

I knew one other Fulani lady long after the death of her husband, she being about sixty-five years of age, and a very nice woman in many ways. She told me that her husband, although of good family, had married only her and that they had been happily married for over thirty years when he died, and she had remained a widow. I fear, however, these are exceptional cases and that the ordinary life of the women of the ruling Fulani class is a hard one.

I was once sitting in my compound when a well-covered and veiled woman came to see me, with the excuse that she wanted medicine. After some conversation I found it was trouble that had brought her. She had been for some years loved by her husband but had had no children; so her husband had married another wife and disliked her now, and she wanted medicine from me to make him love her again! She begged me never to mention that she had come to me, saying that her husband would certainly beat her nearly to death if he knew that she had come out, and much more so if he knew she had come to me.

The ease with which all Hausa women, but specially those of the middle and lower classes, can obtain divorce for almost any reason; also the frequency with which they can obtain redress for cruelty from their husbands in the native courts, gives them power and a position in the community not to be despised. A man, for instance, in order to get a girl of sixteen years in marriage will pay