

master; or if we meet her, it is only as a walking mummy. Not even in her own house can she be seen, though in the presence of her lord; and to inquire of him concerning her welfare, or that of her children, is an unpardonable breach of etiquette. And the reason of this contemptuous and barbarous exclusion and neglect, the traveller is gravely informed, is, that woman has no soul. Well might the traveller retort upon the ignorant Mussulman that such an opinion could be entertained only by the man who has no soul. It is, indeed, one of the strongest marks of the grovelling and dastardly spirit of Mohammedanism and paganism that they degrade and abuse woman because she is feeble and defenceless. There is no meanness so great as his who takes advantage of the power which Providence gave him to protect the weak and confiding in order to enslave them. Yet, aside from the influence of Christianity, this has been a characteristic of human nature; and woman has been the uncomplaining victim in all ages. The oppression has been the more severe in proportion as man has been farther removed from a civilized state. It is less in Turkey and Persia than in China, where females are sometimes seen yoked to the plough and the harrow. Still deeper is the degradation in Hindostan, where the widow must either be burned on the funeral pile or by a public opinion more terrible than literal flames. And yet more intolerable do we find the female condition in Australasia and Polynesia, in some of whose islands the first addresses woman receives from her future husband consist in being levelled to the ground by a club; next she is beaten till sense and life are almost gone, and then dragged over the rough ground to his bark hut. And, as we might expect, it is said that such a beginning of the matrimonial connection is a fair sample of its character through life.