

A wedding I felt I must see, and was fortunate enough to be invited to that of the daughter of a rich Pasha to her cousin, the bride being fifteen and the groom twenty-one years of age. It was really a double fête, for the son and heir of the house, the bride's little brother, a child of seven, had been circumcised the previous day, on the evening of which we arrived to spend the night before the wedding. Open house is kept on these occasions, and a good meal is provided for any poor man who may enter, and avail himself of the privilege.

A beautifully furnished room, containing a velvet chair under a canopy of flowers, was prepared for the seat of the heroine of the day, or rather the three days during which she sits in state, to be the cynosure of all eyes. The first day (that of the wedding) she was dressed in white, the second and third in pink silk and blue satin, respectively, these garments being exhibited, together with all the presents, for public admiration. She herself was in the harem, and looking remarkably untidy, while her mother, another specimen of unwieldy femininity, seemed to be quite overcome and worried, poor thing. The place was full of slaves and servants, all busily helping each other to do nothing, and succeeding remarkably well, though one was rocking the hammock, where slept the baby of the house.

As the bride spoke nothing but Turkish, I could not converse with her. After a very restless night spent on the floor—for it was an old-fashioned household, and contained but few bedsteads—I awoke to find myself in a perfect bee-hive, such a buzzing going on all around, a curious change from the previous day, when the visitors were all men (except in the harem, but I had not stayed there all day, neither had I slept there). Now the whole place was a moving mass of gorgeously-attired women, for, as there were no sacrilegious male eyes to look on, one saw Turkish women “as they really are.” One girl, a relation of the family, I fancy, whom I had taken for a slave the previous day, startled me by appearing in a

brocaded pink satin gown made in the latest Parisian style, stiff with embroideries and draped with lace; her hair dressed high and ornamented with tortoise shell combs and pins. My astonishment gratified her exceedingly; never have I seen such an expression of intense self-satisfaction on a human countenance. Everywhere walked women in various stages of the toilette; indeed, the whole of the upper storey was one large dressing-room, and I suppose the buzzing was occasioned by the Turkish equivalent to “Pin up my hair, darling,” “Can you lend me a handkerchief?” “Do see if my dress is right behind,” etc., etc.

The room in which I had passed the night was speedily transformed into a coffee-room, and an old woman, sitting cross-legged on the floor, into the presiding genius thereof. Before her was a *manghal*, or brass apparatus for burning charcoal, and she was bounded on the south-east and west by innumerable coffee cups, a huge jar of lump sugar, another of coffee, and all other things necessary for the production of the fragrant beverage which she made and dispensed all day to any and everybody; for to-day open house was kept for women, while servants were continually handing round trays of sweets. Soon we were summoned to see the dressing of the bride, who had already donned her white silk skirt, while the dressmaker, who attended to see that her work was right, was arranging the bodice, and a maid put on the white satin slippers over the beautifully-embroidered white silk stockings. Her long hair hung loosely down, interwoven with ribbons of silver tissue marvellously arranged, and the veil did not hide her in the least, as it was composed of gauze of the thinnest possible texture, suspended from a crown of silver and brilliants. Her white kid gloves were on at last, and she disappeared into another room, where we were not allowed to follow her. This was probably some rite connected with a Mahometan wedding that no Christian eye is permitted to see. On her return to the large reception-room, now crowded with visitors, she salaamed to, and