

other writers, sitting under other arches in other towns. What blind confidence must the poor people have in his wisdom and honesty!

He sits cross-legged, pen in hand, the pen often being made of a reed, and his ink sometimes filling the horn of a goat or a small earthen pot, suspended from a hook fastened to the table. To him the women in Yasmak and Ferinje come, settling themselves about him, whispering their secrets of love, intrigue, or domestic joys

eyes lighting with pleasure, or drawn close with anxiety.

Young men come in baggy trousers made of yards and yards of stuff, and from their capacious girdles extract soiled scraps of writing to be deciphered—news from home perhaps, or from some comrade with whom they served as conscripts.

But the face of the old scribe never changes. He has heard it all before. He knows just what answer they will wish to send. He



BREAD VENDORS, CAIRO.



TURKISH DELIGHT VENDORS, JERUSALEM.

and sorrows. Old mothers with dropped veils will bring letters from their sons in the army, or living in distant parts of the empire. As the scribe reads them you can see by the varied expressions that cross the women's faces just what the letters have to tell. Lamentations will often follow, the poor women bowing their heads or beating their breasts as the words fall from his lips. The younger women, more carefully veiled, whisper their secrets close in his ear, their

has a ready letter-writer for all comers—for the man too dull to express himself in written word or too sluggish to convey thought. With unmoved face and quiet manner he translates the emotions of all into the curious curves and dots that make the sign-language of that people, for he understands the hearts about him. We like sometimes to think our emotions individual. But the wise old scribe knows better. The name of the old mother and of the son, of the