

R. C. O'Brien.



DAUGHTER NAMED HANIFA

By EDGAR J. BANKS

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FRIDAY found the Imam Abdullah squatted cross-legged upon the platform of the mosque. Before him, on a little stand, lay the open Koran upon which his eyes were fixed, while his chubby forefinger was energetically gesticulating to the group of excited women about him. From the expression upon his face, and the sharp interruptions from his audience, it seemed that at last, in his old age, after a life filled with the thousand theological battles, and crowned with a thousand victories, he had met his Marathon, for the longer he argued the louder grew the expostulations of the women.

"The Prophet—peace be upon him—" repeated Abdullah for the tenth time that day, and with an expression of increasing despair, "received from Paradise a message that man might have four wives. You, ladies of Mecca, demand that if a man has four wives, a woman may have four husbands. Had that been Allah's will, he would long ago have revealed it."

"But Allah did not say that we should not have four husbands," cried the women. "Oh, great Abdullah," they continued, "Allah has revealed many things through the Prophet, and we are obedient to all his laws; other things are yet to be revealed. Therefore, learn for us Allah's will. Pray that he may reveal to you, you who remember the Prophet, who you were among those to welcome him back to Mecca, you through whom Allah has already revealed so many things, if a woman may not have four husbands as a man has four wives."

Abdullah groaned, for his reputation as a holy man was at stake; he had employed every argument to bring these wives of Mecca to contentment, yet they had defied him, and demanded from him a special revelation.

"I will ask Allah to reveal his will," he stighed. "Next Friday I will impart it to you."

Still groaning in spirit, he arose from the floor, feebly moved across the straw matting to the door, poked his fat, bare feet into his sandals, and went home.

Abdullah's past history had been an interesting one. He was a small, bare-footed boy when the prophet Mohammed returned to Mecca, and now of all the people left in the Holy City, he alone had seen him. Inspired by that rare privilege, he marked out for himself the career of a holy man. When his chin was first fuzzy with the down which evolved into the largest of patriarchal beards, he wandered as a dervish, but to suffer from hunger and thirst, and to lacerate his own body, soon ceased to be pleasures, and finally he settled down as an imam in the Holy City to gain an easier livelihood by fleecing the visiting pilgrims. In his profession he prospered. He alone was intrusted with the keys of the Kaaba, and so great was his reputed piety that he was consulted in every religious controversy.

During his long life Abdullah had seen but one sorrow—his wives had died one after another, yet that was not the cause of his grief, for never for long did he lack his full quota of wives which, both living and dead, he could count to a score. The one thorn in his flesh was that this score or more of wives had presented him with but a single offspring, a daughter, whom he had named Hanifa. This solitary plant of the harem grew and blossomed into a dark, slender, large-eyed Arab maid, sending out her tendrils of love until they entwined about the old man's heart, as if to compensate him for his lack of sons. She was the only child of twenty passing wives.

"Baba," tenderly said Hanifa, as her father, leaving the crowd of angry women in the mosque, had returned home and squatted before the dish of pilaf, which he left untasted, "Are you ill?"

"No, child," replied Abdullah, with an audible sigh, yet without paying his customary visit to the harem, he retired.

The next morning when Abdullah appeared, his eyes were sunken, for he had passed a sleepless night. During the dark hours his audience of clamoring women was ever before him, and although he had a thousand times successfully interpreted the laws of the Koran, now he had failed; his wits had deserted him, and no revelation came; his reputation as an imam would be ruined, and all the wisdom displayed in the past would be in vain.

Thus tortured, he slept none and ate little. Half a dozen times, daily Hanifa urged him to impart to her the cause of his sorrows, and as often did he deny that he was afflicted, yet before the week was half ended, Abdullah had become so feeble that he even neglected the book which was to perpetuate his name; he remained in the corner, silent and thoughtful.

"Baba," said Hanifa, again stroking his old bald head, "Tell me your troubles—perhaps I can help you."

"I have none, child," was the holy man's prevaricating reply. A deep groan followed.

Hanifa was too solicitous of the old man's health to be silent. Long she stood over him, stroking his head, yet finally when the abundance of sighs and groans seemed to be well nigh exhausted, he explained in a feeble voice how the women of Mecca had demanded a special, impossible revelation. Concluding his explanations in

utter despair, he covered his face with his hands and wept.

Hanifa laughed. "Poor Baba," she said, still stroking his bald head. "Your troubles are slight."

Abdullah raised his tear-filled eyes reproachfully.

"They are very slight," she repeated. "Leave them to me and they will disappear."

Abdullah's look of reproach turned to one of keen attention.

"Yes, Baba, if you will give my name just once in your great book, I will bring your troubles to an end."

Abdullah, with the eagerness of the sinking man who grasped at the straw, promised. While Hanifa was explaining the special revelation which on the appointed day he should communicate to the women in the mosque, the tears suddenly disappeared from his eyes. Fortified with a new hope and courage, he arose and shouted to his slaves to immediately bring a large tray of pilaf.

