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Women of Amara

MRS. H. A. BILKERT

THE name Amara means "a newly built place." In some respects it is now living up to its name. For long years it had been only one of the small Arab towns in the Mesopotamian valley lying in unmolested ignorance under the blighting hand of the Turk. But the great war came and shook it awake so thoroughly that it has never been able to go to sleep again. It found itself on the great highway of war, a highway filled with British soldiers and British guns. It saw it's own self "swept and garnished," as it were, in a night—its streets made clean, its filth cleared away and its people kept in order. It stared with wonder at great aeroplanes flying like birds against the cloudless sky. The nights were made bright by the mysterious power of electricity and the muddy river water, so brown and dirty, was changed into water pure and clear to quench the thirsty lips. Thousands upon thousands of white soldiers marched through its streets and outside the desert was white with tents. It saw the sick and the wounded nursed back to life or laid away in the lonely little cemetery, and this great work of mercy was the greatest wonder of all. And now this little city on the banks of the old, old Tigris, has become very much new. It can not understand all the strange things it is experiencing but it knows it can never go back to it's old life.

The last to fall in line in the march of progress is the Mohammedan woman. Though her son learns to read and write in the Government school and her husband becomes rich from English money, yet the wife and mother sees very little reason to change and much less chance. The four bare walls that make her home are no broader than before. And the things that passed outside, wonders though they were, were not