

hand, shouting and cursing Ibrahim's father and grandfather, till he gets back his lost property. Sometimes when men leave their shoes outside the door of a house where they are calling, some one will steal them, and then they are in a sorry plight. Shoes are regarded as very unclean, and when you are talking in polite society, it will never do to speak of them, without asking pardon. You would say, "The other day some one stole my new shoes, ajellak Allah;" i.e., May God exalt you above such a vile subject! You would use the same words if you were talking with a Moslem, and spoke of a dog, a hog, a donkey, a girl, or a woman.

## MAD CAMELS.

What noise is that we hear down in the village, under the great jowz (walnut) trees by the fountain? It rolls, and gurgles, and growls, and bellows enough to frighten a whole village full of children. But the little Arab boys and girls are playing around, and women are filling their jars at the fountain just as if nothing had happened. But it is a frightful noise for all that. It is the bellowing of the camels as their heavy loads are being put on. They are kneeling on the ground, with their long necks swaying and stretching around like boa constrictors. These camels are very useful animals, but I always like to see them at a distance, especially in the month of February, for at that time they get to be as "mad as a March hare." They are what the Arabs call "taish," and often bite men severely. In Hums one bit the whole top of a man's head off, and in Tripoli another bit a man's hand off. I once saw a camel "taish" in Beirut, and he was driving the whole town before him. Wherever he came, with his tongue hanging down and a foaming froth pouring from his mouth as he growled and bellowed through the streets, the people would leave their shops and stools and run in dismay. It was a frightful sight. I was riding down town, and on seeing the crowd, and the camel coming towards me, I put spurs to my horse and rode home.

When camels are tied together in a long caravan, with a little mouse-colored donkey leading the van, ridden by a long-legged Bedawy, who sits half-asleep smoking his pipe, you would think them the tamest and most innocent creatures in the world; but when they fall into a panic, they are beyond all control. A few years ago a drove of camels were passing through the city of Damascus. The Arabs drive camels like sheep, hundreds and sometimes thousands in a flock, and they look awkward enough. When this drove entered the city, something frightened them, and they began to run. Just imagine a camel running! What a sight it must have been! Hundreds of them went through the narrow streets,

knocking over men and women and donkeys, upsetting the shopkeepers, and spilling their wares on the ground, and many persons were badly bruised. At length a carpenter saw them coming and put a timber across the street, which dammed up the infuriated tide of camels, and they dashed against one another until they were all wedged together, and thus their owners secured them.

The camel is very sure-footed, but cannot travel on muddy and slippery roads. The Arabs say "The camel never falls, but if he falls, he never gets up again." They carry long timbers over Lebanon, on the steep and rocky roads, the timber being balanced on the pack-saddle, one end extending out on front, and the other behind. Sometimes the timber begins to swing about, and down the camel goes over the precipice and is dashed to pieces.

## THE FRUIT AND CRITICS.

See the piles of fruit in the streets! Grapes and figs, water melons and pomegranates, peaches, pears, lemons and bananas. At other seasons of the year you have oranges, *sweet lemons*, plums and apricots. There is fresh fruit on the trees here every week in the year. Now we are passing a lemonade stand where iced lemonade is sold for a cent a glass, cooled with snow from the summit of Mount Lebanon, 9,000 feet high. Grapes are about a cent a pound, and figs the same, and in March you can buy five oranges or ten sweet lemons for a cent. Huge water-melons are about eight or ten cents apiece. We buy so many pounds of milk and oil, and potatoes, and charcoal. The prickly pear, or *subire*, is a delicious fruit, although covered with sharp barbed spines and thorns. It is full of hard, large woody seeds, but the people are very fond of the fruit. Sheikh Nasif el Yazijv was a famous Arab poet and scholar, and a young man brought him a poem to be corrected. He told him to call in a few days and get it. He came again, and the Sheikh said to him, "Your poem is like the missionary's prickly pear." "The missionary's prickly pear?" said the young poet. "What do you mean?" "Why," said the Sheikh, "Dr.—, a missionary, when he first came to Syria, had a dish of prickly pears set before him to eat. Not liking to eat the seeds, he began to pick them out, and when he had picked out all the seeds there was nothing left! So your poem. You asked me to remove the errors, and I found that when I had taken out all the errors there was nothing left."

## HOW THE PRIEST COUNTED.

The Syrians have a good many stories about their priests, which they laugh about, and yet they obey them, no matter how ignorant they are, Abú Selim in the Meena