It was early Friday morning, earlier than usual, when Abdullah seated himself upon the platform of the mosque. On all previous occasions, since he could remember, his audiences had gathered and were awaiting him. That Friday morning, when he said his prayers, his voice rang with an unusual clearness, and during his prostrations his old bones seemed to have renewed their youth. His face was beaming with happiness, and his eye had never been more bright, for he had an important communication from Allah to reveal to the wives of the Faithful. At his side upon the platform stood an immense copper kettle which his waiting slave had brought him. One by one the rebelling women came and squatted about, anxious to hear the special revelation promised by the beaming expression upon Abdullah's face.

Finally, when they had all congregated, Abdullah, in a voice deep with mystery and awe, commanded that each woman present should go at once to her home and immediately return with a jug of milk. The women demurred. They had come, they said, to hear the revelation. Abdullah explained that no revelation was possible until his command had been obeyed, and in a few moments two score women, each with a jug of milk balanced upon her head, stood before him.

"Pour the milk into this kettle," said Abdullah, with a voice suggestive of still greater mystery, yet in his eye was a twinkle of delight which he could not conceal.

The women filed past the kettle, poured the milk into it, and returned to their places upon the floor before the great teacher. Abdullah, solemnly stroking his long beard, looked silently at the foaming camel's milk, and then slowly turned to the wondering women before him. His morning's discourse upon the perfect wisdom of Allah, and the wonderfulness of his revelations, was prefaced with a longer introduction than usual. Never had he been so eloquent—never had he spoken with such confidence.

"Now, Oh wives of the Faithful," he said, in concluding his long discourse, "I shall impart the revelation which Allah has sent to you through me, his faithful servant. Allah bids that each of you approach this kettle of milk; he bids that each of you take from the kettle the milk which you poured into it but a moment ago. When you shall have done this, he bids that each of you who will, take four husbands, as a man may take four wives."

"But," he continued, as the sparkling of his eyes increased, "Allah bids me say that if one of you shall take the thousandth part of a drop of the milk which another has poured into the kettle, it shall be accounted unto you a theft, and you shall be delivered to Allah for eternal punishment."

The old man chuckled. The contented expressions upon the faces of the women suddenly turned to amazement.

"Oh great Abdullah," finally suggested an Innocent one in the audience, "we do not know which our milk is—it is all alike—it is all white and foamy."

Abdullah sprang to his feet and with his arms wildly and supernaturally waving above his head, shouted with a monstrous, prophetic voice, which thundered throughout the mosque, the special revelation from Allah:

"As it is with the milk, so would it be with your children," were the few intelligible words amid the resounding echoes. "As you cannot distinguish which drop of milk you poured into the kettle, so you could not distinguish the fathers of your children. Trouble me and Allah no more with your idle words."

The women were vanquished; one by one they left the mosque. As the last one disappeared the chuckling Abdullah looked fondly at the white foam, smacked his lips in anticipation of many days with frequent and prolonged drafts of curdled milk, and clapped his hands to summon the waiting slave to carry the proceeds of his revelation home.

Although Hanifa could not distinguish a leaf from yod, that Friday afternoon she was peering over her father's shoulder while he dilated in his great theological book upon the various sects of the Moslem world. One of them, the largest, he described as the Hanifah. As her father pointed out the word, and read it aloud, she again stroked his old, bald head, and then hurried away to bring him a bowl of curdled milk.

Abdullah's revelation must have met with Allah's favor, for the Hanifah sect has increased in number and in all things worldly. Prominent among its members is Abdul Hamid, the sultan, who, with millions of others, speak reverently of the good old Saint Hanifa.

The Y DAIRY

IMPROVING QUALITY OF DAIRY PRODUCTS

More and more quality in dairy products brings its just reward. When milk is clean and pure more of it is used and a better price is paid. Of course there are exceptions to this, as, for instance, where the milk from a large number of farms is dumped into common vats. The thing to be done under such circumstances is for all farmers to improve their product and for them to let the world know about it. It has been well said that the way to increase the use of milk in the cities is to increase its value by improving the quality.

People are saturated with the idea of sanitation and quality. Products that a few years ago were sold in bulk with no thought of contamination, are now sold only in sanitary sealed packages. Just so with milk—if it possesses quality, people will use more of it and that will improve the market. The consumption of dairy products has increased 25 per cent during the last few years. Credit for much of this increase must be given to the fact that the cleanliness and quality of the dairy products offered for sale have been improved to such an extent that they have become the best the world has ever known.

The methods of improving the quality, of necessity, must start at the farm. The rules or the plans are very simple. The cows and the milkers should be healthy. Most towns and cities have ordinances requiring that cows be tested and found free from tuberculosis before their milk may be sold. It is just as essential that those who do the milking and who handle the milk shall be free from the same disease.

