great compassion for him in being separated from his only wife without the power of marrying another. When Dr. Lichtenstein visited Latakoo, the women were, as usual, very curious about the Christian custom of having but one wife. The queen approved the system, but she thought polygamy was necessary in Africa, because such numbers of the men were killed in war.

Infants of a few hours old are washed in cold water and laid on a mat, with no other covering than a cotton cloth thrown loosely over them.

In twelve or fifteen days the mothers carry them about, suspended at their backs, by means of the *pagne* or mantle, which they fasten around the hips, and over one shoulder. Infants are kept in this situation nearly the whole day, while the women are busy at their various avocations. They are nursed until they are able to walk; sometimes until three years old. A few tumbles, or similar trifling accidents, are not considered worthy of much anxiety or commiseration. Till ten or twelve years old, children wear no clothing, and do nothing but run about and sport on the sands. Those who live near the sea-shore, are continually plunging into the water; in consequence of which scarcely any disease appears among them, except the small-pox. A child receives its name when it is eight days old. A sort of paste, called *dega*, is prepared for the occasion, and the priest recites prayers over it. He takes the babe in his arms, invokes the blessing of heaven upon

it, whispers a few words in its ear, spits three times in its face, pronounces aloud the name that is given to it, and returns it to the mother. He then divides the consecrated *dega* among the guests, and if any person be sick, he sends them some of it. A similar custom prevails in the Barbary states.

The moment an African ceases to breathe, his wife runs out of the hut, beating her breast, tearing her hair, and summoning her neighbors by loud cries. Friends and relatives soon assemble in the hut, and join in her lamentations, continually repeating, "Woe is me!"

When the marabouts have rubbed the corpse with oil and covered it with cloths, each person goes up and addresses it, as if still living. In a few minutes they go away, saying, "He is dead;" the lamentations are renewed, and continue till the next day, when the burial takes place. Major Denham speaks of hearing the Dugganah women singing funeral dirges all night long in honor of their husbands, who had fallen in battle. These dirges were prepared for the occasion, and were so solemn and plaintive, that they could not be listened to without the deepest sympathy.

The body is conveyed to the grave in straw mats. Women hired for the occasion follow it with loud shrieks, and the most extravagant demonstrations of sorrow. They return howling to the hut, where they pronounce an eulogium on the deceased. If they perform their parts well, they are complimented by relations, and are treated with palm wine. or

other spirituous liquors. For eight days in succession these women go to the grave at sunrise and sunset, and renew their lamentations, saying, "Hadst thou not wives, and arms, and horses, and pipes, and tobacco? Wherefore then didst thou leave us?"

The relations and friends of the deceased remain in seclusion with his widow eight days, to console her grief.

The Abyssinian women wound their faces while they lament for the dead. In Congo, the relatives shave their heads, anoint their bodies, and rub them with dust, during the eight days of mourning. They consider it very indecorous for a widow to join in any festivity for the space of one year after her husband's death.

In Dahomey and Ashantee, wives, and slaves of both sexes, often one hundred in number, are slaughtered at the death of the king, from the idea that he will need their attendance in another world; and every year, at least one human being and many animals are killed "to water the graves" of the royal family. The government of Yarriba is more mild and paternal; but it is the custom for a few of the king's favorite wives, and some of his principal ministers, to take poison, which is presented to them in parrots' eggs, in order that they may go to serve his majesty in the world of spirits.

Fragrant flowers and a quantity of gold are sometimes buried with people of rank, for their use in another world. On the death of a young girl, the body is washed, anointed with palm oil, decorated

in all her finery, and laid upon a bed; her companions join in a dance around her; and when this ceremony is concluded, she is buried in her best clothes. The graves are covered with little mounds of straw, on which a lance, bow, and arrow are placed for the men, and a mortar and pestle for a woman. The solemnities always conclude with a feast, at which the guiriots dance, while all join in singing the praises of the deceased.

The Africans, like the Asiatics, do not use knives or forks. All eat from a wooden bowl, which is placed on a mat, or low stool, in the middle of the hut. The women seldom eat until the men have done. After the repast a woman brings a calabash of water, and offers it to each of the guests, for the purpose of washing his hands and mouth. In Tesee the women are not allowed to eat eggs, though the men eat them without scruple. It is not known in what the custom originated, but nothing will affront a woman of that country so much as to offer her an egg.

In Congo, people of rank are often carried by slaves in a sort of hammock swung upon poles, which is frequently protected from the sun by an awning thrown over it. Women in all parts of Africa are often seen riding on asses or oxen. They guide the latter by means of a string passed through a ring in the nose; and they sometimes manage to make these quiet beasts curvet and caper.

