

‘One of these, who, I found, was the favourite, was about six feet high, and corpulent beyond all proportion. She seemed to me, next to the elephant and rhinoceros, the largest living creature I had met with. Her features were perfectly like those of a negro; a ring of gold passed through her under lip, and weighed it down, till, like a flap, it covered her chin, and left her teeth bare, which were very small and fine. The inside of her lip she had made black with antimony. Her ears reached down to her shoulders, and had the appearance of wings; she had in each of them a large ring of gold, somewhat smaller than a man’s little finger, and about five inches diameter. The weight of these had drawn down the hole where her ear was pierced so much, that three fingers might easily pass above the ring. She had a gold necklace, like what we used to call *esclavage*, of several rows, one below another, to which were hung rows of sequins pierced. She had on her ankles two manacles of gold, larger than any I had ever seen upon the feet of felons, with which I could not conceive it was possible for her to walk, but afterwards I found they were hollow. The others were dressed pretty much in the same manner; only there was one that had chains, which came from her ears to the outside of each nostril, where they were fastened. There was also a ring put through the gristle of her nose, and which hung down to the opening of her mouth. I think she must have breathed with great difficulty. It had altogether something of the appearance of a horse’s bridle. Upon my coming near them, the eldest put her hand to her mouth, and kissed it, saying, at the same time, in very vulgar Arabic, “*Kifhalek howajo?*” (how do you do merchant)—I never in my life was more pleased with distant salutations than at this time. I answered, “Peace be among you! I am a physician, and not a merchant.”

‘I shall not entertain the reader with the multitude of their complaints; being a lady’s physician, discretion and silence are my first duties. It is sufficient to say, that there was not one part of their whole bodies, inside and out, in which some of them had not ailments. The three queens insisted upon being blooded, which desire I complied with, as it was an