

THE WOMEN'S MAGAZINE
AZAT KHATYN (LIBERATED WOMAN)

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Azat Khatyn (Liberated Woman) -- this is the name of a sociopolitical and literary-artistic magazine published in Kazan in the Tatar language. Its editor relates the work, problems, and plans of Azat Khatyn.

About three years ago I happened to be in Nurlat Region of Tataria. The lady of the house where I went to get warm proved to be a very pious woman. Collecting several old ladies about her she read the Koran to them. She knew it by heart and read with great feeling in a sing-song, at times raising her voice to tragic notes. At these places the old ladies began to weep.

When the solemn reading was over and the old ladies were praying with their hands covering their faces I became interested in just what in the Koran had moved them so. This simple question left them at a loss. They could not explain at all what the book was all about, but the lady of the house pursed her lips and with a sense of her own importance began to explain in the most general terms what high morality the Koran contained.

"And what does the mullah read during the marriage ceremony, the nikakh?" I asked since I remembered this passage from the Koran well.

Sensing my keen interest the lady of the house became animated.

"Why do young people get divorced so often nowadays? Why, because they don't celebrate nikakh. And do you think you can have a solid family without that?"

"But still, what does the mullah read to the young people that's written in the Koran?"

"In the Koran it's written love and respect each other, be faithful to each other all your life, no matter what misfortune befalls you," replied the woman, becoming more and more enthusiastic.

I listened to her with the greatest astonishment because the Koran says nothing about that. Even less about faithfulness of husband to wife. The thought that woman is the initial cause of all people's sufferings and the destroyer of the human race runs as a red thread through all the