

## A Turkish Wedding.

THE ELABORATE CELEBRATION CUSTOMARY WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE OF QUALITY ARE UNITED IN THE LAND OF THE CRESCENT.

A very pretty and more than pretty picture of a Turkish wedding comes to us from a gentleman living in the village of Solonik, the ancient Salonica, where Jews, Wallachs, Turks, Greeks, and Albanians now dwell to either in amity. Aside from the Balram which follows the Ramadan, or month of fasting, and the Kurban-Balram, the Turk knows but one great festival—that of his marriage. For the rest, his life is occupied with his business and family affairs, and even on Friday he has but to go through his devotions in a mosque after which he returns again to worldly things. Even the two great festivals mentioned have, for the most part, lost their interest in the larger cities, and is only in the provinces that the old manners and customs still prevail, and how pleasant and patriarchal in some of its phases the old marriage festival is told in the account of it is correspondant.

He was invited to the wedding of Ali Nisa Bey, the son of his friend Mahmud Bey, a man of the highest consideration and respect and known through all the neighbouring districts, and consequently the festival was to be more brilliant than usual, and was looked upon as a matter beside which all other events were but as the light dust of the balancer. No less than three score guests had been invited to the house of Mahmud Bey at Kawada, the seat of the aristocracy of Kikwech. Having at length arrived at this place, all in company with Mahmud Bey, he took themselves to the house of Feta Bey, the father of the chosen bride, where they met about fifty other guests, among whom was the Chief Imam of the city. After salutations had been exchanged and they had partaken of coffee, there entered two persons, each accompanied by two witnesses; the first announced himself as the representative of the bridegroom, and the second as to represent a native of the bride, and, presenting their witnesses expressed the desire of their principals to be united in marriage.

Then the Imam inquired of him who represented the bride, "Hast thou given Hattije Hanum, the daughter of Feta Bey, to wife unto Ali Nisa Bey, the son of Mahmud Bey?" and thence was made answer, "I have given her," and so also was it with him who represented the bridegroom. Then the Imam arose and said: "By the virtue of my office in the presence of all these witnesses, I declare the marriage of Ali Nisa Bey, and Hattije Hanum." He then prayed and the marriage was finished. The guests then left the room, and as each passed the door he invoked good fortune upon the house. On the following day the feast began which was to last through two weeks. A donkey taskeress (note of invitation) was sent abroad to many people saying that on certain days they were welcome to share the hospitality of the great family of Mahmud Bey. These invitations were each soon followed by a present to the invited guests of a sheep, an ox, or a cow. The last two days of the festival were reserved exclusively for the trusted friends and relatives of the family. There were wrestling matches between herculean athletes dressed as to their lower parts in tight fitting leather breeches, but with their upper parts bare and oiled. Each smote his hands, slapped his knees, and the two sprang round each other ever watching for a favourable opportunity to grapple. Round and round they went till at last one suddenly sprang upon his opponent and a lively struggle ensued, neither succeeding in throwing the other. They separated and rapped again, trying every trick save tripping; they fell on their knees and on their breasts, but it was only when one had thrown the other and held his shoulders on the ground that it was considered a good fall, the victor receiving a universal "affirm" or bravo from the spectators. In the second round the two agonists clasped their hands and sprang round each other for a full hour before they came to close quarters, and one, catching the other by the right leg, lifted him off his feet, and this also was looked upon as a winning of the bout, and was greeted with the affirm. The defeated athlete then made a low reverence to his conqueror, who extended to him his hand and then embraced him. The prize was an ox, and after it had been awarded, the two wrestlers passed through the crowd and received gratuities which were afterwards equally divided between them. In the evening the party retired to the house, where Mahmud Bey entertained them, and they made themselves comfortable on couches, smoking chibouks and drinking

raki, a liquor made with anise which the Turks drink before partaking of the evening meal. The entertainment was varied with music, the orchestra consisting of two violins, a clarinet, a tambourine, a small drum, and, above all, a "canun"—an instrument resembling the zither, only larger. In honour of the Frankish guest, Italian and French music was at first played, but after a most unearthly fashion, out of all time and tune. At the request of the Frank, some Scharki and Makami (Persian and Arabian) pieces were performed which, in spite of their seeming monotony, were still intoned with a peculiarly charming melody, and were played much better than the French and Italian music. Then came the time to see an Arab dance. The Gypsy girls dressed in a sort of bright coloured garments entered the room and began to move, slowly at first and gently, and then in a tempo *staccato*, till this became quicker and quicker and ended in a bewildering whirl. The steps were a compendium with all possible graceful movements of the body and the music was marked with the striking together of thumbs, one on the thumb and one on the middle finger and used as castanets. As the dancers grew older and wilder and the girls grew into Menads, many a "Mashallah" and many an "Affirm" was breathed out by the enraptured company. As it drew near midnight the servants appeared with silvered yataghans and richly mounted pistols in their girdle, one bearing a kius shot through with gold and silver threads, and the other a ewer of a basin, both of solid silver, and poured water on the hands of the guests. Then a low table was placed in the centre of the room and on it a large copper salver, on the rim of which were bits of bread and delicately carved wooden spoons, while in the centre a dish containing tacheria (soup), into which had been poured, after the Turkish fashion, eggs beaten with vinegar. Around the board the guests sat cross-legged, the host courteously bade them "bujrun"—to command him—and then they fell to, dipping the bread in the soup. At the soup came a baked lamb, a stuffed, a potpourri of meats, baked meat again, several ragouts with hashed meat, boiled pulse, the whole ending with a rice pudding. Then all arose, washed their hands—this time with soap—an partook of coffee, followed by some pleasant eat, and then to bed. In the morning they were awakened by music beneath their windows, and two hours afterwards they went to see the out of the bride. The linen clothes, and other household stuff of the bride had come, borne by twelve heavy-laden mules. Six men carried the copper and silver vessels of the bride on trays, some of silver and some of copper. The procession—and how this reminds one of Aladdin!—bearing the marriage portion, left the bride's house, passed up the two principal streets and then reached the house of the bridegroom. The portion itself might have been taken for an oriental bazaar in *petto*. May this marriage be blessed. Inshallah!

## The Natural History of Dress

The pleasure derived from wearing attractive garments is a not to be denied by the title of a purely aesthetic enjoyment. It is the monopoly of the individual who thus adorns himself; and the pleasures of art, properly so called, are at once a monopoly. The impulse must, one suppose, from the day when primitive man began to paint his body or adorn his head with feathers, have led to a constant variation in his style of apparel. It is of the nature of the passion to be invariable in its craving for change and novelty. We look for an element of novelty even in a work of pure impersonal art, and in the personal art of self-decoration this demand is omnipotent. Hence what answers to spontaneous variation in the region of dress, would commonly be the outcome of it is restless desire to look finer than his neighbor. In this way the feeling for the monumental side of dress has subserved the development of it as a utility. Changes introduced by individual fancy, and the love of the novel and striking, would be permanently adopted when found to bring some advantage, as, for example, increase of warmth. It may, indeed, be said that the growth of dress in mere volume and number of distinct parts has been greatly promoted in the first instance by this impulse of self-adornment. The rude love of beauty showed itself in an admiration of mere quantity; and the men and women who managed to amply their garments would clearly be so doing attain a richer decorative effect.

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