

human nature makes that condition next to an impossibility therefore Mohammed meant for a man to have only one wife! Many educated Mohammedans in Egypt are taking this position. Among the middle classes the difficulty of supporting more than one wife at a time is decreasing polygamy. But by no means is polygamy an unheard-of thing, even if it is going out of fashion. Fashion is always slow in reaching the country places, and it seems to be in the country villages that polygamy seems to be more generally practised. Two brothers, representative country-men, wealthy and conservative, were known to have very extensive harems, each one having twenty-four wives and concubines.

Many fruitless attempts have been made to defend polygamy and to defend the prophet of Islam for preserving it, but, as a careful student of social and moral ethics has said, "To an ideal love, polygamy is abhorrent and impossible," and when ideal love is impossible to the wife's heart she is degraded because the passions of hate and jealousy will quickly and surely take its place.

The Arabic word which is applied to a rival wife is "durrah," the root meaning of which is "to injure," "to harm." This appellation certainly shows that the fellow-wives are not expected to be on terms of amity with each other.

The most common excuse for taking a second wife "over the head" of the first wife, as expressed in Arabic, is that she has failed to present her