

A Peep into a Harem.

A small piece of a dark night slipped into the room and around among the chibouks and marghiles to my feet, where, pressing his forehead to my hand, he contrived to whisper to me that the "Sitt Miriam" wanted to see me. Supposing thereby that she was ready to depart, I went out into the large reception room, but no one was there. My sable guide led on, while I followed, strongly suspicious that the imp might commit an error and guide me into forbidden rooms. I was not far wrong. Crossing a court, down into which the stars shone, I followed him into a dark entry when he threw open a door and I found myself in the holy of holies of an eastern house. That spot forbidden to the foot of man in all known ages of Moslem rule. The scene that burst upon my astonished vision was worth a journey to the Orient to see. One swift glance around the room convinced me that it was right, for I caught the eyes of Miriam, who was curled up on a crimson divan and smoking a marghileh as if she had been brought up to it all her life, and in a moment I understood that she had managed the introduction by some ingenuity that I could not have believed possible. In Greece the seclusion of the harem is unknown. But in Greek families living in Egypt or Syria it is even more strictly enforced than by the Mohammedans themselves, for the contempt which is poured out on a Mohammedan woman who has shown her face to men is visited tenfold on Christians, who have difficulty in keeping their positions in the country. The footsteps of a man had never crossed this threshold before, except of a father or brother, and the inhabitants of this retreat shrank at first in terror from having their faces seen by a stranger. It was by adroit management, by proposing it as a frolic, working up their curiosity, and pledging eternal secrecy and instant departure from the country, that Miriam had persuaded them to consent to send for me, and they secured the old man's permission on the ground of the universal love of the Greeks for Americans, and so I was sent for and so I came. The scene in the room when I entered was worthy a painter's presence. The mother of the family, seated on a pile of cushions, was a woman of splendid beauty, and her daughters were like their mother. Her younger sister, a girl of twenty-two or three, and her niece, a girl of seventeen, were standing near her, while their Nubian slaves, slender and graceful women, black as night, but not thick-lipped, having rather the features of the Shellalee of Egypt, and in form and face models of grace and beauty, waited on their beautiful mistresses. A troop of children, with large black eyes, dressed like fairies, greeted my entrance with a shout of welcome, and for a moment I hesitated to enter a place sacred, not only by oriental custom against such a visit, but sacred especially by the presence of so much magnificent beauty, not before exposed to the eye of a stranger. But the unsurprised look of Miriam and Mrs. and Miss Saunders reassured me, and I advanced with as much courage as could be expected of a somewhat diffident American in an eastern harem. Often since then, in still and quiet evenings, when I remember the incidents of my eastern travel, the face of that radiant Greek girl comes before me like a vision of the unreal beauties of Paradise. I never saw a woman half so beautiful. She was the first and last one that I saw abroad whom I thought equal to the American standard of female beauty; and she was a star. She was reclining on the divan, half buried in its cushions, with her arms around Miriam's neck, telling her, in all the rich oriental phrases she could invent, of her love for her newly found sister. I will endeavour, for the sake of my lady readers, and with Miriam's assistance, to describe her dress, which was almost a *fac-simile* of the dresses of four ladies in the room, whose inferior beauty must excuse my leaving them to sketch their splendid companion. Firstly, she wore that part of the Turkish lady's dress which we should call the trousers, known by them as the *shintyan*, and a very different affair from the pantaloons which the American ladies' rights ladies argue so much in favour of. They are necessarily more cumbersome than the ordinary European style of dress, being enormously heavy folds of silk stuff, embroidered with heavy gold thread, gathered at the ankles with gold and jewelled bands. Those of which I now speak were of rose coloured silk, and the little feet, that were quite hidden in the folds as they fell around it when she walked, were covered with velvet slippers, embroidered with seed pearls. The yellak, a sort of open dress that falls in a long train behind and is fastened only at the waist, falling away so as to leave the *shintyan* visible, is, I believe, not worn by unmarried ladies, but she had a similar dress, of the same rose coloured silk, richly embroidered. A low chemise, with embroidered front and sleeves, left almost the entire bust exposed; and a velvet jacket, heavy with gold thread and jewels, completed the rich and gorgeous costume. But the dress, although of the most costly fabrics of the Damascus looms, was as nothing compared with the jewels that flashed from her wrists, and neck, and hair. Over her left shoulder, hanging like a sash down to the right side of her waist, was a golden girdle or band, made of broad pieces of gold shaped like willow leaves, and fastened together at the sides. The belt of the yellak and *shintyan*, which is ordinarily a cashmere shawl (known vulgarly in America as camels' hair), was silk, gathered at the side with a star of brilliants. On her arms were jewelled ser-pents; and the only covering of her bosom,