Apes, baboons, and monkeys, are exceedingly numerous in Africa. A woman of the country of Ga-



lam, who was carrying some milk and millet to sell in a neighboring village, was attacked by a troop of apes from three to four feet high. They threw stones at her, and holding her fast, beat her with sticks, until she dropped the vessel she was carrying. She returned home much bruised, and the men formed a hunting party, which killed ten of the savage animals, and wounded several others; not however without getting sundry bites and bruises during the encounter.

The Hottentot race seem to be distinct from all other people, and surpassing all others, even the Calmucks, in ugliness. The eyes are long, narrow, and distant from each other; the eyelids do not form an angle at the extremity near the nose, but are formed in a manner very similar to the Chinese; their cheek bones are very high and prominent, and form nearly a triangle with the narrow pointed chin; the complexion is yellowish brown, like an autumn leaf; the hair grows in small tufts at certain distances from each other; when kept short, the head looks like a hard shoe-brush, but when suffered to grow, it hangs in the neck in a sort of hard twisted fringe. An old Hottentot woman is said to be a most uncouth and laughable figure; some parts of the body being very lank, and others jutting out in huge protuberances of loose flesh. The letter S gives the best idea of the curvature of their forms. The habit of throwing the breast over the shoulder, in order to enable infants to nurse while swinging at their backs, contributes not a little to increase their deformity. Yet

some of the women, when very young, are said to be perfect models of beauty in the female form. Every joint and limb is well turned and proportioned, and the hands and feet are remarkably small and delicate, though they never wear shoes, or sandals. Their charms, however, endure but a very short time. They are old at thirty; and long before that time, their shape assumes those strange and disgusting disproportions, for which it seems difficult to account.

In their state of slavery they have suffered great cruelties from their masters, the Dutch boors of South Africa. The lands and flocks, of which their fathers had been in peaceful and happy possession, were wrested from them; they were compelled to labor without compensation; allowed scarcely food enough to support life; mangled with tough, heavy whips of the sea-cow's hide; and sometimes, for the slightest offences, chained to a post, while shot was fired into their naked limbs. These Dutch tyrants introduced a singular degree of luxurious refinement into their mode of despotism; they did not, according to the usual custom of slave-owners, order their offending vassals to receive a certain number of lashes, but directions were given to flog them while their master or mistress lazily smoked out one, two, three, or four pipes.

Under these circumstances, the simple, kind-hearted Hottentots became servile, degraded, and wretched to the last degree. Unlike all others of the colored race, they were always gloomy and dejected, being

rarely excited even to a languid smile. Their indolence was so great that they would fast a whole day rather than dig a root, if they might only be allowed to sleep. The natural color of their bodies was concealed by an accumulation of grease and soot, and their habits were so filthy that the description would be disgusting. Though strong in their attachment to each other, they were generally disinclined to marriage.

The situation in which women were placed,—being originally ignorant savages, and afterward completely in the power of masters, whose policy it was to brutalize them,—of course precluded all possibility of morality or modesty. In fact the immortal part of man seemed extinguished in the Hottentots, and they appeared to be altogether like the beasts of the field.

The bit of sheep-skin which they wear for clothing scarcely answers the purposes of decency, and with them it is entirely a matter of indifference whether it does or not. The women wear a small leather apron, seven or eight inches wide, which it is their delight to decorate with beads, shells, or large metal buttons. If in addition to this they can obtain beads for the neck, and copper rings for the arms, they experience as much delight as can possibly be felt by people of such a phlegmatic temperament. Those who cannot afford beads and shells wear leather necklaces and bracelets, and cover themselves with a piece of sheep-skin, cut into narrow strips, which hang in a bunch about half way to the knee. The rattling of this hard dry skin announces

the approach of a Hottentot woman some time before she appears. In winter, they defend themselves from the cold by means of a sheep-skin cloak over the shoulders; and some wear skin caps on their heads, ornamented as their rude fancy dictates. Fragments of a looking-glass, to fasten in their caps, or among their hair, are considered as precious as diamonds with us.

The habit of greasing their bodies probably originated, as it did in other warm climates, in the scarcity of water, and the necessity of some protection from the rays of the sun. Barrow suggests that this practice introduced into South America would prove a salutary check to the prevalence of that loathsome disorder called the elephantiasis.

When a Hottentot wishes to marry, he drives two or three of his best oxen or sheep to the house of the bride's relations, accompanied by as many friends as he can collect together. The animals are slain, and the whole assembly rub themselves with the fat. The men sit in a circle round the bridegroom, and the women round the bride. A blessing is then pronounced on the young couple, which principally consists in the hope that their sons will be expert hunters, and prove a comfort to their old age. A feast is then prepared, and when they have all eaten voraciously, a pipe is lighted, of which each one smokes a few whiffs, and then passes it to his neighbor. Feasting is sometimes kept up for several days; but they have no music or dancing. Men and women always eat separately.

