



HOME LIFE IN THE ORIENT.

comprised all the visible furniture. A round opening in the floor communicated with the stable beneath and admitted the warmth—and smell—of the animals.

The cheerful "crackling" of the fire soon led to the discovery that the fuel was the dried mountain thorn, and furnished another illustration of a familiar Bible phrase. It is to be regretted that we have no sketch of that most primitive fireplace; it was merely a cement platform about two and a half feet long and eighteen inches wide, rounded in front, built up two or three inches above the floor, with a back also of cement about one foot higher. The fire was laid against this back. Contrary to the usual custom, the house boasted a chimney, not, indeed, in any immediate connection with the fireplace, but its draught attracted part of the smoke and left the atmosphere comparatively clear.

We had been warned, as we rode up to the house, to be very careful not to give any offence, as the people in the village all belonged to the Druses, the fiercest of the Mohammedan sects. But there was nothing fierce about our two hostesses, who watched the inspection of their household arrangements with smiling approval, while the little, round, brown, half-naked babies