which was exposed, as I have said, consisted of strings of pearls that lay across it, each shorter than the one above it, and whose brightness was rivalled by the neck they adorned. I have described the lady's costume as literally as I can for the benefit of my lady readers; but I thought little of her costume then, when I was looking at her splendid beauty. Miriam was in ecstasy herself, and would interrupt her caresses constantly by turning to me with the demand, "Isn't she beautiful?" Her hair was black as the clouds of a December night, and swept away from a fine forehead in heavy tresses. Her face was no cold Greek countenance. It was full of life and passion; her eyes black and flashing with fire; the red blood tingling close under the skin through her cheeks, and sometimes flushing her forehead with an exquisite glow; her lips were red and laughing; her chin was smallest imaginable; and her form slender, yet full and graceful as the forms of dream land.

When we rose to go, and I am bound to admit the hour would have been thought late even in America, they would scarcely permit Miriam to leave them, but again and again embraced her, and kissed her on each cheek, and on her lips, while the Nubians would seize her at the same instant from behind, with one hand on each side, and gave her a sympathetic squeeze in accordance with each kiss of their fair mistress.

After the Prussians.

I sauntered into the Rue de la Paroisse, entered a confectioner's, and asked the woman if the Prussians had left. "Does not Monsieur see? Thank God they marched off at ten this morning." The shop used to be full of men eating pastry all day, but a few hours before, and paying for it. "Are you glad then, that they are gone?" "The orges! may they never live to return! The air is sweet since they went away. One can breathe." And she drew a full breath. "But were they so bad?" "No, I cannot say they were; but they are so hard, so absolute, so insolent. I should not care to go to heaven if I thought there were Prussians there." And so I went out in the hope that she may get over her scruples ultimately, for she makes excellent *bricoles*.

Negotiating a Swindler.

Unfortunately high living in New York required even more to support it than in any of the capitals of Europe. The bare salary of an American junior would not cover a tithe of his expenditure; so, in order not to jeopardise his fashionable position, and lose position in the eyes of the up-town world, he was forced every now and then to "borrow" a few thousand dollars from the bank till. This went on for some time, until he grew frightened at what he was doing, his conscience being awakened by the fact that the end of the year was near at hand, when the books would have to be balanced and his deficit discovered by the directors. After thinking over for some time anxiously what he should do, he determined at length to consult his legal adviser—the lawyer who told me the story—making a clean breast of all his defalcations under the seal of confidence. "What shall I do?" he asked in the greatest perplexity. "I owe the bank just one hundred thousand dollars, and I haven't a red cent to pay back on account." Now this lawyer was wise after the manner of Mammon. Interrogating the young man sharply, and getting all the facts of the case from him he said, "Go and take another hundred thousand dollars, lodge it in another bank in your own name, and then come back to me, I'll put you up to the next move. "Three dollars and a half for my fee. Thank you." Pondering on this strange counsel, American junior went on his way despondent; but after reflecting on it for a bit, and knowing that his adviser was a cautious, wary hand at the law, determined to act upon it. He did so, and by next day he had the affair all arranged, and returned to the lawyer. "Give me an open cheque for fifty thousand to bearer," said that worthy. "You needn't stare; I don't want it for myself, and wouldn't touch stolen money; but give me the cheque, and I'll see your directors, and arrange the matter for you." After a short hesitancy, which the lawyer's stern stare quickly dispelled, the peccant cashier sat down and wrote the cheque as requested. His adviser took it up, and telling him to come along, went to the bank where the young man was employed. "Now," said he to the latter, "go back to your desk, while I go up to the board room. I'll send for you presently, and you'll only have to ask pardon, and so on; they won't do anything to you, you'll see." Going to the upper apartment, as he had said, he asked to have an interview with the president of the bank on pressing business, and was instantly admitted. He did not hesitate long over his version of the affair. "So-and-so's your cashier," he began, "and I am his legal adviser; he tells me he has abstracted two hundred thousand dollars from the bank funds; what will you do to him?" It may be imagined what consternation was created by this sudden piece of intelligence; but the lawyer was equal to the occasion. "There's no good making a fuss over it," said he, "I think I can get back some of the money for you if you hush it. He has got fifty thousand dollars put away so that you can't touch it; and if you let him off, and don't arrest him, he'll pay that at once through me." The president

