

# Sultan's Harem Yields Its Secrets



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"The Sultan's Favorite," painted by A. Rivas.

## Tribune to Print Rare Record

By GUY MURCHIE JR.

THE sultan of imperial Turkey is a figure of glamor unsurpassed. In all history no character of more exotic lavishness can be found. He brings to mind marble halls strewn with silken cushions and flowers, pearls by the roomful, heavily perfumed baths, turbaned slaves, fathomless wealth of every kind, and, above all, the harem.

● The harem, more so than any other institution of the Mohammedan world, is familiar to us—in name. The living reality of the harem, however, a company of several hundred beautiful women and their attendants, kept in a luxurious prison for the pleasure of their lord and master, is as vague as it is fascinating to our imaginations.

● We have a hazy idea of reclining dusky maidens, half nude, half draped in strings of pearls and translucent silks, watched over night and day by huge eunuchs—obese monstrosities of former men who have been deprived of their manhood especially so that they can safely be entrusted with the guardianship of the sultan's most treasured possessions.

● We realize dimly that the harem itself must be a hotbed of rivalry among the most ambitious and desirable girls, as well as a secret nest of intrigue among all manner of slaves, eunuchs, bath keepers, and other attendants. Beyond this vague picture all is lost in scented unreality.

● This was true until N. M. Penzer, a noted orientalist, by means of a sequence of fortunate chances and (Continued on page four.)



(After an engraving by A.-I. Melling, 1819.)

The royal harem of the sultan. These are the quarters in which dwelt, cut off from the outside world and to all purposes, prisoners of their royal master, the sultan's wives and other female slaves.



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The muezzin calling the faithful to prayer, after a painting by Jean Leon Gerome.