When an infant is born, they rub it gently with fresh cow-dung, believing it to possess certain medicinal qualities; they then bruise the stalks of wild figs and wash the child in the juice; and when this is dry, fat, or butter, is liberally applied. After this the parents give it a name, which is generally the appellation of some favorite animal. A feast is given, of which all the inhabitants of the kraal, or village, partake, except the mother, who receives some of the fat for the use of herself and child.

Large numbers of the Hottentot women are childless, and a family of six is considered a wonderful prodigy.

The half European and half Hottentot children are remarkably vigorous and healthy, and become tall, well-proportioned men and women. This mixed race, somewhat remarkable for brightness and activity, seem likely to supplant the natives entirely.

It rarely happens that a Hottentot woman has twins, but when this is the case one of them is barbarously exposed in the woods, to be starved, or devoured by wild beasts, as the case may be. Very old people are sometimes exposed in the same way. All the other African tribes are distinguished for great respect and tenderness toward the aged.

When the Hottentot boys are eighteen years old, they are formally admitted into the society of men. The company of women, even that of their own mothers, is ever after considered a disgrace to them; and being released from all maternal authority, they not

unfrequently beat their mothers and sisters, merely to show manly independence.

The women howl and lament for the dead, in the same manner that prevails in other portions of the continent.

A Hottentot kraal, or village, consists of a circle of low dirty huts, which at a little distance resemble a cluster of bee-hives. The employments of the women are such as generally fall to their lot in a savage state. A great many of them are slaves to the Dutch boors, and of course perform all their most menial and laborious occupations. Their patience and fortitude under suffering are truly wonderful.

Low as the Hottentots are in the scale of humanity, they are by no means destitute of good and agreeable qualities. They are very mild, inoffensive, open-hearted, honest, and grateful. Their affection for each other is so strong, that they will at any moment share their last morsel of food with a distressed companion; and they very seldom quarrel, or speak unkindly to their associates. They seem to be entirely destitute of cunning, and when they have committed a fault rarely fail to tell of it with the utmost simplicity.

M. Vaillant says: "They are the best, the kindest, and the most hospitable of people. Whoever travels among them may be sure of finding food and lodging; and though they will receive presents, they never ask for any thing. If they learn that the traveller has a long journey to accomplish, they will supply him with provisions as far as their circumstances

will allow, and with every thing else necessary to enable him to reach the place of his destination. Such did these people appear to me, in all the innocent manners of pastoral life. They excite the idea of mankind in a state of infancy."

The *Hernhüters*, or Moravian missionaries, have had a most blessed influence on this poor persecuted race. These missionaries cultivate gardens and fields in the neatest manner, and are themselves engaged in various mechanical trades. The Hottentots by kindness and punctual wages are induced to come and work for them, and the good fathers are ever ready to instruct them in agriculture and the mechanical arts. In 1824, nearly two thousand Hottentots lived in small huts, under the protecting influence of the missionaries, each one cultivating a little patch of ground to raise vegetables for his family. Some of them employed their leisure moments in making mats and brooms, while others obtained a comfortable subsistence by the sale of poultry, eggs, and cattle.

Three hundred of their children attended Sunday school; and they contributed five hundred rix dollars to the missionary establishment by voluntary subscriptions. Under the fostering care of true-hearted, humble Christians, their habits of indolence and filth disappeared, and they became distinguished for industry and cleanliness. By the last accounts, about sixty Hottentots were communicants of the church.

Barrow, who visited the establishment in 1798, says: "Early one morning I was awakened by

the noise of some of the finest voices I ever heard, and looking out saw a group of female Hottentots sitting on the ground. It was Sunday, and they had assembled thus early to chant the morning hymn. They were all neatly dressed in printed cotton gowns. A sight so different from what we had hitherto observed, with regard to this unhappy class of beings, could not fail of being most grateful."

"On Sundays, they all regularly attend divine service, and it is astonishing how ambitious they are to appear at church neat and clean. Of the three hundred, or thereabouts, that composed the congregation, about half were dressed in printed cottons. Their deportment was truly devout. One of the fathers delivered a discourse replete with good sense, and well suited to the occasion; tears flowed abundantly from the eyes of those to whom it was particularly addressed. The females sung in a plaintive and affecting style; and the voices were in general sweet and harmonious."

