

thought to be Moslems. But only one part of them profess the faith of the prophet, and they are never marked for their enthusiasm. The Turk prays five times a day, while few Kurds pray once in five days. A great majority of these would-be Islamites never attend any religious service except when they are in the company of religious leaders and Turks. This fact tells the story of an enforced religion.

Another part of the Kurds worship Satan, who, they think, is not devoid of merit. They do not utter the word "devil" or "Satan," but call the ruler of hell by the name "fallen angel." These Yezidies are the most religious of the Kurds, because they have suffered only less than the Christians for their faith. They foster a revengeful hatred for the Mohammedans and a marked sympathy for the Christians. Unfortunately, these do not exist in great numbers: they are found only in the vicinity of Mosul, where they have their religious head, who is obeyed and honored like a holy man.

The third part of the Kurds profess a mysterious faith, which seems to be a strange inixture of all the Oriental religions. They believe in transformation, prophets, dreams, saints. They can go to the mosque while in town, and kiss the door of a church when unseen by Turks. These people, who are called "red-heads" by the Turks, contemptuously, have no special place for worship; but, when the *seid* or the saint comes, all the villagers gather together in a large house. They bring their musical instruments with them, —primitive, huge banjos, which make a noise more fitting the battlefield than any meeting. The leader sits near the hearth-stone, while the musicians sit down in a circle under the wall. The rest of the congregation stand up in a circle. They play and sing; while the by-standers begin a lively dance, men, women, and children. Sometimes whole nights are spent in these religious exercises. This is the only way of worship or prayer they have, and only a few strangers have ever witnessed it.

Great numbers of these "red-heads" live in a district named Dersim, which is seldom visited by foreigners, because the length of the Kurdish guns keeps both the tax gatherer and the soldier, as well as the Armenian pedler, at a respectable distance.

The language spoken in this district is very interesting. Its whole structure, especially the terminations of its words, which end mostly in "o" and "a," make it sound like a European language. The frequent use of the proposition "de" has made people call it "Oriental French."

The language spoken in the neighborhood of Van is called "Guruk," but it is confined to a small number of Kurds. The great majority of the Kurds use a language called "Kurmanji," a dialect of Persian. The Kurmanji is a nice language, with a great many Aryan words and expressions in it, though it becomes more Arabic the more you travel southward. It has not the grammatical regularity of the Persian, which has been cultivated by so many poets and writers; but it has a kind of wild beauty, freedom of expression, force of meaning, and a charm of simplicity. Some American missionaries tried to translate the Bible into this language, though it was not probable they would find any Kurdish reader for it. The work was done chiefly for a few Armenians and Syrians, who speak Kurdish, so it was written in the Armenian character, the Kurds having none of their own. But, after the New Testament was published, they found it was understood only in a few villages; while outside of the narrow circle it was perfectly unintelligible. So the Kurds were not edified much by this translation. The missionaries learned, to their great surprise, that even the Kurmanji varies so greatly in declensions and conjugations in different places that it is impossible for strangers to create a Kurdish literary language by a translation.

It is surprising that certain love-songs and tales of battles circulate in