

ment, and afterwards gives the lover a description of the girl and her possessions. The next day the lover exacts a similar privilege, only he experiences more difficulty in inducing the bashful fair one to show herself; if he is then satisfied, the betrothing is not long delayed; on which occasion the young people kneel to receive the father's blessing, who places one of the household saints on their heads during the ceremony; rings are interchanged, and the bride gives out handkerchiefs to her female friends for them to embroider, and which she presents on the wedding-day to her husband and his friends. On the preceding afternoon, she is conducted to the bath, her companions singing lamentations at the prospect of losing her, while they walk through the village. The same parties thus chant before setting out to church; "A falcon flies in pursuit of a dove. Charming dove, are you ready? Your mate has come to seek you." "Yes," is answered with sighs. The saint's image accompanies the party to church, and when the priest's benediction has been pronounced, the bridegroom by legal rights takes his bride by both ears and kisses her; the young maids remove her virgin head-dress, replacing it with the marriage insignia, and then all return home to make merry, and the bridegroom throws nuts on the ground to indicate his renunciation of all boyish sports.

Less poetical than weddings thus accompanied by song, the African observances would not be at all relished by the American sex. Not only is the nuptial engagement an affair of merchandise, in which the bride's father sells his daughter for so many oxen and slaves, but the girl's nominal consent is not considered necessary, and as soon as ever the price is paid, and perhaps the very same evening, the young girl selected is decked in a white veil of her own weaving, and attended by her own friends, she goes to the bridegroom's house, where she takes off her sandals, and a calabash of water is given to her; she knocks at the door, which being opened, discloses the bridegroom seated in state, surrounded by elders of his family; going up to him, she kneels before him and pours the water over his feet in token of her submission to his will. In curious contrast to this insulting want of even decent attention toward the bride among the swarthy Africans, are the antique ceremonies

observed by the superstitious Hindoos; but they are so tediously long drawn out, we must endeavour to compress our account of them as much as possible. The father makes the proposal on behalf of his son, which is always done on a lucky day; before a reply is given, the bride's father pays a similar visit, after which, with great pomp, the other parent accompanies his son, who makes gifts to the bride, one of which is a piece of silk to be worn on her wedding-day; his father then presents four to six guineas with some betel to the bride's father, saying, "The money is thine, and the girl is mine." The answer is *vice-versa*. and a Brahmin repeats a certain formulary which closes the betrothment. A lattice-work is now built in the court-yard, and from ten to thirty days' festivities are carried on, and friends call, and the interval so spent is equivalent to the reading of banns in church. Offerings are made to propitiate the god of marriage, and in the evenings the young couple ride on elephants to return their friends' visits, when fireworks and illuminations add to the pomp kept up in all conceivable ways. For fear any evil eye should have been turned upon the lovers during these evening processions, a piece of cloth is torn in two in their presence, and the pieces thrown away in opposite directions; and on the wedding day Brahmins arrange themselves on a raised platform, surrounded by jars of water, the two largest being placed on it by the lovers, and prayers are offered up to bring down the deity into one of them. The sacrificial fire is then kindled, and oil, butter, rice, incense, &c., are thrown into it. The nuptials are performed by a Brahmin, who, at the conclusion, breaks a cocoa-nut in two, and then blesses the tali, or piece of gold, worn by all married women, which is placed round the bride's neck by the bridegroom, who swears before the fire to take care of his wife. All present sprinkle rice, mixed with saffron, over the shoulders of the newly-married, and repeat prayers as they do so, which is their mode of bestowing a benediction on the union.

Amongst the Turks, marriages are generally those of convenience, and are arranged by the parents in presence of a notary, the bride's dowry being her own reclaim in case of separation. On the eve of the wedding, she goes to a public bath, where she is met by a large company of friends and relatives, and,