The Dutch had always excused their own tyranny by saying that their unfortunate victims could not possibly be raised above the level of brutes; and they manifested extreme jealousy of the influence of the Gospel, because it bringeth light and freedom. The same spirit, which always led them to place the poor Hottentot in the worst possible point of view, likewise induced them to represent the amiable and generous Kaffers as a savage, treacherous, and cruel tribe. Yet they knew perfectly well that the Kaffers had shown a remarkable degree of moderation toward the



white colonists; and that in the midst of a war, into which they had been driven by a series of iniquitous persecutions, they spared the lives of all the Dutch women and children that fell into their hands, though their own wives and children were murdered by the Dutch without mercy.

In 1828 the British government relieved the Hottentots from their grievous thralldom, and at once bestowed upon them all the privileges of citizens. The change from slavery to freedom produces the effect that would naturally be expected by any one who had observed human nature attentively. This long oppressed race are fast improving in health, cleanliness, industry, and respectability.

The Bojesmans, or Bushmen, are wild Hottentots, who have always preserved their independence, though under circumstances of the extremest misery and want. In personal appearance they very much resemble the Hottentots, but are more diminutive and ugly. The colonists call them Chinese Hottentots, on account of the peculiar position and formation of the eyes and eyelids. Their customs and modes of life bear a general resemblance to those of their more submissive brethren; but, unlike them, they are very cheerful, active, and industrious. Both men and women spring from rock to rock, like wild antelopes, and their motions are so swift that a horseman finds it impossible to keep up with them on uneven ground. Although their scanty subsistence is earned with great danger and fatigue, they are always merry.

The deadly animosity of the Dutch settlers makes it necessary for them to remain concealed in their hovels among the rocks all day; but on moonlight nights, they come out and dance from the setting of the sun to its rising. They consider the first thunder storm as a sure indication that winter has passed away, and testify their joy by tearing off their sheep-skin coverings, and tossing them high up in the air. On these occasions, they dance for several successive nights. The circular places trodden around their huts indicate their fondness for this amusement.

The women usually wear a piece of antelope's skin cut into filaments, after the manner of the other Hottentots; and like them they are entirely unconscious of any shame in being without even this scanty covering. Some of them wear caps made of ass' skin, and bits of copper or shells suspended in the neck from their little tufts of hair. It is customary for elderly men to have two wives, one old and the other young. These poor creatures have such a dread of white men, that Mr. Barrow could hardly tempt the little children to come down the rocks toward his party, to receive the biscuits he held out to them. The mothers, finding their little ones were treated kindly, ventured to approach; and when they had received a few trifling presents, forty or fifty women and girls came down without any symptoms of fear. But the women went backward and forward a dozen times, with invitations and presents of tobacco, before one man could be prevailed

upon to descend ; and when he did, he half cried, half laughed, and trembled like a frightened child.

The Gonaquas are a tribe of unsubdued Hottentots, taller than the Bojesmans, but resembling them in personal appearance. The women generally paint the whole body with compartments of red and black. The red is an ochrey earth, the color of brick-dust, and the black is either soot or charcoal, mixed with grease. To finish this embellishment in approved style is a tedious process. Some content themselves with merely painting the cheeks. These colors are always perfumed with a powder called *boughou*, the smell of which is very disagreeable to those who are unused to it ; but the Hottentots are so fond of it, that they will sometimes give a lamb for a thimble full of *boughou*. The men paint only the upper lip ; by means of which they continually inhale the fragrance. When young girls consent to perform this office for their lovers, it is considered a very endearing proof of affection. These women are very fond mothers. Their principal occupations are cooking, taking care of their children, and making garments and vessels of the skins of animals sewed with sinews. Their aprons and cloaks are usually made of calf skins, and are longer and larger than those worn by other Hottentots. As soon as milk is taken from the cow, it is put in a leather sack with the hairy side inwards, and suffered to ferment ; for, like the Arabs, they have a dislike to sweet milk.

The Dutch women at the Cape are excessively ignorant, tyrannical, lazy, and fat ; the inevitable

consequence of having slaves to do every species of labor, while they themselves indulge in great profusion of animal food. An old Dutch African woman is said to be as laughable a figure as an old Hottentot; one being as large and uninterruptedly round as a hogshead, and the other characterized by uncouth projections of the body. The young Dutch girls at the Cape are said to be much superior to their clumsy, awkward brothers. They are generally small and well formed, with social, unaffected manners. A few of the higher class are tolerable proficient in music, French, and English, and have considerable skill in lace and various kinds of needle-work. They copy with much eagerness the English fashions that are brought to them, from time to time, by ladies bound for India.

Sons and daughters share equally in the paternal inheritance, and an entire community of property, both real and personal, takes place at the marriage of two persons, unless provided against by a formal contract before the wedding.















