

Our Foreign Letter.

FROM SYRIA.

"OLD UGLY"—A CASE OF MALARIAL SPLEEN.

This is the photograph of a little boy named Mohammed, who was in Hospital six months for malarial spleen; the masculine woman beside him is his grandmother, with whom he lives in a village about five hours' ride from the hospital; so you see they came a long way, and it was the rainy season. Such a funny, weird, old-looking child! His complexion of a dark, yellowish brown, and a pair of eyes that did not match, one blue, the other yellow! The day he arrived someone christened him "Old Ugly," and it was certainly not a misnomer. On entering the ward, he toddled up to me, put his cold little hands in mine, and said: "Baired, sittee, queteer aiy airn," (I am cold, lady, and very ill) "the fever is on me." One could see that plainly enough, for his teeth were chattering, and he was shivering from head to foot; he was at the "cold stage." I put him to bed at once, between blankets, piled as many as I could spare on the top of him, and put hot water bottles to his feet and the sides of his cot.

He lay curled up like a little animal, still shivering, in spite of all his coverings.

The pulse was small, quick, and irregular, the breathing quick and shallow. To the touch the skin was very cold, but the thermometer showed the temperature had already risen considerably above normal. This sensation of cold, due to contraction of the superficial vessels, lasted about two hours, when the axillary temperature rose to 107 degs. Then the "hot stage" began, and Mohammed tossed about, complaining of bad headache, of pains in back and legs, and of being "queteer suchen, mithal en-nar" (very hot, like fire.) The face lost its blue pinched appearance, and became flushed. I relieved the little patient of some of the blankets; these must never be removed all at once, however much the patient complains of heat, or he would get a chill, and the attack would last much longer. The "hot stage" continued for three

hours, then came the "sweating stage," and with it a great sense of relief. The skin, before so dry and burning, gradually got moist, until the child was in a bath of perspiration, and the pain and discomfort of the previous stage gone. The pulse became slower, and the tongue moist, the temperature fell by degrees till the normal was reached, when the boy exclaimed, "I am better, lady, and I want my supper." I sponged him down with tepid water, changed his shirt, which was dripping wet, remade his bed with fresh sheets, and only one blanket, and then gave him bread and beef tea for his supper, whereupon he sat up and attacked it vigorously, as if he had never been ill in his life. But Mohammed was by no

means cured, and required long and careful nursing. He had had repeated attacks of malaria till his little body was saturated with it. When I entered the ward next morning, after he had wished me "Good day" and kissed my hand, he said, "Sister, you haven't seen my spleen!" All Arabs who suffer from malaria get to know they have a spleen, and the exact position of it, and Mohammed's spleen was not one that could be overlooked; it was enormously enlarged, three inches below the costal margin, and as hard as wood; on palpation it felt like a dish, the convex side to one's hand. During the six months the boy was in hospital, great attention was given



OLD UGLY AND HIS GRANNY.

to the diet, which consisted largely of leben; this is a sort of sour milk, something like junket, only much nicer. It is eaten in large quantities in Syria, Egypt, and Turkey; in the latter country it is called yaourte. It is an invaluable food for all cases of fever, gastritis, dyspepsia, and general weakness, and fortunately is now obtainable in England. Mohammed, being an Arab boy, enjoyed his leben very much. To get the fever out of his system 2 grs. of quinine were given three times a day, and as this at first caused vomiting it was given subcutaneously in 2 grs. doses. As the patient grew stronger he had no difficulty in taking it by mouth. Whenever I came to give it him he would say: "Moorh, moorh, moorh, sittee" (Bitter, bitter,

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