

consider themselves above following the plough, so they employ fellahin (peasants) from the adjacent districts to do this for them as soon as the rains begin. The Bedouin provide the oxen and seed. After sowing the corn the fellahin return home, coming back for the harvest when the corn is ripe. When all is finished the Bedouin receive two-thirds and the fellahin one-third of the produce.

Their chief crops are wheat, barley millet, and lentils, for themselves and their horses and donkeys, and vetches for their camels and cattle.

The tribes which are purely pastoral buy corn, exchanging it for cattle, wool, and fat. In the Arabian deserts there are others again who live only on the milk of camels, of which they have large herds. These camels thrive on the scanty, herbage of the desert; and their milk, with a few dates or the seeds of wild plants, constitutes the food of their owners. Even their horses are said to have camels' milk given them night and morning.

THEIR HORSES AND ARMS.

They rear many horses, of which they are very fond. In bad and dear times a Bedouy would often rather starve with all his family than sell his horse. When, as is sometimes done, they do part with a high-bred mare, they never sell her outright, but only a share in her, in which case the different owners have the foals in proportion to their respective shares.

It is very interesting to see them riding, with their spears—twelve or fifteen feet long—especially when they are showing off. Horse and man then seem as if they were one. The Bedouin can load a gun, aim, and fire at full gallop. They are very skillful in using their spears. When one is thrown they do not dismount to pick it up, but the horses are trained to kneel for an instant for this purpose, and both steeds and riders are very agile. They are also armed with swords, daggers, and pistols, while a few have rifles.

THEIR OCCUPATIONS AND AMUSEMENTS.

The men tend and milk the cattle, but the women make the butter and cheese; they also spin and weave, while the men spend much time in polishing their weapons. They are very fond of talking over their fights and raids. They amuse themselves with music and song. Their principal musical instrument is the rabara, a kind of fiddle, but with only one string. Its construction is very simple; a wooden framework a foot square covered with goat skin, and a curved stick to which the string is secured; a rude bow is made of a stick and horse-hair. On this rude fiddle they accompany themselves as they sing. They have also a double pipe called nai, made of reeds.

CURIOUS BIRTH CUSTOMS.

Among the Bedouin, as with the fellahin, there is rejoicing at the birth of a son, but sorrow at that of a daughter. When a man has a son born they tie the father to a pole of his tent till someone goes bail for him that he will do his duty—that is, that he will immediately kill a sheep and make a feast, that all may rejoice together. The child is swaddled and left thus forty days, when it is washed. Then the parents receive various presents from their friends, a little money, clothes for the child, and so on. They then name the child. Many are called after animals, as tiger, lion, wolf, in the hope that they will be great warriors when they grow up. Boys are not weaned before the third year,

ROUGH REMEDIES FOR SICKNESS.

They are usually healthy, though they never wash, and are not particular about their food. This is attributable doubtless to the open-air life they lead. The chief diseases they suffer from are dysentery, cramp, headache, fever, gout, rheumatism, measles, and small-pox. Recently they have adopted vaccination for small-pox. If any one has fever they take a large-headed nail, heat it red hot, and burn the patient in the middle of the forehead. For dysentery they use gunpowder, and for other complaints decoctions of various herbs known to them. They dread small-pox greatly. Should any one be attacked, by it, he is put under a tree or some other shade, with bread and water, and left there. The encampment is broken up and moved to another place. The sick person is left entirely; if he recovers he rejoins his people, but if he dies the wild beasts devour the body.

TWO HUNGRY SHEIKHS.

In an emergency both men and horses will go for three or four days with hardly any food or water. Every Bedouy carries with him some flour and salt; the flour for food for himself and horse and the salt to allay their thirst. They can also eat enormous quantities at one meal.

I was once at Tayibeh, one of our out-stations, when four Bedouin came to the village. They had with them one of a number of young camels which they had stolen, and were selling to the villagers, who are fond of camel's flesh. This camel was killed, and the people proceeded to prepare a meal for the four Bedouins, two of whom were sheikhs, the other two being slaves.

