

selves covers half the floor of the single room that forms the house. The walls were evidently whitewashed when the house was first put up, but are now covered with dust and smoke. A few ugly pictures and some fantastic needlework are the only ornament. That pile of quilts in the corner is the bedding, for all are to sleep in this room on the floor.

An old man, his stockinged feet drawn up under the folds of an ample dressing gown, is seated on the *sedir*¹ by one of the small windows. He moves as if to rise and give his guests the seat of honor in the corner, but we press him not to move, and seat ourselves by his side. "He is our baba, our grandfather," explains our host. And as he sits there with toil-worn hands, his face surrounded by white hair as by a halo, he reminds one of the old patriarchs who toiled when young for the bread of their children, and when old lived to guide, comfort and bless those who now toiled for them. And so Ghazar Baba now rules with patriarchal dignity and wisdom over a household composed of his two sons, his daughters-in-law, and thirteen grandchildren. His days of usefulness as a bread-winner are now almost over, though he is loath to believe so, but he will still live for many years to be a guide and an inspiration to his little grandchildren and great grandchildren.

While we are sitting on the *sedir* talking, a handsome woman enters, her costume gayer than ordinary and her hair and bosom covered with tinsel and a few gold and silver coins. She is the *harss*,² who has come to wash our feet. So she puts down her basin before us, and removing our stockings, pours water over our feet from a brass pitcher and wipes them with a towel which she has flung over her shoulder. And then she goes away, and a low stool is brought and is placed in the centre of the floor. A large cloth is cast over this, and on top is put a brass tray covered with a simple but abundant repast of corn-bread, onions, *keufté*, and *madzoon*,³ that were prepared over a fire that burns on the earthen floor of the other half of the room. So we squat on the floor all around the table and drawing the table cloth over our knees as a napkin, fall to. Three tin forks have been found in the village for the guests; the rest of the family, those of them who can squeeze around the table, eat with their fingers. But for the *madzoon*, everybody has a wooden spoon and we all eat out of the one dish in the centre.

In such surroundings *Torkom* grew up. He played prisoner's base in the narrow streets, and flew kites, and played marbles; and when he was old enough to be into mischief at home, he was sent to the village school, where he learned to sit on the floor with twenty other boys of his own size, doing nothing or worse, all day long; while the teacher, who was also reader, in the church, taught the bigger boys the elements of reading and figuring.

1. *Sedir*—sofa or couch running the length of the room.

2. *Harss*—bride, the most recently married woman in a family. She remains *harss* until another is married into the household. The parents of a girl save up her dowry and prepare her wedding clothes from the day of her birth. That is why even the poorest has a comparatively rich dowry.

3. *Keufté*—a sort of hash done up in the form of balls. *Madzoon* (Arm.), perhaps more familiar by its Turkish name *Yoghoort*—a sort of curded milk; a staple food in Turkey.