

20. Hospitality is a virtue for which the natives of the East in general are highly and deservedly admired ; and the people of Egypt are well entitled to commendation on this account. A word which signifies literally "a person on a journey" ("musafir") is the term most commonly employed in this country in the sense of a visitor or guest. There are very few persons here who would think of sitting down to a meal, if there were a stranger in the house without inviting him to partake of it unless the latter were a menial ; in which case, he would be invited to eat with the servants. It would be considered a shameful violation of good manners if a Muslim abstained from ordering the table to be prepared at the usual time because a visitor happened to be present. Persons of the middle classes in this country, if living in a retired situation, sometimes take their supper before the door of their house, and invite every passenger of respectable appearance to eat with them. This is very commonly done among the lower order. In cities and large towns, claims on hospitality are unfrequent ; as there are many wekalehs, or khans, where strangers may obtain lodging ; and food is very easily procured ; but in the villages, travellers are often lodged and entertained by the Sheykh or some other inhabitant ; and if the guest be a person of the middle or higher classes, or even not very poor he gives a present to his host's servants, or to the host himself. In the desert, however, a present is seldom received from a guest. By a Sunneh law, a traveller may claim entertainment from a person able to afford it to him, for three days.



Hospitality of Eastern People

Eastern people, especially Egyptians, are renowned for their hospitality. Visitors, also called 'musafir', are invited by the locals. Further, it is considered immoral not to invite the guest, present at their home, before beginning the meal. Even lower-class guests are also invited to eat with servants. Middle-class people often take their meals outside their house and offer every respectable passerby to join them. This trend is more common in villages, while in cities food is easily accessible. Guests often present gifts to their host. As per Sunna law, guests are to be entertained for three days.