

The Moslem women in China occupy a better position than their sisters in lands where Islam is supreme, and are more favoured than Moslem women in India. The Koranic sanctions in the matters of marriage and divorce, concubinage and slavery, are apparently but little exercised ; if they were taken advantage of, Islam would be brought into greater disrepute in China. Moslem women, like their heathen sisters, have suffered not a little from the cruel fashion of foot-binding. Much additional sorrow and often privation has come to her through the blighting and vicious habit of opium-smoking and opium-eating, to which so many of her household, male members chiefly, have been addicted. (Both practices now are happily doomed in China, but by no means at an end yet.) But the Moslem woman has not had to wear the veil, nor to endure the isolation and bitter jealousies of harem life. Exactly what value the Chinese Moslem places on his women-folk, it would be difficult to state ; opinions are conflicting ; but modified by Chinese views he probably has a higher opinion of them than the Moslem in lands of Islam. But so long as the Mohammedan finds no place for her at the services in the mosques, nor thinks it necessary to enlighten her as to religion even when at home, Islam lies under grave reproach in its treatment of Moslem women.

How far the Moslems in China are worse in this respect than those in lands of Islam, it would not be easy to say. But one has frequently met with Mohammedans who, so far from attending the weekly services in the mosques, had no idea that the Moslem service-day had already nearly passed. Outside the inner circle found in the mosques, to whom these remarks do not apply, the average Mohammedan in China is notoriously lax in his observance of the usual rites and ceremonies of Islam.

The well-known breadth and all-inclusiveness of the