There is a growing tendency to substitute principles for rules. This applies especially to the production of clean milk. The way to produce clean milk is simply to keep it from becoming contaminated with dirt. This requires a clean milking place, clean cows, clean milkers, and clean pails and other utensils. Cooling the milk is likewise very essential. Everyone knows that cool milk keeps very much better than warm milk. The reason is that bacteria, which cause the milk to become sour, multiply much more rapidly in warm milk. There are possibilities on every farm of cooling the milk. It may be running water, it may be ice, or it may be some other arrangement. The big thing is to apply the slogan, "keep it clean, keep it cool."

Half a Million Boarder Cows in New York State

Four hundred and sixty-two thousand New York state cows do not produce enough butter fat to pay their board bill, says Professor H. A. Hopper of the New York State College of Agriculture at Ithaca. Yet, he continues, they add enough to the total production of milk and cream to depress market prices of the product of the 938,000 good cows in the state.

According to Professor Hopper, there are 55,000,000 more pounds of butter fat in storage now than a year ago, which causes the lower price in dairy products. Under such conditions it is even more than usually important on account of present high feed prices to cull out the low producers. Culling was never more necessary or needed worse than at the present time, says Professor Hopper.

One-third of New York's cows are not only failing to pay their own way, but are making it difficult for the other 938,000 cows to return a profit.

The cow-testing associations now in operation in various parts of the state are doing valiant work in coping with this menace to the dairy industry, but what is needed is more of them and more men who are not afraid to beef the low producers. The scales and Babcock test for butter fat will weed out the poor cows, if their owners will see their duty and do it; and better rations and more home-grown feeds will increase the net earnings of the good ones.

Dairy Facts

A dairy barn doesn't need to be costly to be clean.

Cream and milk cool 23 times as fast in water as in air of the same temperature.

You must like cows if you expect them to make a profit for you. Then you have got to study and understand cows and all that goes with their breeding, feeding and care.

The best way to meet the dairy cow's mineral needs is to apply lime and phosphorus, in the form of ground limestone and acid phosphate, to the soil, and thereby grow more high mineral roughages, such as clover and alfalfa.

A heavy allowance of potatoes for dairy cows produces milk of poor flavor. They may be used with success, however, when not over 30 to 35 pounds of raw tubers are fed a day to a cow. A slightly larger allowance of cooked potatoes may be fed.

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Two Great Languages.
The only living language besides English which is at present growing with any rapidity is Spanish. Spanish is the principal language of America from Mexico southward, and the population of the South American countries is increasing rapidly. Yet even Spanish is no likely rival to English as a world language.

Not Always "Mount Vernon"
George Washington's estate, Mount Vernon, was originally called Hunting Creek but when it came into the possession of Lawrence Washington, the brother of George, he changed it to Mount Vernon in honor of Admiral Edward Vernon, of the British navy.

Millions Paid to Hunt.
During one season sportsmen in the United States pay on an average about \$5,000,000 for hunting permits and licenses of all kinds. This money is used by the various states to establish game preserves, pay for wardens and generally to reduce taxation.

Danger!
New York newspapers are discussing the question, "What is an adventuress?" An adventuress is a woman you and your husband met awhile ago, and your husband remarks, "Why not have her out to our house to dinner sometime?"—Kansas City Star.

Reversal of Usual Order.
The sloth, a purely arboreal animal of Central and South America, practically spends its life upside down. These animals hang head down in the trees and rarely leave them.

Grumbler Never Leads.
Pessimists are always in the rear, and never in the van in the march of progress. Your successful men and women are never chronic grumblers.—Bishop Samuel Fallows.

Time to "Take Stock."
Many a man who boasts that he is self-made wonders why his fellows do not share his admiration of his creation. Such a man should go farther and give serious thought to his achievement. Introspection might reduce his conceit.—Grit.

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Apples Oddly Colored.
Apple trees planted near a perpendicular rock cliff at Cashmere, Wash., produced apples that were colored on one side only because the sun and light could not reach the side next to the cliff. The location was chosen so that the roots might find perpetual moisture at the foot of the cliff.

Ink From the Maple.
A homemade ink was, in earlier days, sometimes made from the bark of the red maple by boiling it and adding sulphite of iron, says the American Tree association. It contains considerable tannin, and, at one time, was occasionally employed in dyeing.

Getting in Shape.
It might console the farm boy who is growling about pitching hay during the sweltering days of July and August if he'll just remember he is getting himself in fine trim to enjoy golf a little later in life.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Earliest Sweet Sounds.
The lyre, the flute, the trumpet or horn, and the kithara were used by the Greeks. The Egyptians used the flute, the sistrum, the lyre and the harp. The harp, in many instances, had 15 strings.

Nature's Great Law.
Everything bears within itself an impulse to strive after a higher degree of divinity, and that is the great law of progress throughout all nature.

Had Scanty Store of Iron.
Practically all the great countries of antiquity were deficient in natural supplies of iron. Consequently most of the civilized people of early times had few tools, limited largely to knives, hoes and weapons.

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