



The Sultan's Palace.

is not quite so good, but he is, contrary to the general idea, the husband of one wife only ; although the Koran allows him four, the Turk of to-day seldom takes advantage of the permission, probably he finds life easier with only one. I certainly heard of one cunning man who had two establishments, with a help-meet in each, and neither was aware of the other's existence. How he accounted for his frequent absences, I do not know, possibly he pleaded "military duty." But he is lazy, and again lazy, and yet again lazy. The busy march of civilization that entails restlessness and energy, does not interest him. He prefers to sit quietly in his cafe smoking the interminable cigarette, and drinking endless cups of coffee, undisturbed by the turmoil of Western life ; and so he will continue to smoke, and sit and sip, until his life as a nation is finished, and his government is swept away to make room for his successor who is already shouldering him out, slowly but surely. That point, however, has not yet been reached, and he is still a nation governed by a body conducting its work by means of espionage, for the land is simply a nest of spies with other spies to spy on them. Every public meeting is an object of suspicion, and theatres

and concerts must obtain a permit from the government before each representation, or woe betide the unlucky manager. I was present at a concert given at a pretty little Greek theatre, when, during the first item on the programme, a posse of police marched up the hall and mounted the platform. The performers sat as if turned to stone, the bow of the violin remained glued to the strings, and the pianist's hands were poised in mid-air in the very middle of an elaborate flourish, while a short dialogue ended in a general seeking of wraps and departure, minus our evening's entertainment. All this, forsooth, because the manager had forgotten to obtain the usual permit, accompanied, I suppose, by the usual "backsheesh."

A Turkish theatre is generally a wooden erection of the covered shed style of architecture externally, and a pleasing compound of circus and stable within. Mud floor, plain deal arrangements (not unlike horse-boxes) represent the "boxes," while the "stalls" are rush-bottomed chairs, and the "gallery" is reserved for the ladies, and screened by lattice-work. As for the acting, well, it would make one weep, only it is such an absurd caricature of the histrionic