

bands. Long intervals of silent melancholy come upon her, intense and dumb, like threatening brain-trouble. She was playful as a kitten five years ago.

Poor little souls—crushed every one of them at sixteen or seventeen under the heel of Islam. Do you wonder that we do not consider it an elevating creed?

And yet they have gone under without tasting the bitterest dregs of a native woman's cup; for (save a baby of the eldest girl's who lived only a few weeks) there were no children in the question. And the woman's deepest anguish begins where they are concerned. For divorce is always hanging over her head. The birth of a daughter when a son had been hoped for, an illness that has become a bit tedious, a bit of caprice or counter-attraction on the husband's part—any of these things may mean that he will “tear the paper” that binds them together, and for eight francs the kadi will set him free. This means that the children will be forced from the mother and knocked about by the next wife that comes on the scene; and the mother-heart will suffer a constant martyrdom from her husband if only divorce can be averted. The Algerian women may claim the boys till seven and the girls till ten or twelve; the countrywomen have no claim after the little life becomes independent of them for existence.

Look at the awful and fierce sadness of this face: more like a wild creature than a woman.* She has

* See illustration opposite page 294.