

large parts of the country, and are sung and told everywhere with slight modification, which are never petrified in print. They live on the lips of itinerant singers as well as on the lips of the Kurdish women, who are very fond of singing. As is usual among unlettered people, the author of the songs is never asked about. They are considered a kind of common property, which may be used till a better one comes to replace it. The following is a specimen of many love-songs. The heroine is "Gevre," a Kurdish maiden's name which is quite common :

"The night is dark, the village sleeps ;
The flocks of sheep do not come home ;
The world rests from its toil.
Gevre and I alone have sleepless eyes,
My Gevre who waits near the hill.
The northern wind strikes the bare mountain :
It flutters her veil and tassels.
I know she is waiting for me.
My Gevre waits between two roads.
Tears shower down from her large dark eyes :
They are not water, but drops of pearl.
Do not cry, Gevre, I will come home soon.
My Gevre has no equal in beauty and form :
She has a thin waist, like a candle ;
Her face is bright, her eyes lighted like fire ;
She is worthy to appear in old, wise men's
council," etc.

The traveller in Armenia often hears the forests echo such songs; and a few minutes walk through the thick bush will reveal the singer,—not seldom a shepherdess, whom a stranger might confound with the fabled spirits of trees. Her dark eyes, long tresses of hair, red skirts, and her brown face, partly covered with jingling silver pieces, make a strange but not unagreeable impression. She is fearless as the huge bull-dog at her feet, which will tear to pieces any man or beast that may approach her against her will.

However, neither the natural beauty of the place nor the presence of the charming singer means safety for the caravan. It may be her brother or lover is hiding himself behind a rock. He hears her song, and waits there to show her his courage. The caravan proceeds. Suddenly the roar of guns is heard. The terrified mules and muleteers flee to each other. The

brave men of the caravan, who had their guns at hand, answer the robber in the same way. Sometimes the battles last two or three hours; and the robbers go away, having gained nothing and lost all their gun-powder and balls. But this occurs very seldom, because the Kurds never attack a caravan unless they are sure of their prize. They bind everybody's hands, beat them to insensibility, bind their eyes, and take them to the thickest part of the forest, and leave them there to struggle to loosen the hardest knots in the world. Meanwhile the robbers take the spoils. They travel day and night, reach a seaport, sell the horses and mules, and take the cash home. This is conducted as a most honorable trade, which procures money enough to pay both the expenses of these knights-errant and bribe the Turkish officers, when necessary.

When a Kurdish maiden is proposed to, she asks if her would-be husband has killed any man or brought home any spoil. If not, he is not thought a man: he is called a child, who had better go to play than think of marriage. Honor is paid to the warrior who is slain, while those who die a natural death are seldom thought worthy of funeral wailings. There is nothing so pathetic as the burial of a Kurdish chieftain. The women of all his kinsmen form a long procession following the corpse. They walk on slowly, crying aloud. One or two singers sing the deeds of valor of the departed hero, his battles, his plunderings. After a few lines, they all burst into a wild chorus, "Le me no! le me no!" ("Woe to me! woe to me!"). This lasts several hours, and it is repeated on two or three successive days after the burial.

Kurdish warriors make a serious mistake when consenting to be enrolled in a cavalry called by the name of the greatest living despot. This mistake may give a death-blow to all Kurdish valor. They have allowed themselves to be used as tools for the Turkish governmental policy of ex-