The chief of the village about sunset brought in the food in a huge wooden down—a mountain of rice and bread, with the meat on the top—enough for a large number of people. The four Bedouin, the chief of the village, and another peasant were the only persons who partook of it. The two latter ate a moderate quantity and retired, the Bedouin demolishing all the rest of the enormous amount of food. They had asked me to join them, but as some other food was being prepared for me I declined.

About half an hour later my supper appeared—a pile of rice nearly as large as the previous one, some small dishes of meat, and ten loaves of bread. To this another man and myself sat down.

Soon after we had begun, the chief of the village said, 'Why do you not invite our guests, Mr. Nyland?'

This is the proper thing to do, but as they had only just finished a hearty meal I had thought it superfluous. So I apologized for my neglect, and invited them to share our supper.

The two sheikhs immediately joined us and ate like hungry men, ending by consuming nearly the whole of the rice, bread and meat, giving what was left to the slaves, and I am not sure that even then they were satisfied. They seemed none the worse for the amount they had eaten, but were very lively and chatty all the evening.

CAN THEY BE REACHED?

Such, then, are the Bedouin. It is very difficult to say what spiritual work can be done amongst them. I have often stayed in their tents and been most kindly received. On first making their acquaintance one would suppose that they would readily receive the Gospel, but it is part of their idea of what is due to a guest not to oppose or contradict what he says. Could any one

live among them, he could teach their children.

Besides the difficulties arising from their nomadic life and their distrust of strangers, the Bedouin in the nearer districts are under the control of the Turkish Government, which does not allow missionary work among them. It is only in the Great Desert that they are still really independent. It is impossible for Europeans to have many dealings with them, and our native helpers are unwilling to do so, as they say they are not up to their tricks.

A Chinese Evangelist's Dream.

Mr. B. E. Newcombe, missionary in China, relates the following of a native preacher: 'There was a time when he was seeking a great blessing day and night—pleading the promise and waiting for the answer. His faith was sorely tried. He could not understand why the blessing tarried, and was almost tempted to think, "The quest is not for me." Then one night as he slept he dreamed, and lo! he saw a king seated on his throne, and all the nobles and great ones of the kingdom standing around, and to each and all the monarch gave most beautiful and costly gifts, but to the one whom he loved best—to the one who was nearest to him—he gave but a little folded slip of paper. And when he had received it his countenance fell, and he looked very sad. There was nothing beautiful to look at, and inside it contained but one solitary character pronounced "king" (meaning "willing"). He could not read its meaning, his eyes could see nothing precious or rare in the gift, and sadly he concluded, "The king loves me no more; he has transferred all his love to others." The king noticed the sad looks of his favorite, and calling him to his side (for when he began to doubt the king's love, he had moved to a little distance away), he asked him, "Why are you sad? What is it that troubles you?" And he told the king all. He said, "O king, it is because I fear that you now love me no more. You give royal gifts to all around, and to me a valueless bit of paper." And the king smiled on the man he loved best as he answered, "That bit of paper is the most royal gift of all. To the others I gave precious gifts,—something of gold, something of precious jewels, something of beautiful raiment,—but to you, because I love you best, I give everything,—all I have,—for with that precious talisman in your hand you have but to say what you want and I am willing. As long as you and I live there is no other word between us." And a great joy lit up the man's face as he listened to the king's words. He was satisfied. And with that in the dream the whole scene began to change. The dreamer no longer saw the king and his court, but ere he was conscious of the change he became aware of another Presence, and knew that before him stood the King of kings; and as he bowed at his feet, he heard his voice saying to him the one word "king,"—"willing,"—and he knew that his prayer was answered, and he knew that henceforth he might ask whatsoever he willed and it would be done unto him, and a great joy filled his heart. He was satisfied.'—'Christian Herald.'

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