

“On the 18th of October, it was so excessively hot that it was impossible to suffer the burning sun. The poisonous simoon blew likewise as if it came from an oven. Our eyes were dim, our lips cracked, our knees tottering, our throats perfectly dry, and no relief was found from drinking an immoderate quantity of water. The people advised me to dip a sponge in vinegar and water, and hold it before my mouth and nose, and this greatly relieved me. In the evening I went to Sittina. Upon entering the house, a black slave laid hold of me by the hand, and placed me in a passage, at the end of which were two opposite doors. I did not well know the reason of this; but had staid only a few minutes when I heard one of the doors at the end of the passage open, and Sittina appeared magnificently dressed, with a kind of round cap of solid gold upon the crown of her head, all beat very thin, and hung round with sequins; with a variety of gold chains, solitaires, and necklaces of the same metal, about her neck. Her hair was plaited in 10 or 12 small divisions like tails, which hung down below her waist, and over her was thrown a common cotton white garment. She had a purple silk stole, or scarf, hung very gracefully upon her back, brought again round her waist, without covering her shoulders or arms. Upon her wrists she had two bracelets, like handcuffs, about half an inch thick, and two gold manacles of the same at her feet, fully an inch in diameter, the most disagreeable and awkward part of all her dress. I expected she would have hurried through with some affectation of surprize. On the contrary, she stopt in the middle of the passage, saying, in a very grave manner, “*Kif halec?*” (how are you?)—I thought this was an opportunity of kissing her hand, which I did, without her shewing any sort of reluctance. “Allow me as a physician,” said I, “madam, to say one word.” She bowed with her head, and said, “Go in at that door, and I will hear you.” The slave appeared, and carried me through a door at the bottom of the passage into a room, while her mistress vanished in at another door at the top, and there was the screen I had seen the day before, and the lady sitting behind it.