

to whom he had some months before lent a very valuable Arabic book. He did not like to ask to have it returned, and was wondering how he should introduce the subject when they reached the well. Half from curiosity and half for amusement, he proposed that they should see what the well would reveal to them. The oracle was a wild-looking, very old Nubian woman, and directing Mr. R—— to look steadily down into the well, she gazed earnestly into his eyes to read the fate there reflected. After some minutes she said, "What you are thinking of is lost: it has passed from the one to whom you gave it, and will be seen no more." The effendi asked what the oracle had said, and when Mr. R—— told him he had been thinking of his book, and repeated what the Nubian had uttered, the effendi confessed that he had lent the book to a dervish and had never been able to recover it, and feared it was indeed lost. It was a lucky hit of the old darkey's, at any rate.

An opportunity came at last to gratify a long-cherished wish, by visiting a harem. Madame L——, a French lady who has lived here many years, visits in the harems of several pashas, and invited me to accompany her. I donned the best my trunk afforded, and at eleven o'clock we set out, each in a sedan chair. I had often wondered why the ladies I saw riding in them sat so straight and looked so stiff, but I wondered no longer when the stout Cretans stepped into the shafts, one before and one behind, and started off. The motion is a peculiar shake, as if you went two steps forward and one back. It struck me as so ludicrous, my sitting bolt upright like a doll in my little house, that I drew the curtains and had a good laugh at my own expense. Half an hour's ride brought us to the pasha's house in Stamboul—a large wooden building, with closely-latticed windows. We were received at the door by a tall Ethiopian, who conducted us across a court to the harem. Here a slave took our wraps, and we passed into a little reception-room. A heavy rug of bright colours covered the centre of the floor, and the only furniture was the divans around the sides. The pasha's two wives, having been apprised of our intended visit, were waiting to receive us. Madame L—— was an old friend and warmly welcomed, and as she spoke Turkish the conversation was brisk. She presented me, and we all curled ourselves up on the divans. Servants brought tobacco in little embroidered bags and small sheets of rice paper, and rolling up some cigarettes, soon all were smoking. The pasha is an "old-style" Turk, and frowns on all European innovations, and his large household is conducted on the old-fashioned principles of his forefathers. His two wives were young and very attractive women. One, with a pale clear complexion, dark hair and eyes, quite came up to my idea of an Oriental beauty. Not content, however, with her good looks, she had her eyebrows darkened, while a delicate black line under her eyes, and a little well applied rouge and