deliberated, went back to consult his fellow-directors, had up the cashier to examine him—and you may be sure he did not let out the fact of having increased his borrowing so considerably at the lawyer's "suggestion;" the final upshot was that the offer was accepted. "Now," said the lawyer, when he and his client had got outside the building, and the matter was all settled, the cashier only losing his situation in the way of punishment, "that's all through I don't want anything for myself, as you have already paid me my fee; so you have got fifty thousand dollars to pay your debts with, and start afresh. I advise you selling off, and going out West; and now good bye!"

A Spicy Letter.

A writer who has both said and written many a good thing in his day, thus discourses in a late familiar letter to a city correspondent:—

"There is nothing new or startling since you left. The only event of much importance is, that my old brown hen has, after an elaborate sitting, hatched out exactly one brown chickey, of which the amiable mother seems duly proud. I feel pretty well convinced, however, that hens, like ladies, are happy in proportion to the number of young ones they have to cluck over. A man and woman with just about a score of children, are at least ten times as happy as another couple, whose calamity it is to rejoice over only one son and heir, or 'sole daughter of their house and heart.' So, my dear friend, take my advice and have just as many children as possible. The great object of existence is happiness. So say the philosophers of all ages. Some of them place happiness in one attainment, and others in others. They have all missed the mark by a considerable distance. The only true definition of happiness is that which good old Priam would probably have given had he enjoyed the happiness of my acquaintance, namely, seventeen sons, and daughters to match. Solomon, of whom you have probably heard, was a very wise man. The reason why he was the wisest of men was, that he had more children than anybody else had. Of course, a happy man and a wise man are human synonyms. If you aspire to wisdom and happiness, follow the lustrous examples of the old gentlemen whom I have called up for your edification, and pick up as many little ones in your cabbage-bed as possible. I can fancy you sitting in your easy-chair, on a coolish winter night, alongside of your shovel and tongs, and holding forth to a semi-circle of boys and girls, of various ages and sizes, in the most eloquent of harangues, in which you will touch seriatim on the moral law, whiskey punch, the Jewish theocracy, oysters, oxygen gas, the potato-disease, the reason why the tail of each individual pig is garnished with a kink, the chemical affinities of hogs and homony; why a boy who wears grey breeches, always has a black patch on his seat of honor, the phosphorescence of the ocean; why comets haven't all got two tails; the virtues of 'old Bourbon;' why the flower end of an apple, is sweeter than the stem end; the practicability of bridging the Atlantic; why a pretty mouth is more kissable than an ugly one, &c., &c."

THE STAR.

HARBOR GRACE, AUGUST 30, 1872.

RUMOURD MURDER AT LABRADOR.

FOR several days past a rumour has been in circulation here to the effect that a most atrocious murder had been committed at the White Bear Islands, Labrador. We cannot trace the origin to any authentic source. But it is certain that letters have been received from parties in the neighborhood of the latter place, stating that a horrible crime had been perpetrated, which, if true, bids fair to rival any of its predecessors. We will not at present make any statement as to the manner of its committal, stories are so often set afloat in an exaggerated form. It is mooted here to-day that High Constable Fallon and two or three of the police have got orders from headquarters at St. John's to proceed to Labrador and there learn all particulars of the case. While hoping that there is some mistake in the current rumour, we cannot but say that, if such an atrocity as murder has actually been committed, the law should mete out to the guilty the full penalty provided for felons. We hope the police will display their usual cunning and alacrity in tracing the case to some definite shape. The public mind naturally was shocked on the receipt of such startling intelligence, more especially, so close upon the execution amongst us of a criminal for that fearful wickedness, which is alike despised by the laws of God and man. Let us trust that the report is untrue in some points; but that if proven fully a truthful one,—that the guilty will receive that retribution which is justly due.

