

THE FAVORITE SULTANA.

("N'ai-je pas pour toi, belle juive.")

[XII., Oct. 27, 1828.]

To please you, Jewess, jewel!

I have thinned my harem out!

Must every flirting of your fan

Presage a dying shout?

Grace for the damsels tender

Who have fear to hear your laugh,

For seldom gladness gilds your lips

But blood you mean to quaff.

In jealousy so zealous,

Never was there woman worse;

You'd have no roses but those grown

Above some buried corse.

Am I not pinioned firmly?

Why be angered if the door
Repulses fifty suing maids
Who vainly there implore?

Let them live on--to envy
My own empress of the world,
To whom all Stamboul like a dog
Lies at the slippers curled.

To you my heroes lower
Those scarred ensigns none have cowed;
To you their turbans are depressed
That elsewhere march so proud.

To you Bassora offers
Her respect, and Trebizonde
Her carpets richly wrought, and spice
And gems, of which you're fond.

To you the Cyprus temples
Dare not bar or close the doors;
For you the mighty Danube sends
The choicest of its stores.

Fear you the Grecian maidens,
Pallid lilies of the isles?

Or the scorching-eyed sand-rover
From Baalbec's massy piles?

Compared with yours, oh, daughter
Of King Solomon the grand,
What are round ebon bosoms,
High brows from Hellas' strand?

You're neither blanched nor blackened,
For your tint of olive's clear;
Yours are lips of ripest cherry,
You are straight as Arab spear.

Hence, launch no longer lightning
On these paltry slaves of ours.
Why should your flow of tears be matched
By their mean life-blood showers?

Think only of our banquets
Brought and served by charming girls,
For beauties sultans must adorn
As dagger-hilts the pearls.