WE have to acknowledge the receipt of several copies of the "St. John's News," a new weekly journal recently published in that city. It is exceedingly well got up, and contains a large amount of useful information; the editorial department being ably sustained. We have no hesitation in saying that it is by far the best weekly paper published in this country. The Proprietor has our best wishes.

THE body of George Smith—the circumstances connected with whose death have already appeared in these columns—was picked up in the neighborhood of Portugal Cove on Monday last, having been carried by the wind and sea entirely across the Bay. The features were very much disfigured.

[FOR THE HARBOR GRACE STAR.]

"Auld Reekie's" Proclamation and "D. & A's" Commentary Thereupon.

BY "AULD REEKIE."

The happiest day of my existence was Wednesday last. About 9 o'clock that morning I had the infinite pleasure of observing some verses of my own reprinted in the *Standard*. Oh the delight I experienced quite overcame me. I could not rest, out went dancing all over as it were. In my wanderings I found four pieces of artillery on the road leading to Bear's Cove, which I had at once conveyed to my residence; placing two in front and two behind; but, oh, horror! I had the *Standard* in my pocket while firing off the first cannon, and it would not allow such a paper to stay in its resting place, the suction nearly tore my coat-tail with it, as it flew to the mouth of the joyful announcer of my hilarity. Only a few fragments were saved, and those were my own verses; all the explanatory notes being charged, a matter I regret, such expositors as "D. & A" (compliance being rarely met with. The cannons are still in good order, and would just like a shot at the above named firm—it might possibly be a six-pound pill to swallow without the aid of any condiment.



Latest Despatches.

LONDON, Aug. 23.

The Prince of Wales has gone on a yachting excursion to the coast of France. He arrived at Nouville, where he was cordially received by Thiers. The reception was entirely formal. Thiers and the Prince promenaded on the beach to-day. Count Orloff has transmitted to Thiers a letter from the Emperor of Russia, which states that the meeting of the Emperors at Berlin, is not aimed at France.

The business of the Board of Arbitrators at Genova is nearly finished.

Mr. Bancroff Davis, gives a ball this evening.

PARIS, 22.

The steamship "Panama," which sailed from St. Maseau, on the 27th, was lost in a storm off the coast, near Santendar. The passengers and crew were saved.

LONDON, 23.

There were no disturbances in Belfast last night. The military continue to occupy the streets, and the most stringent regulations are still in force.

The Dublin bakers' strike is ended, and tranquility has been restored.

The weather is fair, and favourable to the crops.

Three hundred and fifty radicals have presented themselves as candidates for the Spanish Cortes, at the elections shortly to be held.

NEW YORK, 23.

There was a heavy thunderstorm at Long Branch yesterday, and several boats with fishing parties have not been heard from.

Three men were drowned at Baltimore yesterday, by the upsetting of their boat, while boarding a steamer.

At Montreal, the first match of English cricketers, against 22 Canadians, commenced yesterday. The game was delayed by a storm. The Englishmen won the toss. The score stood 136 with three wickets down.

Gold closed in New York yesterday at 113½ and 113¼.

LONDON, 27.

The Empress Carlotta is reported to be dying. All hope is given up and the last sacrament has been administered.

Cholera is raging with great violence in the valley of Cashmere.

The Govern- ly triumphed a The jubilee with a torchlight The Empero in Hungary in to Dresden with The people o dinary prepara Emperors of A Emperor Will September. A quiet are ahead The weather able for the cro Mr. Johnston derry yesterday tion of his lan to Belfast. T latter city and ed again. Stanley has Telegraph," re in the "Spee view." Consols stea

Our Govern an appeal to South America along her west manner. It is reporte last evening ra Mr. Middleton

Gold uncha Rev. James has received ment as Archb Fears no lo New York. Stokes, the He had a renc plaint last nigh attendance.

A BIG DIAM to possess a di world, and mo the four great be much large weigh 365 car

MR. STANL SOCIETY.—Sti ten to Mr. Sta graphical Soc acknowledgment forded to Dr.

Aug. 29.—Rave Funton & Mu

Aug. 27.—Lev Paterson & F 29.—Atlanta, 2 ley & Sons.

On the 15th of a daughter.

At South Sid deservedly reg 82 years.

10 Brils. 20 Sides 40 Kegs 40 M. S

Oppos MUNN'S. Aug. 27.